

RIGHTS-OF-WAY AS HABITAT WORKING GROUP

CHICAGO • OCTOBER 26, 2017



OHIO DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION

OHIO DOT CASE STUDY

BUILDING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND POSITIVE PR

Joel Hunt
Program Administrator
ODOT Highway Beautification and Pollinator Habitat Program

COMMUNICATIONS-BASED PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

- Relationship Building
- Thoughtful Messaging
- Know Your Audience
- Brand It, Sell It
- Utilize Media
- Know Your Limitations



OPHI - ALL YOU CAN WHERE YOU CAN

- Core Partners Include
 - ODOT, ODNR, ODA, USFWS, ODRC, Pheasants Forever, SWCD
- Provides Technical Assistance
 - Seed Mix
 - Site Location
 - Installation, Maintenance, Monitoring
- Conducts Research
- Assists with Outreach
- Gives ODOT's Program Credibility



BUILDING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND POSITIVE PR

ODOT Case Study:

- Brownfield to Blooms
- Pollinator Habitat Education Centers
- Public-Private Partnerships
- Milkweed Pod Collection
- Outreach Events
- Red Poppy Remembrance Garden

BROWNFIELD TO BLOOMS

The Columbus Dispatch

ODOT to convert former district HQ site in Newark into urban pollinator habitat

By Marc Kovac
The Columbus Dispatch

Posted at 9:31 AM

Updated at 9:31 AM

NEWARK — There's a vacant lot near downtown Newark with grass, a few trees and a fence with "No Trespassing, Property of the State of Ohio" signs.

It's not much to look at today, but in a few years, if all goes as planned, the parcel will blossom with primroses, coneflowers and a mix of other native wildflowers and vegetation.

The former Ohio Department of Transportation headquarters site has been selected by ODOT as its second urban pollinator habitat, with a goal of beautifying the area and drawing Monarch butterflies, rusty patched bumblebees and other wildlife.

"It's four acres in an urban area that we're just mowing — and we're mowing it quite frequently," said Joel Hunt, administrator of ODOT's Highway Beautification and Pollinator Habitat Program. "By converting it to a natural area, it will be blooming from early spring to late fall."

ODOT District 5 headquarters moved from the Newark property to Jacksontown about 30 years ago. Buildings were removed in the late 1990s, and there are currently no structures at the site, according to district spokeswoman Morgan Overbey.

Three years ago, ODOT started efforts to plant pollinator habitats along its 19,000 miles of roadway around the state, reducing its mowing costs, beautifying those areas and helping to increase populations of pollinators. Populations of monarchs and honeybees have been on the decline in recent years, which is problematic for the overall ecosystem and the state's agricultural industry in particular.

"Pollinators contribute to one in three bites of food that we eat," Hunt said. "It makes sense for us to do all we can" to protect and support them.



📷 BUY PHOTO

▲ HIDE CAPTION

A fence and "No Trespassing" signs mark the boundary of the former Ohio Department of Transportation headquarters site in Newark. The property is slated to become ODOT's second urban pollinator project, with wildflowers and native plants to replace regular grass. [Marc Kovac/Dispatch]

POLLINATOR HABITAT EDUCATION CENTERS



- Native Demonstration Gardens
- Interpretive Signage
- Seed Packets in Vending Machines
- All 6 New Ohio Welcome Centers by 2025



PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Public-Private Partnerships Allow ODOT to Convert More Acres

- Cost sharing
- Long-term maintenance
- Gives organizations ownership



OPHI ANNUAL MILKWEED POD COLLECTION



The Columbus Dispatch

Want to save monarch butterflies? Collect milkweed seeds

By Mary Mogan Edwards, The Columbus Dispatch

Posted Aug 29, 2016 at 12:01 AM

Updated Aug 29, 2016 at 9:54 AM

Monarch butterflies, those iconic spring-and-fall migrators we all learned about in elementary school but rarely see these days, are in more trouble than usual this year. But in the next two months, those concerned about the drastic decline in monarch numbers can do something about it: go out and find some of the only food their babies will eat.

Monarch butterflies, those iconic spring-and-fall migrators we all learned about in elementary school but rarely see these days, are in more trouble than usual this year. But in the next two months, those concerned about the drastic decline in monarch numbers can do something about it: go out and find some of the only food their babies will eat.

