Milkweed for Monarchs

HB685 (Rep. Moeller) (Sen. Bush)

The Monarch butterfly is in trouble.

Over the last 20 years Monarchs have seen a precipitous 80 to 90 percent decline in population due to threats, including climate change, pesticide use and habitat loss. They are now in the process of being considered for protection under the Endangered Species Act.

Monarchs cannot survive without milkweed native to Illinois. With over 80% of people living in urban areas there is an unprecedented opportunity for home owners and urban land managers to help conservation efforts for Monarchs by planting milkweed in butterfly gardens.

Unfortunately, many municipalities across Illinois list milkweed as a noxious weed, meaning citizens are not allowed to plant it in their gardens. Planting milkweed is a great way to help other pollinators, too, as milkweed provides nectar resources for a diverse suite of bees and butterflies. HB685 will remove native milkweed from municipal noxious weed lists.

SUPPORT

HB685
to remove native milkweed from noxious weed lists

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• Adult Monarchs hibernate over winter in central Mexico.
• In spring travel thousands of miles over several generations from Mexico, across the United States, to Canada.
• Illinois is critical--located directly in path of Midwestern migration.
• Each generation lays eggs on milkweed plants along the way. Milkweed is the ONLY plant Monarch larvae can eat.
• Eggs hatch into a larva or caterpillar.
• Caterpillars feed on the milkweed plant for about two weeks; then forms a chrysalis.
• Adult butterfly emerges in 10 days to 2 weeks; cycle starts over again for 4 more generations.
• Fourth generation makes journey from the central United States to wintering grounds in Mexico and back again the following spring.

Unless we act now to help the Monarch, this amazing animal could disappear in our lifetime.