

PAUL TITTL

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 25TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Good morning Mr. Chairman,

First off thank you to the chair and committee members for hearing my bill which designates the monarch as the Wisconsin butterfly.

The monarch has been disappearing from our state over the past few decades and has seen a population decrease of 90 percent in past years. The decreasing population numbers are alarming because the complete removal of any species from the ecosystem has widespread implications for environmental challenges ahead. For example, monarchs serve as good pollinators for the environment and are known to fertilize many wildflowers. We can jeopardize our environment if we don't address this issue. Jack Voight, one of our former state treasurers brought this issue to my attention and will be expanding on the specific challenges monarchs are facing.

This bill is a first step to bring public awareness to the danger of losing the monarch butterfly for our ecosystem, and how we can inspire conservation solutions in the future to keep these productive workers in our ecosystem. Thank you for hearing my testimony.

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RACHAEL A. CABRAL-GUEVARA

STATE SENATOR • 19TH SENATE DISTRICT

Testimony before the Assembly Committee on Environment

Senator Rachael Cabral-Guevara

November 30, 2023

Hello, members of the Assembly Committee on Environment. Thank you for allowing me to provide testimony on Assembly Bill 446, a bill that would declare the Monarch as Wisconsin's state butterfly.

The Monarch has experienced a sharp 68 percent decline in population due to pesticide use and colony collapse. These butterflies are important pollinators and, frankly, an important part of nature's food cycle. By declaring Monarchs as the state butterfly, we can put ourselves on the right track to preserve this beautiful species.

Peak migration through Wisconsin is in early September. Our state is also a breeding ground for the eastern migratory population of Monarchs. In short, Wisconsin has had a long history with this species and the Monarch has earned its place as one of our state symbols.

I am hopeful you will support this important first step to preserve one of nature's gems: the Monarch butterfly.



Friends of Butterfly
Gardens Inc.

A 501c3 Nonprofit Organization

WWW.FriendsOfButterflyGardens.com

November 30, 2023

Re: AB Bill 446 Recognizing the Monarch as the State Butterfly

**Board of
Directors**

Dear State Representatives & Senators,

Jack Voight
President

The iconic Monarch butterflies are becoming an endangered species. We encourage your support of the above Monarch butterfly bill. This bill will increase public awareness of the Monarch.

**Dr. Rich
Merkhofer**
*Vice
President*

The Monarch butterfly is recognized in seven other states as their state butterfly/insect, including neighboring states of Illinois and Minnesota.

**Corinne
Roe, CPA**
Treasurer

Marty Voight
Secretary

Recently, the Wisconsin Conservation Congress board of directors unanimously supported my citizen resolution to designate the Monarch butterfly as Wisconsin's state butterfly.

Your support would be appreciated!

Yours truly,

**Jack Voight, President of Friends of Butterfly Gardens Inc.
Wisconsin State Treasurer, 1995-2007
Retired Master Gardener of Wisconsin**

The Monarch as Wisconsin's State Butterfly

F A C T S H E E T

The States of Alabama, Idaho, Illinois, Minnesota, Texas, Vermont and West Virginia have already designated the Monarch as their state's butterfly. This designation creates enhanced public awareness of the plight and benefits of the Monarch butterfly.

PLIGHT:

- The Monarch butterfly is endangered. Their numbers have declined more than 90% since the 1990's.
- Due to increased pesticides and herbicides, there are fewer milkweed plants, the only plant where Monarchs lay their eggs.
- Insufficient numbers of Monarchs currently migrate to Mexico and return to the U.S. each year, thus a steady decrease in numbers of Monarchs each year.

BENEFITS:

- Butterflies and other pollinators help produce 30% of our food.
- Ironically, the butterfly is studied by students (life cycle, migration).
- Tourist attractions at nature centers and business developments.

SUPPORT:

- To increase the Monarch population, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service is planting one billion milkweed plants from Minnesota to Texas.

- **The Prime Minister of Canada and the Presidents of the United States and Mexico have pledged to conserve the Monarch population.**
- **Endorsements [since 2014] of this legislation from:**

Dr. David Hogg, Chair, UW-Madison Dept. of Entomology; Dr. Douglas Buege, President, Southern Wisconsin Butterfly Association; Dr. Chip Taylor, University of Kansas & President, Monarch Watch; Lucas Olson, Biologist, Natural Heritage Conservation Bureau, Wisconsin DNR; Jack & Marty Voight, owners, Butterfly Gardens of Wisconsin; Jim Anderson, retired naturalist, Mosquito Hill Center, New London, WI; 2015 Wisconsin Conservation Congress; **2022/23 Scenic Wisconsin; 2023 Wisconsin Conservation Congress** (with special thanks and appreciation for the support of former DNR Secretary George Meyer)

