



Monarch on Meadow Blazing Star


My Native Garden

A HOME GARDENER FINDS JOY IN PLANTING A NATIVE GARDEN AND WATCHING THE LIFE IT BRINGS

CITIZEN'S FOR CONSERVATION has a native plant sale every spring, and last spring we indulged. We have a small area in front of our house that has primarily been barren except for a couple of bushes. At the CFC Native Plant Sale, we purchased a variety of milkweeds, blazing stars, coneflowers, bergamot, Western sunflowers, cardinal flowers, grasses, and additional plants based on our soil type and what they attract, as well as a red bud tree and oak leaf hydrangea. The plants were no larger than just a

few inches and came in a plug form, so they were super easy to plant. I opted for native plants because they require little maintenance and offer so many benefits for living creatures.

I had no idea how much those little creatures love, love, love their native plants. Within one month of planting we started to see garter snakes, salamanders, and gray tree frogs throughout the garden. Soon, tiny monarch caterpillars appeared, followed by monarch butterflies along with bees, katydids, dragonflies, hummingbirds, and more.

Every morning we went out to the gardener with a cup of coffee to see what we could find—like a scavenger hunt. We were in complete awe of how many different species of life were drawn to the native garden, and it was so gratifying, especially with the surprisingly large number of monarch caterpillars and butterflies. I had no idea our little garden could support so much life while providing a fun and colorful landscape. It just goes to show, a small effort can make a big difference, and native plants host a plethora of life. 

Jessica Underwood grew up in Barrington Hills and lives on a farm raising goats, training horses, and enjoying the natural surroundings of the environment. She recommends native plant gardens for your home or business. To learn more about planting native gardens, visit page 142.



Cope's Gray Tree Frog on Red Bud



Two Monarchs on Meadow Blazing Star



Western Sunflower and Cardinal Flower



Monarch Caterpillar on Milkweed



Gray Tree Frog



Monarch on Brown-eyed Susan



Katydid on Sunflower



Showy Goldenrod



Green Tree Frogs on Boneset

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Monarch with Cardinal Flower



Katydid on Red Bud



Monarch Butterfly on Meadow Blazing Star



Monarch Caterpillar on Milkweed



Gray Tree Frog

CFC Spring Native Plant Sale in May

Each spring, CFC's annual Native Plant, Shrub, and Tree Sale attracts customers from as far away as Wisconsin. CFC offers homeowners more than 18,000 native plants—and 225 native species—including thousands of milkweed plants, part of CFC's "Milkweed for Monarchs" campaign. Gardeners value the sale both for the abundant supply of hard-to-find native plants and for the information on planting and care shared by CFC volunteers. The sale has been so successful that CFC now offers a native tree and shrub sale in the fall, as well.

The 2018 Spring Plant Sale dates are May 4, 5, and 6. Pre-ordering opens on March 1, and closes April 10. May 4, from 11 a.m. – 6 p.m., is the pre-order pick up day. It is open to all members and those who have pre-ordered. The public sale is on May 5 and 6, from 9 a.m.-3 p.m.



CFC NEEDS VOLUNTEERS

CFC's ability to set up this huge event is contingent on volunteers. CFC needs volunteers to set up tables, unload plant delivery trucks, and arrange plants on tables in the week before the plant sale. At the plant sale, CFC needs people who are knowledgeable about native plants to give advice to shoppers and to help load vehicles. After the sale, help is needed to take down everything and put it away. Contact CFC to offer your services at the next plant sale. Visit www.citizensforconservation.org.