

## Mayors' Monarch Pledge

One way you can help monarchs is to bring attention to the National Wildlife Federation's Mayors' Monarch Pledge. Through the pledge, city mayors across the country will encourage sustainable practices to their city workers, promote native vegetation for public gardens, and change or remove detrimental ordinances.

In December of 2020, the Monarch Butterfly was evaluated under the Endangered Species Act for potential listing and deemed "warranted but precluded" by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This means that there is enough evidence to list the butterfly under the Endangered Species Act, but there are too many other species in even worse shape that must take priority. Every year the federal status will be reviewed until the monarch is either listed or no longer a candidate. There are about 161 species with a higher ranking than monarchs, which puts them about 2/3rd of the way down the list. They are still considered a "Tier 1 imperiled" at-risk species in Nebraska. This means that the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission and our partners will continue to monitor and manage the species the same as before, with no large changes to our conservation efforts in the state of Nebraska.

The instructions for the Mayors' Monarch Pledge are straightforward and can be completed at [www.nwf.org/MayorsMonarchPledge](http://www.nwf.org/MayorsMonarchPledge). The following are the steps needed to complete the pledge. Some parts can be completed before contacting your mayor, and mayors might be more likely to participate if the process is already started. For a letter to help make contact with your mayor, follow this link. <https://www.nwf.org/MayorsMonarchPledge/Resources/Citizen-Action>

Firstly, you need the contact information for the mayor and the point person for the city. Then you need a quick pledge summary that can look something like this:

*ExampleTown is a city in Central Nebraska with a population of roughly 10,000. The city is along the Made-up River on the edge of the Sandhills. Mayor Smith of ExampleTown, NE has committed to saving the monarch butterfly and other pollinators with their signing of the Mayors' Monarch Pledge and looks forward to engage residents in building more pollinator habitat throughout the city.*

Lastly, you pick at least three Action Items from the list of 30 options. Here are five favorites, but they are all good.

1. Convert abandoned lots to monarch habitat.
2. Engage with community garden groups and urge them to plant native milkweeds and nectar producing plants.
3. Change weed or mowing ordinances to allow for native prairie and plant habitats.
4. Initiate or support community science or citizen science efforts that help monitor monarch migration and health.
5. Direct city property managers to consider the use of native milkweed and nectar plants at city properties, where appropriate.

The pledge is open from December 1<sup>st</sup> through March 31<sup>st</sup> each year.

If you have any questions or would like more assistance, please contact Cody Dreier, Pollinator Ecologist at Nebraska Game and Parks, [cody.dreier@nebraska.gov](mailto:cody.dreier@nebraska.gov), or 402-471-1755. You can also contact the program directly at [mayorsmonarchpledge@nwf.org](mailto:mayorsmonarchpledge@nwf.org).