

What's going on in the field?

Milkweed seedlings were planted to counter declining populations of milkweed plants and monarch butterflies, both of which are suffering from habitat loss across the United States.

These two species have intertwined life cycles. The monarch butterfly lays eggs only on milkweed plants because that is the only food that the caterpillars (larvae) eat. The larvae have adapted to survive on plants that are toxic to most animals, as well as to herbivores, pathogens, and parasites that would negatively affect the milkweed plant. In fact, by virtue of the larvae having ingested the toxins, adult monarchs are unpalatable and poisonous to their predators such as birds.

Milkweed plants benefit from butterflies (including monarchs) and bees that pollinate them when they visit the flowers to get nectar.

Did you know:

- Adult monarchs from Connecticut fly 3,000 miles to a very specific overwintering location in Mexico?
- The individuals who make the journey are from a generation that has never been there before?
- The tap root of a milkweed plant can grow to be 12 feet deep?
- The soft threadlike parachutes attached to milkweed seeds are used by humans as an insulating material and also in flotation devices due to its water-repellent properties?
- Depending on the species, milkweed flowers can be different shades of white, yellow, green, purple, pink, orange, or red.

PLEASE STAY ON THE TRAILS AND DO NOT ENTER THE FIELD.



Special thanks to the Lyme-Old Lyme High School Environmental Club for planting the seedlings!

To support the Old Lyme Land Trust or volunteer, contact us at OLLandTrust@gmail.com or visit our website.

For more information about local efforts to support pollinators, contact PollinateOldLyme@gmail.com.