

Butterfly Heroes Campaign

Subaru Joins National Wildlife Federation and Hanson's Garden Village in Leading the Drive to Save Monarch Butterflies and Pollinators



The [National Wildlife Federation](#) announced the launch of **Butterfly Heroes presented by Subaru** with a goal of 100,000 Americans pledging to help save monarchs and critically important pollinators in 2016. To help reach that goal, the National Wildlife Federation is distributing over 50,000 Butterfly Heroes Garden Starter Packets for those who take the Butterfly Heroes pledge, and corporate partner, Subaru will give out a further 50,000 at its retailers nationwide. Hanson's Garden Village, provided Kocourek Subaru, Don Miller East and Don Miller West Subaru dealers with demonstration container gardens representing elements of wildlife habitat, encouraging customers to plant for pollinators and become Butterfly Heroes this spring as part of the Subaru loves the Earth initiative.

The Disney Conservation Fund is also supporting the NWF effort as part of its mission to protect the planet and help kids develop lifelong conservation values, and Botanical Interests is the official provider of seeds in the kits that participants receive when they make a formal pledge to become a National Wildlife Federation Butterfly Hero.

"From bird watchers to backyard gardeners to sportsmen and fans of our *Ranger Rick* magazines, we can all be a part of saving the monarch butterfly. We're asking Americans to pledge to plant the native milkweed seeds in their yards and community spaces on which monarchs depend for survival. Each individual planting may seem like a small step, but together we can create thousands of acres of habitat that will help save the monarch butterfly," said [Collin O'Mara](#), president and CEO of the National Wildlife Federation. "If we all work together, we can help save the butterflies, bees, hummingbirds and other pollinators responsible for one of three bites on an average dinner plate."

The Butterfly Heroes Campaign asks Americans to submit a photo of themselves making the international sign language sign of the butterfly at [NWF.org/ButterflyHeroes](#). By taking the pledge, participants will be mailed a free kit (while supplies last) and if entered by June 1, are eligible for a chance to win a trip for four to Walt Disney World in Orlando.

The population of Monarch butterfly populations was at one billion as recently as 1996, but numbers have declined as much as 90 percent in recent years, a result of numerous threats, particularly loss of habitat due to agricultural practices, development and cropland conversion. Degradation of wintering habitat in Mexico and California has also had a negative impact on the species, though numbers in Mexico showed signs of a [small rebound this winter](#). Monarch habitat decline is indicative of the stressors other butterflies, bees and all pollinators are facing.

As part of the National Wildlife Federation's [Garden for Wildlife](#) program, Butterfly Heroes seeks to connect gardeners, kids and families alike to help create new habitats for monarch butterflies. With monarchs [currently migrating north](#) through the United States on their way to their summer homes, it's essential for their survival that they find plenty of milkweed along the way. Butterfly gardens are a great way to provide sustainable habitats in small spaces. Botanical Interests is supporting the campaign with a donation of native milkweed seeds.

Planting milkweed or nectar plant seeds provides essential elements of butterfly habitat: food, water, cover and a place for monarchs to raise their young. Add a water source—such as a birdbath filled with pebbles or mud for pollinators to land upon to get a drink— and your Butterfly Hero garden qualifies as an official National Wildlife Federation [Certified Wildlife Habitat](#) and will also be counted as part of the Million Pollinator Garden Challenge. www.millionpollinatorgardens.org.

Subaru, one of the world's leading automakers, has joined Butterfly Heroes as the official presenting sponsor for 2016, as part of its efforts to restore monarch numbers through its "Subaru Loves the Earth" initiative. Through this partnership, Subaru will distribute 50,000 NWF Butterfly Heroes garden kits and install hundreds of demonstration gardens at its retailers across the U.S. In addition to its contribution to Butterfly Heroes, Subaru's U.S. automotive plant in Indiana was the first and only automotive plant to earn Certified Wildlife Habitat certification through NWF's Garden for Wildlife program. Since May of 2004, all Subaru vehicles have been manufactured in a zero landfill plant, where 100 percent of manufacturing waste is either recycled or turned into electricity. To learn more about Subaru Loves the Earth and the environmental work Subaru does, visit Subaru.com/environment.

"Through our 'Subaru Loves the Earth' initiative, we are always looking for opportunities to help raise awareness of critical issues affecting wildlife and our environment and we're excited to work alongside the National Wildlife Federation to empower thousands of Butterfly Heroes nationwide," said Alan Bethke, vice president of marketing at Subaru of America.

The Butterfly Heroes Campaign is part of a number of [programs](#) designed to inspire people to get outdoors, help wildlife, and become more aware of the nature in their neighborhood and community. The National Wildlife Federation, celebrating its 80th anniversary in 2016, has worked to secure the future of wildlife species and to connect people with nature for decades, while inspiring generations of young people through [Ranger Rick](#) magazine, and working with educators, administrators and students to "green" their schools and to experience [learning in the great outdoors](#).

The [National Wildlife Federation](#) is America's largest conservation organization inspiring Americans to protect wildlife for our children's future. Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).