



The Monarch Journey

Creating Communities of Biodiversity

Monarch Awards Applicant Newsletter

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Journey Notes

When you add native plants, you begin to notice more life in the garden — bees on the flowers, holes from caterpillars feeding on leaves, birds searching for insects, and seeds or berries forming for later.

Some native plants, called **keystone** plants, support many species. In this issue, we look at how even one or two well-chosen plants can help your garden become part of a larger living landscape.

In the Garden

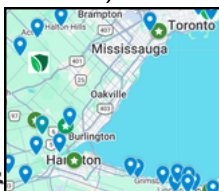
Not every bee in the garden is a honey bee. Honey bees are managed, non-native bees and are not the bees most at risk. Many native bees are small, solitary, and easy to miss. Some visit many kinds of flowers, while others depend on specific native plants for pollen. A garden with a variety of native flowers helps support a wider range of native bees. Find out more: [A Beginner's Field Guide to Identifying Bees.](#)

Resource to Explore

Did you know there are 12 milkweeds (*Asclepias* spp.) native to Ontario? Here are some that do well in gardens in our region:

- Poke Milkweed (*Asclepias exaltata*)
- Swamp Milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*)
- Purple Milkweed (*Asclepias purpurascens*)
- Common Milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*)
- Butterfly Milkweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*)
- Whorled Milkweed (*Asclepias verticillata*)

Check out the [Native Plant Nurseries in Ontario](#) - It includes a detailed list and map.



Eco-Gardening Tips

Native Plants and Keystone Plants:

An ecological garden does more than look beautiful. It provides food, shelter, and habitat for other living things. Native plants are especially important because many insects and birds depend on them.

Take a look at your garden and ask: Which plants are native to this region? Which ones are feeding pollinators? Are there any plants that also support caterpillars, birds, or other wildlife?

Try this: Choose one area of your garden and notice which plants attract the most activity. Watch for bees, butterflies, beetles, flies, caterpillars, and birds.

One Small Action: Add one native keystone plant that suits your garden conditions. If you have room for a tree, consider an oak, willow, birch, or native cherry. For smaller spaces, consider dogwood, hazelnuts, viburnums, native roses, goldenrod, aster, native sunflower (*Helianthus* spp.) milkweed, or native grasses.

Check Out this Resource: [Pollinator Partnership Canada](#) to find out which Native & Keystone Plants are in your region.

HELPFUL
TIPS



Without milkweed plants, Monarch butterflies cannot complete their lifecycle.