

Title of Talk: Monarchs and Milkweeds: Creating Habitat to Attract Monarch Butterflies and Other Pollinators

Brief Biography for Tom Landis:

Tom is a forester who retired after 30 years of working as a nursery specialist for the US Forest Service, and has spent the last 15 years creating pollinator habitat in southern Oregon. He is a co-founder of the Southern Oregon Monarch Advocates, and on the Board of Directors for the Western Monarch Advocates.



Habitat for pollinators means native milkweeds, the only host plant for monarch butterflies, and nectar plants which monarchs and other pollinators use for food. Using his nursery experience, Tom has been growing our 2 native milkweeds as well as an increasing number of nectar plants. Due to a continuing interest in monarch restoration, Tom has given around 120 monarchs and milkweeds workshops in the Northwestern US but as far away as a Society of Ecological Restoration meeting in Manchester, England.

To encourage the use of local native milkweeds and other pollinator plants, Tom helped write a booklet Native Pollinator Plants for Southern Oregon. He also co-authored an article which was published in the Spring 2018 issue of the Native Plants Journal entitled “Using native plants to create pollinator habitat in southwest Oregon: lessons learned”.

Content of Talk:

My talk will begin by discussing the current status of the western monarch butterfly, and what we can do to help rebuild populations after their recent crash. Monarchs are charismatic emblems of good environmental stewardship, and our recovery efforts have received tremendous popular support.

The main focus of this workshop will be a discussion on how to establish monarch waystations –

specialized pollinator gardens that include milkweed. Since milkweed is the only plant that monarch caterpillars can eat, we'll talk about the importance of using native milkweed species. Nectar from flowers is the only food source for butterflies, including monarchs, so we'll discuss the best native nectar species that flower in the early season, mid-season, and especially late season. Late blooming nectar plants are critical to fuel migrating monarchs and help them build-up fat reserves to sustain them overwinter.