Supporting this initiative:

**Scenic Wisconsin
Board of Directors**

**Butterfly Gardens of Wisconsin
Jack, Marty and Emily Voight**

All Endorsers Listed

Wisconsin Conservation Congress

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

September 6, 2023

ORDER OF BUSINESS M I. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS A. CALL TO ORDER
MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY Chairman: MarySusan Diedrich [Time] 6:30 P.M.
Via Zoom B. ROLL CALL **ATTENDEES** Mike Ellsworth-Harold Drake-Kevin
Schanning-Michael Hamm-George Meyer- Brad Wagner-Danielle Johnson-Duke
Tucker-Tim Grunewald-Chuck Boley-Steve Bechtka-Butch Roberts-Peter Hellios-
Todd Cook-Tashina Peplinski-Michael Murphy- Gary Roehrig-Matt Wehn
W.D.N.R.- Maggie Hutter W.D.N.R. EXCUSED Lowell Suring-Robert Benson
UNEXCUSED **GUESTS** Merri Ann Gonzalas-Linda Hendrix-Amy Mueller-Deb Martin
-Barb Voightman-**Jack Voight**- Steve Benning C

RESOLUTION 450123 MONARCH BUTTERFLY

COMMITTEE CHAIR DISCUSSION The resolution was read by the committee chair. The author was present and spoke on behalf of the resolution. He related that he wrote a resolution 9 years ago which passed state wide with 90% support. Unfortunately, the legislature never acted on it. Currently he is working with the legislature and a bill has been drafted. (LRB3814) Comments: MarySusan stated the currently 7 states have the Monarch as their state butterfly. Wisconsin is one of nine states without. Steve Bechtka recommended moving the Resolution forward as a means of protecting the Monarch.

ACTION Motion was made by George Meyer to forward the resolution. Motion 2nd by Danielle Johnson. Motion Passed on a voice vote Committee chair will notify resolution author.



Friends of Butterfly Gardens Inc.

Our mission is to ensure the iconic monarch butterfly does not become extinct. We seek your support of our four major programs:

- The Butterfly Gardens Admission Membership Program
- The Habitat for Monarchs Program
- The Monarch Raising Program
- The Legacy Partner Program

We believe each program enables the monarch butterfly to succeed and survive. Program details are presented in this flyer and on our website.

We hope you will experience the joy, excitement, awe, mystery and wonder of native butterflies, animals and plants.

Jack & Marty Voight, Co-founders of Butterfly Gardens of Wisconsin Inc.

Contact us for more information

www.FriendsOfButterflyGardens.com

920-733-2929



Programs

of the Friends of Butterfly Gardens Inc.

More program details and fees are posted on our website.



Admission Membership Program:

An annual admission fee for a family or an individual is available. Visits are unlimited.



Habitat for Monarchs Program:

A "Habitat for Monarchs" yard sign displays your support of milkweed habitat for monarchs at home, business or elsewhere. Milkweed seeds & a certificate are included.



Monarch Raising Program:

A raising kit creates an opportunity to experience the monarch life cycle at home or in the classroom. The kit includes a cage, plants, caterpillars and instructions.



Legacy Partner Program:

A major donor campaign has begun to establish a \$1 million endowment fund at the Community Foundation for future funding of the Butterfly Gardens operations.

Butterfly Host Plants

Butterflies have their preferred host plants to lay their eggs on. We recommend native nectar and host plants for your butterfly garden.

Monarch: Common Milkweed, Red/Swamp Milkweed, Butterfly Weed, Poke Milkweed

Mourning Cloak: Birch, Poplar, Willow

Painted Lady: Hollyhock, Sunflower, Thistle

Cabbage White: Cabbage, Nasturtium

Tiger Swallowtail: Willow, Cherry

Red Admiral: False or Burning Nettle

Wood Nymph: Grasses-Bluestem, Wild Oats

Spangled Fritillary: Wild Violets

Yellow Clouded Sulphur: Alfalfa, Clovers

Viceroy: Willow, Aspen, Cottonwood

Question Mark: Elm, Nettle

Eastern Comma: Elm, Nettle

Black Swallowtail: Dill, Parsley, Golden Alexander

Silver-Spotted Skipper: Honey Locust, Wisteria

Buckeye: Snapdragon, Plantains

N2550 State Highway 47, Appleton, WI

Take Exit 142 from US 41 & Go North 2 Miles



FriendsOfButterflyGardens.com



Friends of Butterfly Gardens Inc.

A 501c3 Nonprofit Organization

WISCONSIN'S
LARGEST
BUTTERFLY
HOUSE & MAZE



FriendsOfButterflyGardens.com



Friends of Butterfly
Gardens Inc.

