

West Chicago Renews Commitment to Monarch Butterflies

MARCH 15, 2021 BY CITY OF WEST CHICAGO



A call for West Chicago residents and City staff to take steps to continue and increase the planting of milkweed and nectar plants to preserve and strengthen the monarch butterfly population is included in a **Proclamation** declaring March 31, 2021 as “Mayors’ Monarch Pledge Day” in West Chicago.

The Proclamation will be read at the City Council meeting of Monday, March 15, 2021 and is a reaffirmation of the National Wildlife Federation’s (NWF’s) Pledge, originally taken by Mayor Ruben Pineda in 2017.

West Chicago has been part of an expanding North American network of cities working to create habitat in public parks, public landscaping, vacant lots, roadsides, medians, green roofs, backyard gardens and open spaces throughout the entire community.

“Cities, towns and counties play a pivotal role in advancing monarch butterfly conservation in urban and suburban areas,” said Patrick Fitzgerald, Senior Director of Community Wildlife at the NWF. “By working together, we can ensure that every American child has a chance to experience majestic monarchs in their communities.”

According to the NWF, monarch butterflies numbered around 1 billion in 1996. Today, their numbers have declined significantly as a result of numerous threats, particularly the loss of habitat due to cropland conversion, urban development, and agricultural practices. Degradation of wintering habitat in Mexico and California has also had a negative impact on the species.

Over the years since signing the original Pledge, much has been accomplished to advance the mission to protect and conserve the monarch in West Chicago through education, outreach, milkweed seed distribution, the planting of official Monarch Waystations, public art projects and more. In 2019, the City celebrated *The Year of the*

Butterfly with a collaborative project that brought 36 artfully decorated wooden butterflies to public gardens throughout the community. The City received a national award from America in Bloom for the best pollinator program among its member cities.

“Much more is planned for the future as two of the City’s volunteer Commissions, the Environmental Commission and the Cultural Arts Commission take the monarch ‘under their wings’ with plans to create exciting ways to educate and inspire the entire community to do its part this year,” said Mayor Pineda. “We are committed to the monarch and all pollinators in West Chicago,” he added.

The National Wildlife Federation is America’s largest conservation organization, uniting all Americans to ensure wildlife thrive in a rapidly changing world. Follow it on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagra](#)