Champaign County Pollinator Coalition

July 7, 2016

1:30-3:00 p.m.

Parkland College

Introductions

Attending today’s meeting:

Facilitator: Carol Hays – Prairie Rivers Network/ Illinois affiliate National Wildlife Federation – focused on Monarch preservation planning; working with IDNR on statewide Monarch summit and plan

Mike Daab – Champaign County Forest Preserve – has habitat and milkweed seed, builds awareness through outreach

Nick Frillman – U of I undergrad student; Upper Sangamon River Conservancy volunteer

Kirby Pringle – Roadsides for Wildlife – developed a documentary on Monarchs

Leslie Mitchell – City of Champaign Public Works

Jonathan Manuel – Champaign County Soil and Water Conservation District – CRP and CP42 Pollinator programs for rural areas and farmland

Bruce Stickers – Pheasants Forever Conservationist habitat director – has pollinator mix and equipment; works with landowners to plant pollinator habitat

Robin Hall – U of I Office of Recreation and Parks Resources

Jared Schuneman – U of I Office of Recreation and Parks Resources

Trent Hopper – U of I Extension – Pollinator Pockets

Heidi Leaseler – Parkland Faculty biology classes – Sustainability program

Olivia Webb – U of I – IL Climate Action Plan

Anna Barnes – Lierman Community Gardens, Urbana

Andy Robinson – CDAC – Research Park no mow areas

Thor Petersen – Parkland Sustainability Center – native plantings on 40+ acres

Cindy Shepherd – Faith in Place – Story Gardens at various faith communities

Caitlin Lill – Urbana Park District and Audubon Society

Savannah Donovan – Urbana Park District – Public outreach for native planting

Derek Liebert – Urbana Park District – facilities plantings in native plants

Bob Szafoni – Grand Prairie Friends – land trust; own 700+ acres of prairie and steward/manage 500+ acres of prairie and woodlands; hold an annual spring native plant sale in Urbana

Randy Hauser – Champaign Park District – Pocket flower gardens; balancing annuals with native perennials; assessing which pollinators visit plants to determine which are most beneficial

Joel Spencer – Urbana Free Library Teen Open Lab- serves 20-30 teens; raise awareness with teens; information hub; library owns empty lot next door developing into small pollinator habitat; has auditorium for meetings

Katie Hollenback – University of Illinois Water Resource Institute – raises, releases, studies Monarchs; outreach and education workshops to youth and adults; has developed a planting for pollinators video

Needs and Concerns

Plant Material

Need common milkweed in planting mix

Need more pollinator/milkweed seed mix—ran out this year due to demand

Preserving local genotypes of milkweed

Rights of way planting opportunities – roads and railroads, trails, powerline (Ameren) rights of way

Timing of mowing programs

Lack of milkweeds that work in home gardens

Pollinator plants not treated with neo-nics

Education of land management/mowing staff on how to ID plants

Invasive removal (how to by hand not by mowing)

Need to change attitudes about mowing more generally – a clean mowed area is not what is desired

Need to reach absentee landowners of ag lands

Need late nectaring plants for returning Monarchs

Need diversity of plants, not just milkweed

Where we plant

Need pathways and corridors planted in habitat

Need sizeable planting areas—consider schools, nursing homes, hospitals, churches, parks

Local businesses – Clear View? Plastipak has a pollinator garden that is a good demonstration

Mapping of areas for planting

Interstate corridors – talk with Stephanie at IDOT about program

Contracts – educate contractors; Champaign is developing a test for bidders

Need a weeding/maintenance strategy and mulch guidelines

Who plants and how is it maintained

We need a coordinated message about this

Assure program rules and info (e.g. CRP mowing guidelines) align with needs of pollinators

Increase available CRP acreage in Farm Bill funding

Educate large landowners about plant maintenance and manage expectations before planting

Develop supportive resources – website/brochure

Who else should we invite to the collaborative?

Farm managers

IDOT - need to determine who is talking to them so that we are coordinating our message

IL Natural History Survey

Local nurseries: Prairie Gardens, Illinois FS, Country Arbors

Corridors and Rights of Way group (through Pheasants Forever)

U of I – Morgan Johnson, Brent (landscape architect), Bryan (mowing and maintenance)

Decisions:

Focus of the group will be pollinators but our public messaging will focus on Monarchs since that is what the public is interested in and concerned about; preserving Monarch habitat helps all pollinators

We will strive to coordinate our public messaging so that it isn’t contradictory, which undermines our public credibility.

We will encourage development of a local pollinator garden map.

We will encourage pollinator garden signage to identify gardens. We will encourage plant labeling that is clear. We will promote pollinator gardens so that the public can see them. We will educate about pollinator garden maintenance so that pollinator gardens are viewed as desirable in the landscape.

Our communication will be primarily through social media (Facebook Group and public page); face to face meetings will be quarterly or as needed. We will post documents, meeting summaries and a photo of the group to Facebook following meetings. We will develop a shared Google calendar and promote each other’s pollinator focused events. We will support grant development to bring more resources into the county to address pollinator needs.

In the first quarter we will focus on outreach to IDOT about their policies and planting/mowing program; Carol Hays will report back to the group what IDOT commits to statewide at the upcoming Monarch Summit in September

In the second quarter (fall) we will focus on outreach to nurseries to order plant material and support pollinator pocket program for homeowners and small landowners

Possible FAQ

Questions members receive most often:

Where do I get native (pollinator) seed?

Where/how do I plant native seeds/plants?

Is this a weed or a pollinator plant?

Is this plant dangerous/poisonous?

When will it bloom?

How come all I have is weeds (in the first year after planting/seeding)?

What do I do with my pollinator garden at the end of the season?

Why is the prairie on fire?

How to plant my pollinator garden so it looks like (Meadowbrook Park)?

When will I see the butterflies?