SAN DIEGO POLLINATOR ALLIANCE

Summer 2022

Photo Credit: Kathy Keatley Garvey

- *Happy Pollinator Week!*
- *San Diego Native Milkweed Project*

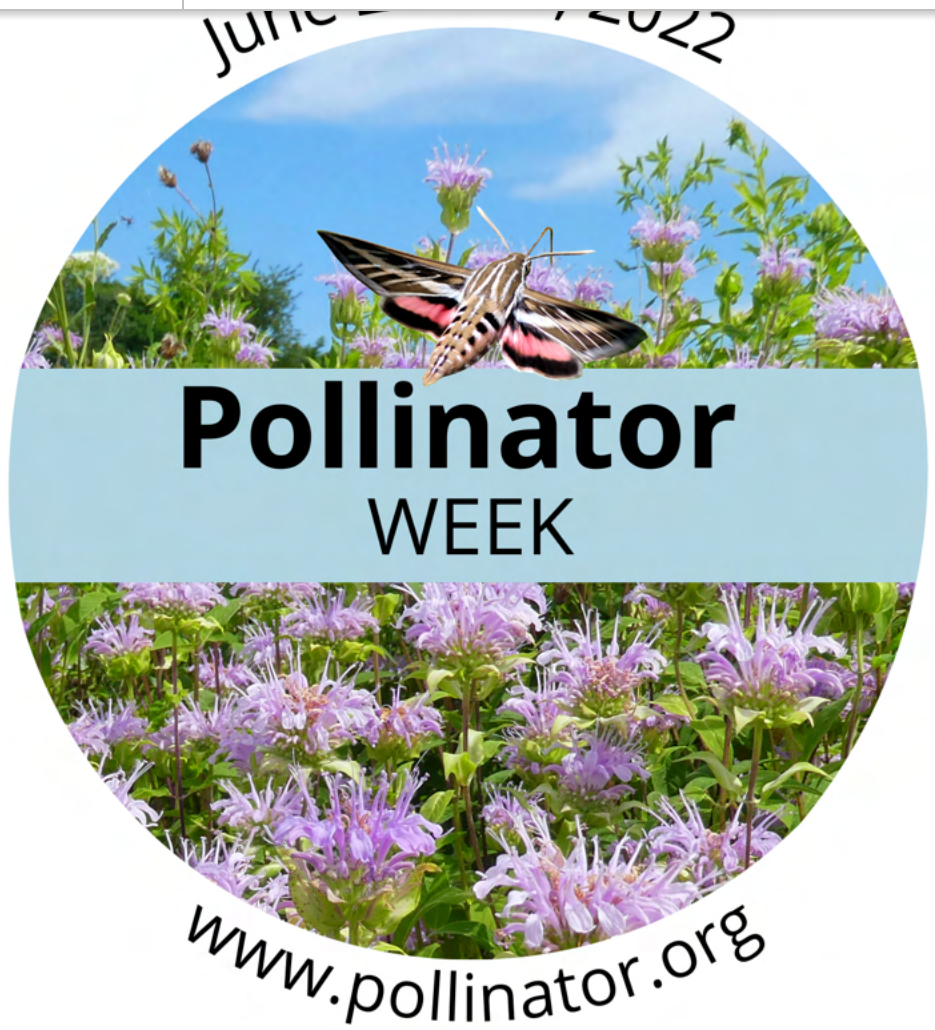
- Pollinator Resources

Happy Pollinator Week!

Our friends at Pollinator Partnership have declared June 20th - June 26th *Pollinator Week*, and we are here to celebrate! 1 in 3 bites of food exists because of pollinators, and it is our goal at the San Diego Pollinator Alliance to support their well-being and secure their future.

Our current programming focuses on pollinator education through workshops and demonstration sites, as well as supporting monarchs through the promotion of using native milkweed in backyards and restoration sites. Additionally, we are also working closely with farmers and ranchers to assess their working lands and support them with the implementation of native pollinator habitat in their fields and ranches. There are several wonderful co-benefits of carbon farming practices, like no/low till and cover cropping, that also support pollinators so producers are able to both build soil health and habitat at the same time.

