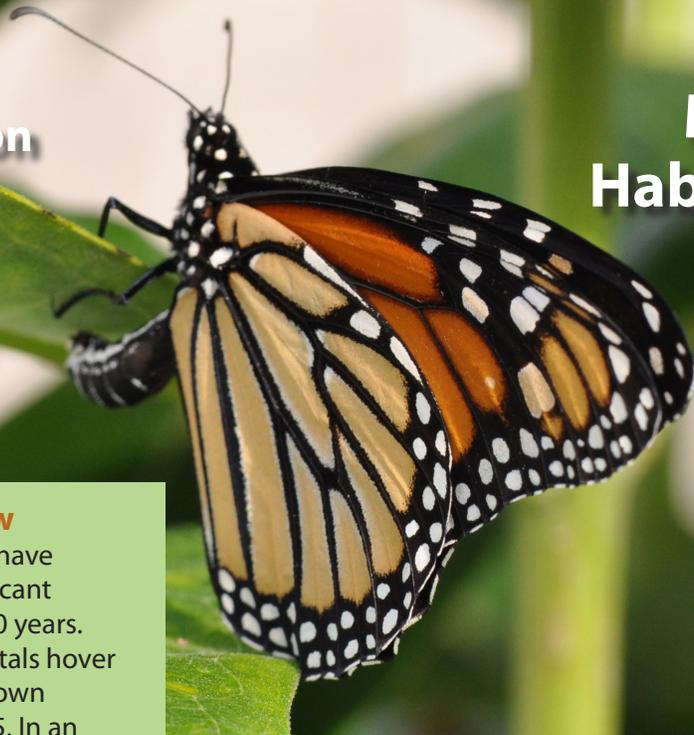


Natural Resources Conservation Service



Illinois: Overview

Monarch butterflies have experienced a significant decline in the past 20 years. Today, population totals hover around 34 million, down from 1 billion in 1995. In an effort to restore and enhance Monarch habitat in Illinois, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is offering financial and technical assistance to help landowners and conservation partners develop butterfly-friendly improvements on private lands. Through a systems approach, NRCS will help landowners on the conservation and enhancement of diverse native plant communities and ecosystem management to encourage the production of important plant species required for brooding and nectar during migratory periods. Eligible landowners can receive technical and financial assistance for voluntarily installing conservation practices that develop pollinator and wildlife habitats essential to the Monarch.



Monarch Butterfly Habitat Development Project

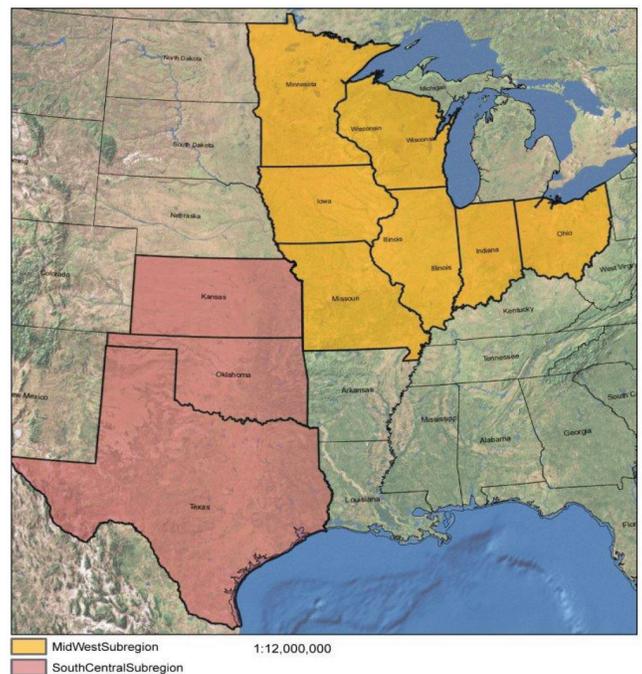


Illinois Priority Areas Cover the State

All Illinois counties are eligible and have been selected as focal areas for Monarch butterfly habitat development because of our state's key location within the butterfly's flight zone during spring and fall migrations. Illinois is in the heart of the zone, giving every single landowner in every county a huge opportunity to make Monarch habitat improvements on private lands. Whether you farm 1,000 acres or 100, adding the right plant species on your land can support Monarch butterfly populations as they travel their long route and support agriculture simultaneously.

Conservation Funding and Practices

NRCS in Illinois will work to implement conservation practices across the state to restore and/or enhance diverse pollinator habitat to provide high-quality nectar species during the critical migration time periods of May through October.



NRCS Monarch Butterfly Habitat Emphasis Areas
 MidWestSubregion
 SouthCentralSubregion



Butterfly Milkweed



Common Milkweed



Purple Milkweed



Swamp Milkweed

NRCS conservation professionals can provide technical assistance and planning tools to conduct Monarch habitat assessments on private lands to determine what conservation actions will provide the best results to improve Monarch habitat.

Using funds from NRCS's programs, including the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), and the Wetland Reserve Program (WRP), NRCS can provide financial assistance to eligible private landowners. They can voluntarily implement conservation practices that conserve and enhance diverse native plant communities, while focusing on land management that promotes native milkweeds, and early- to late-blooming nectar plants.

Prescribed burning, conservation cover crops, and upland wildlife habitat management are a few examples of practices where NRCS programs and assistance can help private citizens make a difference in improving Monarch habitat.



Landowner and Public Benefits

When landowners improve habitat for Monarchs with NRCS conservation practices, they are also providing habitat for native bees, honey bees, and other pollinator and wildlife species. These efforts also can lead to other natural resource benefits, such as improved water quality, healthier soils and more productive working lands.

Improved habitat will increase Monarch sightings for millions of Americans to enjoy each year as the orange-and-black butterfly make their annual, multigenerational iconic migration from central Mexico to as far north as Canada. Conservation investments are good for all Americans because well-managed farms produce food and fiber, sustain rural economies, and provide food security to the Nation. All across the country, farmers, and urban communities are voluntarily taking action and putting conservation on the ground to improve Monarch habitat on hundreds of thousands of acres.

For More Information

To get more details about NRCS, the Monarch Butterfly Habitat Development Project, or to find the office near you, visit www.il.nrcs.usda.gov today. There are deadlines for accessing EQIP funds this year; however, landowners can sign up for EQIP at any time.