The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) has been planting some of its 19,000 acres of roadside since 2014 with native plants to sustain bees, butterflies and other pollinators. This year, the department is asking the public to help with the monarchs, by gathering seed pods of the common milkweed plant and taking them to the nearest county Soil and Water Conservation District office.

"We figure we can get more hands from volunteers," ODOT spokesman Matt Bruning said. Plus, he said, "When the public is involved in something, people tend to be more invested. We want to raise public awareness" of the critical need to boost pollinator populations.

The Franklin County Soil and Water Conservation District office is at 1404 Goodale Boulevard, Suite 100. A list of offices in other counties [can be found here](#).

During the monarch migration, three generations of young will be bred on the way from Mexico to Canada and back. The larvae need milkweed along the way to survive. ODOT's all-hands-on-deck strategy aims to collect as much milkweed seed as possible

THE BLADE

MONARCH BUTTERFLY

Public asked to pluck milkweed seed pods

ODOT calls for plant proliferation

8/24/2016

BLADE STAFF

The Ohio Department of Transportation is asking for the public's help with a new campaign to plant milkweed along state highways to support Ohio's monarch butterfly population.

Between Sept. 1 and Oct. 30, people can help the Ohio Pollinator Habitat Initiative by gathering milkweed seed pods from established plants and dropping them off at collection stations around the state.



Migrating monarch butterflies feed on milkweed.

The seeds are to be planted along ODOT's 19,000 miles of highway right-of-way statewide.

"Common milkweed is essential to the survival of monarch butterflies in Ohio," Marci Lininger, a biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, said in a prepared ODOT statement.

"Ohio is a priority area for monarchs. Fourth-generation monarch butterflies hatch in Ohio in late summer, migrate north to Canada, and then come back through Ohio once more in order to fly to Mexico for the winter," Ms. Lininger said. "This

same generation is also responsible for starting the life cycle all over again in the spring, laying the following year's first generation of monarchs."

"Planting milkweed and other native wildflowers on our roadsides benefit the pollinators who in turn benefit agriculture," ODOT Director Jerry Wray said. "They also beautify our highways and reduce mowing costs — a double bonus for Ohio taxpayers."

The Ohio Pollinator Habitat Initiative was formed in response to a 2014 petition to list the monarch butterfly as federally endangered.

It is an educational campaign to inform landowners, farmers, government agencies, and the general public of the importance of pollinators to human food supplies and the habitats they need to survive.

Milkweed seed pods ideally are picked when they are dry and gray or brown in color. If the center seam pops with gentle pressure, the pods are ready for picking.

Pods should be stored in paper bags or grocery sacks so they stay dry, then placed in a cool, dry area until they can be delivered to a collection station.



- All 88 Ohio counties participate
- Print, television, radio call-in show
- 20 million seeds collected
- Inmates process seed pods

OUTREACH EVENTS



Tabling



Presentations



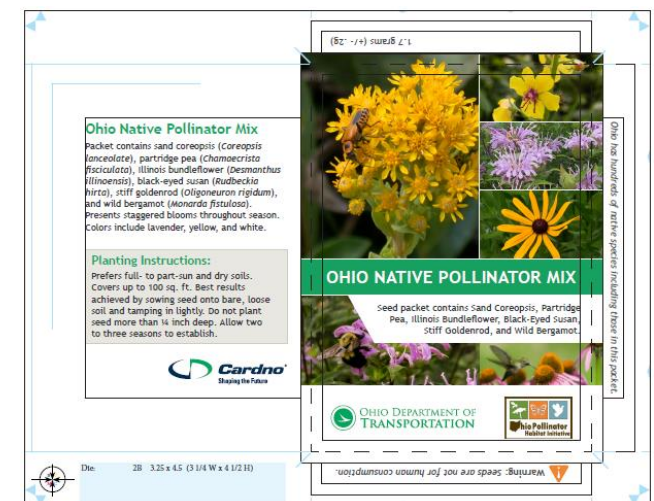
Cross-Promotion



Site Visits



Planting Days



Giveaways

WWI RED POPPY REMEMBRANCE GARDEN

- 2018 Marks 100 Year Anniversary of the End of WWI
- The Red Poppy is a National Symbol of Remembrance of the victors of WWI
- ODOT Will Install and Dedicate a Red Poppy Remembrance Garden on Memorial Day Weekend 2018
- Interpretive Signage, Seed Packets
- Controversy:
 - Opium Poppy
 - Non-Native Plants



QUESTIONS

