

Pollinator Habitat Management Area Initiative



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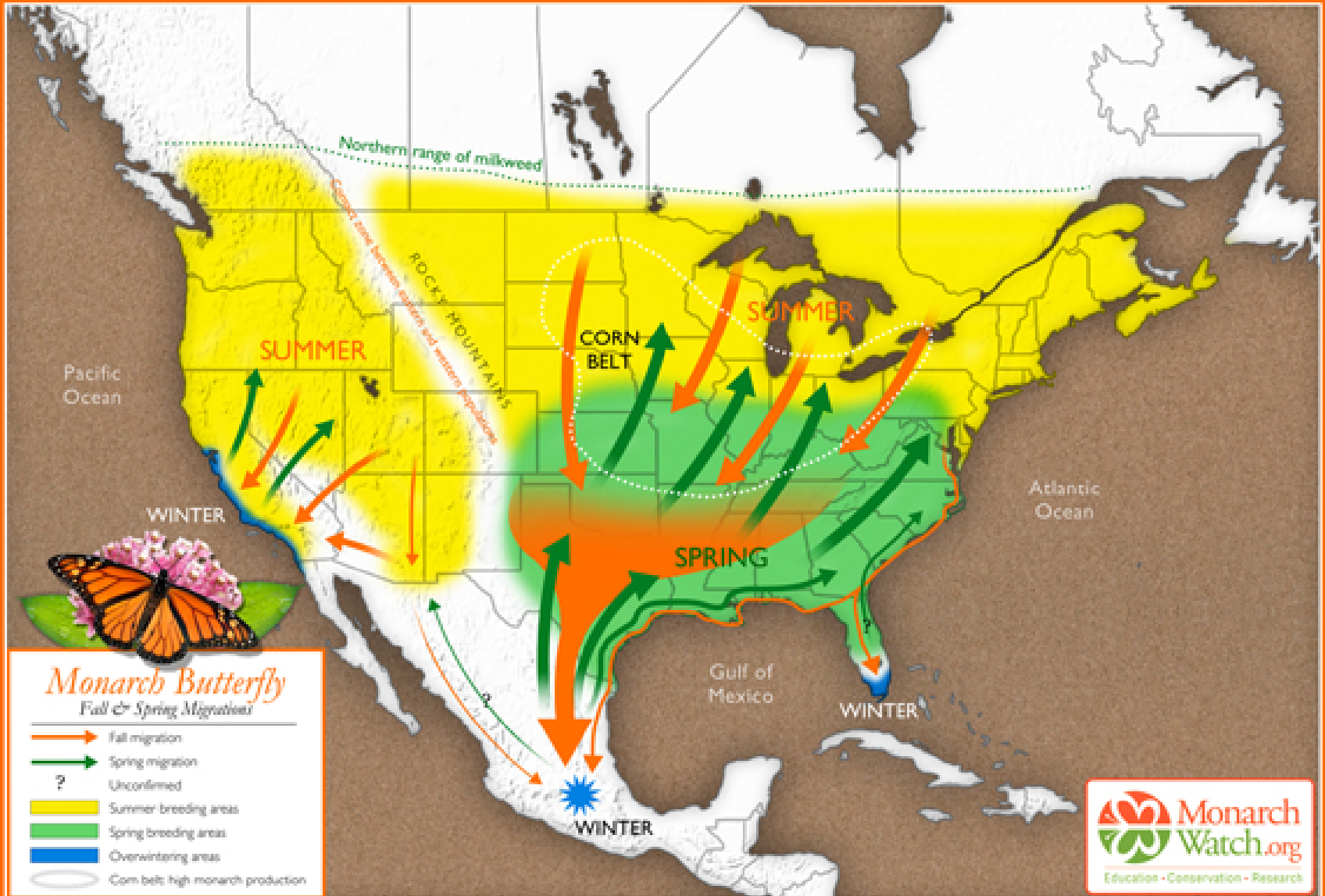


Background: City Council Resolution

Resolution Action Statement: BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN: The City Manager is directed to collaborate with the local offices of the National Wildlife Federation and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and **initiate a process for incorporating the cultivation of native milkweed where feasible into the city's landscape portfolio** at Austin City Hall, city-owned buildings and properties, as well as the city's vast preserve lands, parks, and open spaces.

