

North Dakota Pollinator Efforts

North Dakota Game and Fish Department
January 2023

- The North Dakota Monarch Butterfly and Native Pollinator Strategy was developed in 2016 and updated in 2018 to include partner updates on pollinator conservation progress. More than 14 partners contribute efforts including state, federal, university, non-governmental, and agriculture organizations. <https://gf.nd.gov/gnf/conservation/docs/nd-monarch-butterfly-native-pollinator-strategy.pdf>
- The ND Game and Fish Department (NDGFD) partnered with ND Parks and Recreation Department to assemble more than 10,000 monarch butterfly seed packets to be provided free with the 2019 state park pass, which featured a monarch.
- NDGFD is partnering with Natural Resources Conservation Service's Plant Materials Center (PMC) to assist educational organizations in developing urban pollinator gardens. The Urban Pollinator Program (UPP) will facilitate outdoor pollinator learning sites on as many school and community grounds as possible. <https://gf.nd.gov/education/urban-pollinator-program>
 - NDGFD and PMC have provided over 3,000 plants to 33 schools across the state from 2018 to 2022.
- NDGFD offered free wildlife food plot seed to landowners since 2019. The mix included a variety of flowering plants for insects, for up to a 5-acre planting.
- NDGFD has committed the transition to using neonicotinoid-free seed on all its food plots on Wildlife Management Areas.
- NDGFD developed a Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) Riparian Project, available for landowners to enroll in CRP, including pollinator practices CP42 and CP42B. <https://gf.nd.gov/plots/landowner/crep>
- Since 2019, NDGFD has implemented 102 agreements to seed grass/forbs, totaling 10,523 acres on private lands.
- NDGFD has established high diversity pollinator demonstration plots at several locations, including the Bismarck office, WMAs, and the Conservation and Outdoor Skills Park at the North Dakota State Fair.
- NDGFD is providing funding for Audubon Dakota's Urban Woods and Prairies Initiative. This program enhances and creates natural areas for people and wildlife, including high diversity prairie restoration, along riparian areas in the urban cities of Fargo, Grand Forks, Bismarck and Minot.
- NDGFD, ND Department of Transportation, and North Dakota Wildlife Federation partnered to develop a pollinator interpretive site at an I-94 rest area.
- NDGFD and the US Forest Service partnered to develop a pollinator interpretive plot near a campground and hiking trail at Sheyenne National Grasslands, known as the Jorgen's Hollow prairie restoration project.
- NDGFD has produced multiple informational videos on pollinators, which were aired on TV stations throughout North Dakota. See examples on this webpage <https://gf.nd.gov/pollinators>
- NDGFD and many other partners are submitting data to the Monarch Conservation Database (MCD). This Power Point indicates North Dakota is contributing significant monarch conservation efforts and gaining milkweed stems: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/8169fcb99632492cb73871654b9310bb>
- NDGFD has reached out to the ND Weed Control Association and the ND Agriculture Department to encourage counties to remove Common Milkweed from their county noxious weed lists. Four counties currently list this native plant as a noxious weed: Renville, Sheridan, Traill and Wells.
- NDGFD launched the Meadowlark Initiative (<https://gf.nd.gov/meadowlark-initiative>) in 2020 to revitalize, recreate, and protect native grasslands and the species, ranchers, and communities that are interdependent on them. To kick-start this initiative, the NDGFD engaged and enlisted a coalition

of conservation partners and stakeholders on a USDA Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCP) grant proposal.

- One of the RCPP goals is to evaluate the impact of grassland restoration via the Meadowlark Initiative on native pollinators.
- In 2019, 2020 and 2021, the NDGFD conducted milkweed and Monarch field evaluations on WMA's and PLOTS acres to better understand the value and benefit of existing habitat and new herbaceous plantings for Monarch conservation and recovery efforts.
- NDGFD, ND Department of Agriculture, and several other agriculture and industry partners cooperatively funded a statewide pollinator inventory and research conducted by North Dakota State University from 2017 to 2020.
- NDGFD, through a US Fish and Wildlife Service Section 6 grant, awarded funds to North Dakota State University to research enhancing floral resources in grasslands with low plant diversity to conserve native pollinator populations and benefit other grassland dependent organisms.
- NDGFD, through a US Fish and Wildlife Service Section 6 grant, awarded funds to the North Dakota Natural Resources Trust to conduct surveys on the federally listed Dakota Skipper butterfly.
- NDGFD partnered with North Dakota Natural Resources Trust on its Bakken Development and Working Lands I and II Projects to match conservation partner and North Dakota Outdoor Heritage Fund grant dollars to renovate and reestablish high diversity native grass/forb grasslands.
- NDGFD cooperated with the North Dakota Water Commission to provided match dollars with EPA-319 and ND Outdoor Heritage grant funds for planting water quality buffers using high diversity pollinator habitat.
- NDGFD is actively working with both state and federal agencies at a national level to manage and recover rare and declining pollinator species.
 - Dakota Skipper Recovery Team
 - Mid-America Monarch Conservation Strategy
- NDGFD has partnered with Bismarck's Downtown Business Association and others to fill planters in downtown Bismarck with flowers and grasses that are beneficial to pollinators (including educational signage).
- NDGFD is starting the process of revising the North Dakota State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP). The SWAP is a comprehensive conservation plan for safeguarding rare and declining wildlife. The SWAP identifies 115 species of conservation priority and identifies key habitats and community types. The current plan was approved in October 2015 and must be updated every ten years. The NDGF anticipates completing a plan revision by summer 2025. The NDGFD is evaluating numerous insect species for inclusion on the list.