

Including Plants in Restoration Projects on Conserved Lands to Support Pollinators and Monarch Butterfly

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The California Department of Fish and Wildlife has committed to enhancing habitat for pollinators and Monarch butterflies on our own properties and to encouraging other landowners to do the same. Below are sources to help in planning a restoration or habitat enhancement project and in identifying the appropriate plants for pollinators and Monarchs.



Photo: Jack Ferrante

For pollinators, the restored habitat should provide plants that support the forage, reproduction, shelter, and hibernation of local species, with a variety of plants that bloom across the seasons.

For Monarch butterflies specifically, the restoration should provide nectar and host plants when and where monarchs need them. Monarch butterflies depend on nectar sources throughout the year, and the caterpillars are completely dependent on milkweeds as a host plant.



Photo: USFWS

Designing a planting project that benefits pollinators requires consideration of a number of factors, including selection of appropriate plant types for your location and site conditions, source of seeds and starter plants, and avoidance of plants treated with systemic insecticides.

The Xerces Society's [Pollinator Conservation Resource Center](#) and [Monarch Conservation](#) pages provide a host of valuable resources for planning your project, including:

- A [California-specific plant list](#) brochure and a [database of pollinator plants](#) based on bloom time, soil, exposure, height
- [Guidance on installing wildflower meadows for pollinators](#) including seed mixes for different regions in the state
- Bee identification and monitoring guides
- A [Habitat Management](#) guide
- [Monarch nectar plant guides](#)

To enhance the success of habitat restoration and avoid hybridization issues, CDFW recommends using seed or plants derived from local sources. If such local material is not readily available commercially, time for collecting seeds and growing out the material should be incorporated into the

restoration planning. First consider collecting seed from native pollinator or nectar plants already growing on the property. Then identify appropriate species using a local flora, the “What Grows Here” feature on [Calflora](#), or by using [Calscape](#) (especially the advanced search for bee and butterfly gardens). The [California Native Plant Link Exchange](#) allows for searches by bioregion, wetland/upland, and for nurseries.

Carefully planned and implemented restoration or habitat enhancement projects can contribute greatly to improving pollinator habitat, and help these important components of ecosystems thrive into the future.