May 14, 2015

Background: Monarch Migration



Background: Mayor's Monarch Pledge



Pollinator Habitat Management Area Initiative: Overview

- Pollinator Habitat Management-designated areas (wildflower meadows) marked with Grow Zone sign
- **Focus:** Underutilized areas of City parks that are currently mowed with a 3-week to once-a-month frequency
- Evaluate these PARD areas for suitability as pollinator-supporting wildflower areas.
- Selected areas would be assigned an annual fall mowing cycle to allow native wildflowers and grasses to set seed.
- Trails within these areas can be mowed more frequently to connect areas of the park and provide the public with access to enjoy the wildflower meadows.
- Signage would be placed to educate and inform the public of the intent and goal of the modified management.

Potential Areas for Initiative

- Wildflower area behind Gus Garcia Recreation Center that could be seeded for milkweed
- Currently mowed area near the parking lots at Roy Guerrero
- Currently mowed area at Circle C Metro Park alongside Vinemont Dr.
- Currently mowed area at Dove Springs
- Currently mowed area at Pease Park

Justification

- Wildflowers are an attractive amenity for any public area.
- Non mowed areas:
 - help remove particulates from the air
 - serve as pollination and nectar sources
 - serve as wildlife habitat
 - help soil sequester carbon and reduce urban heat island
 - utilize less water and require fewer chemicals such as herbicides and fertilizers
 - require less staff time and maintenance cost
 - help reduce our carbon footprint and fuel cost

Initiative Implementation

- 1) Mow site entirely
- 2) Light till of existing site
- 3) Rent no-till seed drill to spread seed
- 4) After first season, rent 8-9 foot drop spreader
- 5) Spread Dillo Dirt with drop spreader attached to PARD tractor with turf tires

Initiative Needs

- GIS inventory of existing Pollinator Habitat Management Areas (wildflower areas, buffer strips and meadows)
- Staff to document existing wildflower areas
- Native wildflower and milkweed seed mix
- Pollinator Habitat Management Area Signage (Grow Zone)
- Mowing sub-contract language, specifying designated areas and stipulations for non-compliance to include reseeding
- Equipment Rental or Purchase Needs:
 - No till seed drill with staff to operate tractor
 - 8-9 foot drop spreader with staff to operate

Tie to Ongoing Work with Monarch Coordination Group

- Monarch Coordination Group Members:
 - City of Austin Parks and Recreation
 - City of Austin Water - Wildland Conservation
 - City of Austin Watershed
 - US Fish and Wildlife Service
 - National Wildlife Federation
 - Austin Independent School District
 - Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center
 - Keep Austin Beautiful
 - Austin Parks Foundation
 - Pollinator Partnership
 - Monarch Watch
 - Monarch Gateway

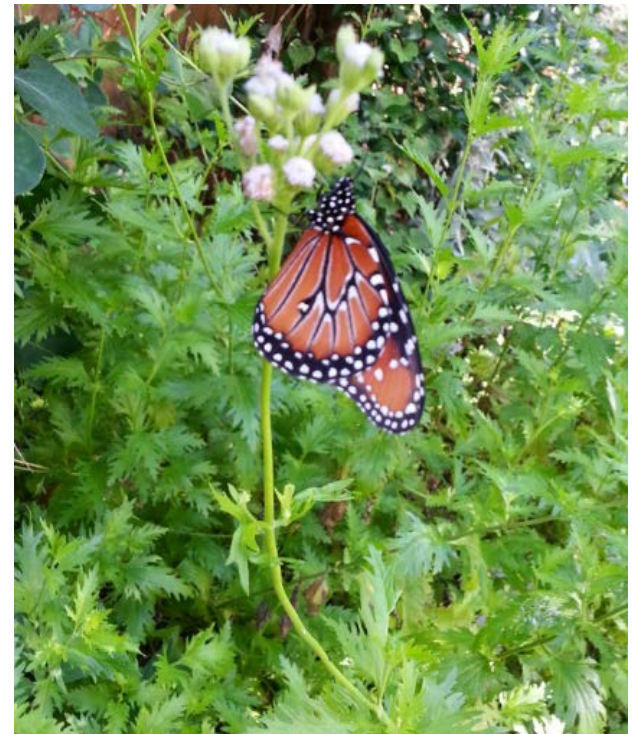


Photo: Matt Jackson