A 501c3 Nonprofit Organization

Since 2013, thousands of visitors have enjoyed our native insects, animals, and plants as well as our other amenities. Butterflies, bees, frogs and turtles will greet you. Our outdoor butterfly house, gift store, waterfall, pavilions, mazes and trails will enhance your garden visit.



**Main
Event
Center**

**Waterfall,
Pond &
Pavilion**



**Gift Shop,
Butterfly House
& Plant Nursery**

**Pavilion &
Picnic Area**



**Butterfly Maze
& 1/2 Mile
Keystone
Plant Trail**

NATIVE BUTTERFLIES



Monarch



Mourning Cloak



Painted Lady



Cabbage White



Tiger Swallowtail



Red Admiral



Wood Nymph



Spangled Fritillary



Yellow Clouded Sulphur



Viceroy



Question Mark



Eastern Comma



Black Swallowtail



Hummingbird Moth



Silver Spotted Skipper



Buckeye

NECTAR PLANTS



**Golden Alexander
May-July**



**Red Bee Balm
June-August**



**Mountain Mint
July-Sept**



**Purple Coneflower
July-Sept**



**Bergamot
July-Sept**



**Black Eyed Susan
August-Sept**



**Joe Pye Weed
August-Sept**



**Meadow Blazingstar
August-Sept**



**Stiff Goldenrod
August-Sept**



**New England Aster
August-October**

Butterfly Gardens owner looks to stimulate action on monarchs

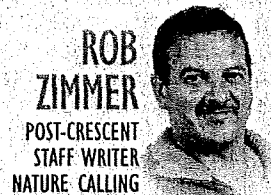
Jack Voight, owner of the Butterfly Gardens of Wisconsin, located just outside of Appleton, is passionate about butterflies and butterfly habitat.

To help gain awareness for the increasing threats to the monarch butterfly, Voight plans to introduce resolutions at next week's annual Conservation Congress hearing in Kaukauna to help ensure the monarch gets the recognition it deserves from the state legislature and the public.

Disappearing monarch populations are a concern, and with so many factors working against them, such as widespread pesticide use, land-use changes, weather conditions and habitat loss in Mexico on their wintering grounds as well as here in the United States where they breed, there is fear that monarch populations may never recover.

Overwintering colonies in the mountains of central Mexico were at their lowest numbers in recorded history this past winter, leading many to wonder just how many of these large, black and orange butterflies will make it back this summer.

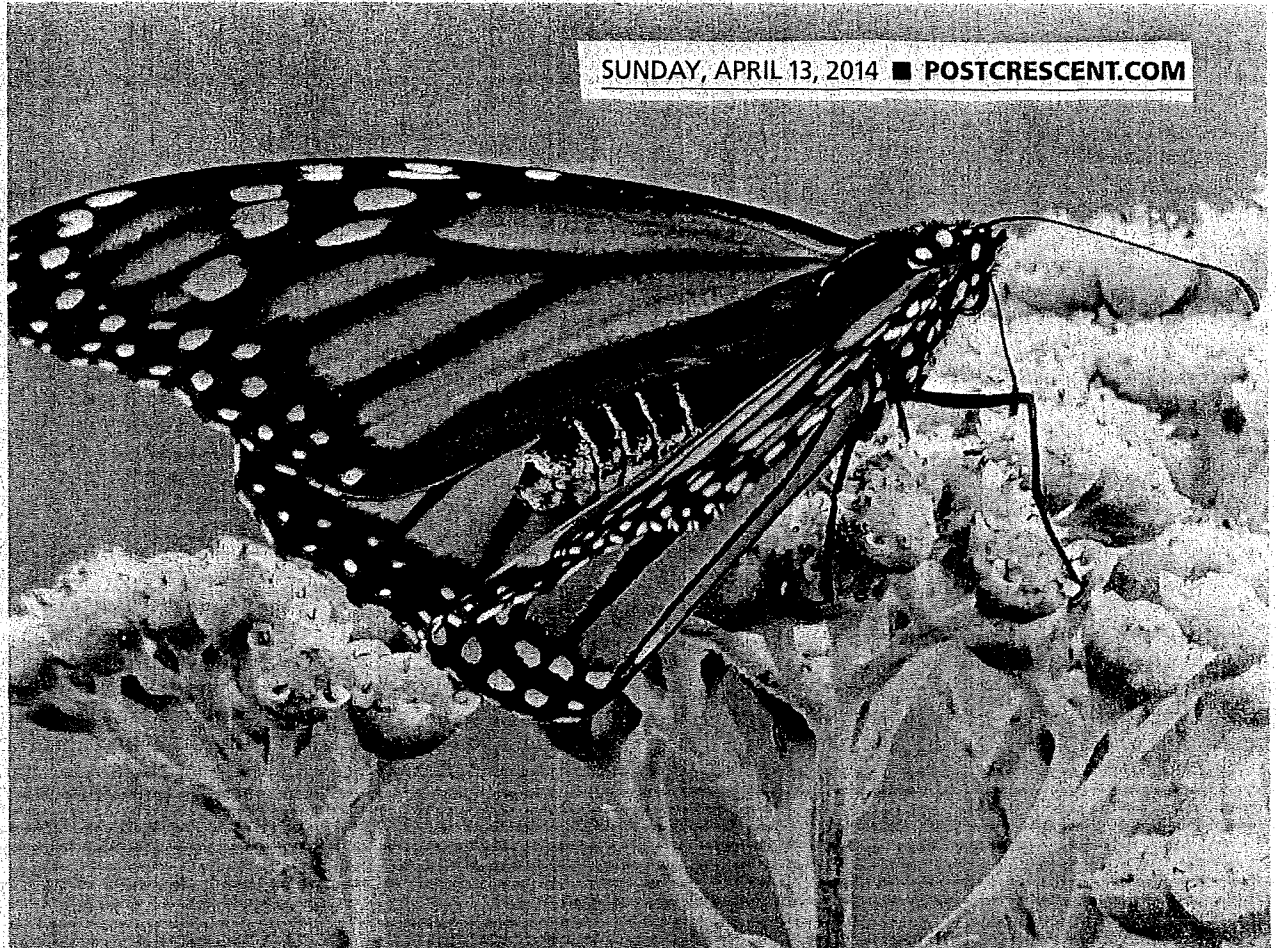
"Estimates indicate that approximately 30 percent of those monarchs annually migrating to Mexico are from Wisconsin, and the total number of monarchs in Mex-