Our network is also growing! In Winter 2021, we were asked to convene a regional working group as a means to connect the various efforts of organizations and individuals who support pollinator health and the creation of native habitat. We call ourselves the SoCal Pollinator Network, and we meet every other month to learn from our friends in San Diego, Orange and Los Angeles counties about what projects they are working on. It has provided many great opportunities for collaboration, support and expansion. If you are interested in being part of this network, feel free to reach out to us and you will be invited to the next meeting.



Share the News with the Pollinator Week Toolkit
Throughout the week as you share your love for pollinators via social media, be sure to use the tag #pollinatorweek! You can also *check out this extensive guide* that provide many ways to get involved and promote awareness this week, and beyond.

San Diego Native Milkweed Project

We are now in year 3 of the San Diego Native Milkweed Project, which is our effort to propagate milkweed native to our area and make it available for purchase at local nurseries. Local native milkweed is not widely commercially available now, and anything labeled "native" is grown in a different part of California. We think that seed from the local area will thrive better and be more appropriate for habitat restoration, so we set out in partnership with US Dept. of Fish & Wildlife, Earth Discovery Institute and others to collect seed from wild sources and farm them in our San Diego soil.

California to invest in our local seed. Come Spring of next year, our goal is to have more regionally appropriate native milkweeds for purchase to the public and for restoration projects. If you are a grower, or know one, interested in native milkweed, please let us know!

If you are a backyard enthusiast looking to plant some monarch habitat, we are happy to offer a free packet of seeds. If you are working on a larger scale restoration project, we are happy to discuss larger quantities of seed. Contact us at *pollinators@rcdsandiego.org* to get started!

Education & Events

Pollinator Power Party
Monday, June 20th - Friday, June 24th | Online
Join the Pollinator Partnership for a week long celebration including speakers, interactive sessions and more. *Register for the fun here!*

Mt. Helix Family Nature Day
Saturday, June 25th | 9:00am - 3:00pm | Mt Helix Park, La Mesa
There will be several opportunities for kids and adults alike to learn about pollinators

hosting "Breakfast with the Birds" at 9:00am. Admission and parking are free. Park at the lower lots at the corner of Vivera and Mt. Helix Dr.

Monarch Joint Venture's Complete Monarch Essentials Course
6 Weeks Online from June 29th - August 3rd

Learn in-depth about monarchs in this course! The price is $200 and classes meet Wednesdays from 4:30pm - 6:00pm PST. *See here for more info and to register.*

Spring Events at the Water Conservation Garden

Saturdays in June | 9:30am - 11:30am
Butterfly Experiences
Release your very own butterfly to nectar on nearby flowers at the beautiful Dorcas Utter Butterfly Pavilion and Native Habitat Garden. *See here for more info!*

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invertebrate insects under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA). *Read more about the decision here.*

CA Dept of Fish & Wildlife Lists Tropical Milkweed as a Class B Noxious Weed
This decision is due to *tropical milkweed's role* in hosting a protozoan parasite of monarch butterflies (*Danaus plexippus*) called *Ophryocystis elektroscirrha (OE)* that decreases their viability and rates of migratory success, adding another factor to the decline of their species. This distinction means that counties now have the option to ban the growth and sales of tropical milkweed - which is exactly what *Ventura County* did! As of June 1st, tropical milkweed is no longer allowed to be grown or sold at nurseries in their county. One small step for their county, one giant leap for monarchs!

To learn more about the CDFA ruling, *see here*.

Pollinator Resources

- If you or someone you know is interested in planting a pollinator garden, our *Pollinator Toolkit* is a great resource to share!
- *Here is a list of nurseries* to visit from the California Native Plant Society.

May your Summer be full of sunshine and sweet nectar!

Photo Credit: Jerel Reeves

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