ico has declined by 90 percent from record high numbers in the 1990s," Voight said.

Voight plans to ask the Conservation Congress to recommend that the organization work closely with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Wisconsin Department of Transportation and others to initiate and implement action to institute a public awareness campaign aimed at restoring more milkweed vegetation in Wisconsin.

Additionally, and perhaps more symbolic, Voight will introduce a resolution to call for the state to designate the monarch as Wisconsin's



Jack Voight, owner of the Butterfly Gardens of Wisconsin, plans to introduce resolutions to help raise awareness of the plight of the monarch in Wisconsin at Monday's annual Wisconsin Conservation Congress spring hearings. One of Voight's proposals is making the monarch the state butterfly. ROB ZIMMER/POST-CRESCENT MEDIA

state butterfly.

"Twenty-seven other states already have a state butterfly," Voight said. "This includes the states of Minnesota and Illinois, which have designated the monarch as their state butterfly."

Furthermore, Voight

seeks to help create a Monarch Corridor across the state, raising awareness of the peak monarch migration routes through Wisconsin.

The annual Conservation Congress hearings will be held in every county at 7 p.m. Monday.

There are a number of key issues being recommended for action this year, including a proposed tundra swan hunt. If you are passionate on this, or any other topic on the agenda, be sure to get out and attend the meeting in your county.

The complete agenda and locations for each county can be found online: <http://dnr.wi.gov/about/wcc/springhearing.html>.

— Rob Zimmer: 920-419-3734, yardmd@postcrescent.com; Twitter @YardMD

Remarks on SB 443 and AB446

Steve Arnold, Ph.D., and former Mayor of Fitchburg, November 30, 2023

For identification, I earned my doctorate in the Cornell University Entomology Department, where I studied insect population dynamics. I also served as the Common Council representative to Fitchburg's Resource Conservation Commission for eight years. I am here representing only myself.

As a former local elected official, I know the importance of seemingly "symbolic" actions like designating a state butterfly. Elementary school teachers will teach units on the Monarch. Businesses will establish butterfly and milkweed gardens. Homeowners will participate in No Mow May. Passing this bill will set in motion a host of actions to protect the Monarch and make our ecosystems healthier.

I grow milkweed in my own rain garden. Milkweed is the only food of the Monarch caterpillar. By the end of the growing season, caterpillars have nearly defoliated the milkweed. This reminds us of the important ecological services that pollinators like the Monarch butterfly provide to allow our crops and natural ecosystems to thrive, and how apparent "waste" land like highway medians and fence rows provide food and habitat for the Monarch and other pollinators.

I am glad to see that the Senator's Bill 443 has such broad, bipartisan support. My own Rep. Jimmy Anderson has signed on as a cosponsor. Thank you, Rep. Oldenburg, for allowing me to share my thoughts. My daughter and her family live on the Asbury Ridge in your district and appreciate your service.