City of Phoenix

Phoenix, AZ

Mayor Kate Gallego

Pledge Summary

Phoenix is the fifth largest city in the country and is located in the beautiful Sonoran Desert. Phoenicians are committed to the vision of becoming the most sustainable desert city on the planet, and have a strong ethos of habitat conservation, wise water use, and support of native plant species. Phoenix Mayor Kate Gallego signed the Mayor's Monarch Pledge to raise awareness and galvanize efforts to expand crucial habitat and food sources for monarch butterflies. The city looks forward to working with residents and stakeholders to increase the prevalence of native plants throughout the city to support pollinators.

Action Items Committed for 2024

Communications and Convening

- Engage with developers, planners, landscape architects, and other community leaders and organizers engaged in planning processes to identify opportunities to create monarch habitat.
- Launch or maintain a public communication effort to encourage residents to plant monarch gardens at their homes or in their neighborhoods. (If you have community members who speak a language other than English, we encourage you to also communicate in that language; Champion Pledges must communicate in that language.)

Program and Demonstration Gardens

- Plant or maintain a monarch and pollinator-friendly demonstration garden at City Hall or another prominent or culturally significant community location.
- Launch or maintain an outdoor education program(s) (e.g., at schools, after-school programs, community centers and groups) that builds awareness and creates habitat by engaging students, educators, and the community in planting native milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants (i.e., National Wildlife Federation’s Schoolyard Habitats program and Monarch Mission curriculum).
- Earn or maintain recognition for being a wildlife-friendly city by participating in other wildlife and habitat conservation efforts (i.e., National Wildlife Federation’s Community Wildlife Habitat program).
- Add or maintain native milkweed and nectar-producing plants in gardens in the community.
- Host or support a monarch butterfly festival that is accessible to all residents in the community and promotes monarch and pollinator conservation, as well as cultural awareness and recognition.

Systems Change

- Integrate monarch butterfly conservation into the city’s Park Master Plan, Sustainability Plan, Climate Resiliency Plan or other city plans.

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Kate Gallego	2026	12/17/2025	
Mayor Kate Gallego	2025	12/16/2024	Leadership Circle
Mayor Kate Gallego	2024	12/15/2023	Leadership Circle
Mayor Kate Gallego	2023	12/7/2022	Signatories
Mayor Kate Gallego	2022	12/13/2021	Signatories
Mayor Kate Gallego	2021	4/30/2021	Signatories

Action Items

In total, how many individuals have been reached through the Mayors' Monarch Pledge in your community this year (Jan-Dec)? Please limit your answer to only the number of individuals reached in the answer field below (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only.).

62489

Of the total number of individuals engaged, how many youth (0-18) were reached through the Mayors' Monarch Pledge in your community this year (Jan. - Dec.)? If none, please write 0.” (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only.)

1205

In total, how many acres of monarch habitat have been created in your city in the last 12 months? Please limit your answer to only the number of acres in the answer field below (e.g., 3). Note: 1 acre = roughly the size of a football field.

1.9

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Where was the habitat created this year? Example locations may include residences, schools, places of worship, rights-of-way, roadsides, community gardens, shared public spaces, and more.

parks, other public property, schools, community gardens, private property

How are you leveraging the Mayors' Monarch Pledge program to engage marginalized communities, such as low-income communities or communities of color?

The pledge has helped the city expand pollinator and biodiversity actions within other city programs and priorities, including those focused on equity, heat, stormwater harvesting, and water conservation. We have utilized the pledge to partner with non-profits, community partners, and other government agencies on events, projects, and outreach related to the monarch butterfly and other urban wildlife and biodiversity topics. Outreach materials are offered in both English and Spanish for broader accessibility.

What was your community's motivation for taking and continuing to work on the Mayors' Monarch Pledge?

The City of Phoenix is committed to being a sustainable desert city. The Mayor's pledge supports our ethos of habitat conservation, wise water use, and support of native biodiversity.

What resources have been most helpful to you thus far and what new resources would you like to see to help meet your goals? What resources would be useful to help expand equitable engagement in community processes and access to high-quality, usable nature?

We have appreciated the informational resources and access to NWF staff. Native Sonoran Desert milkweed plant and seed availability remain key limiting factors. Grants to support installation of monarch habitat with stormwater harvesting features would help those property owners who couldn't otherwise afford the plants or the water to keep them alive.

What else should we know about your monarch butterfly conservation efforts over the last year?

In 2024, the City of Phoenix saw monarch and biodiversity priorities being wrapped organically into more city programs and materials than ever before. From the 2025 General Plan update to the Desert Landscape Guide to the Green Stormwater Infrastructure Handbook for Residents, and more, the incorporation of native milkweed and native nectar plants is continuing to expand and reach more people. Our list of internal and external collaborators continues to grow, which is critical to expanding the reach of messaging efforts. Although this annual report captures the quantitative information the City of Phoenix has access to, we know that the actual impact on monarch butterfly habitat and information is actually much greater than reported because of these collaborations and partnerships.

Selected Action Items

Engage with developers, planners, landscape architects, and other community leaders and organizers engaged in planning processes to identify opportunities to create monarch habitat.

Please describe the extent of engagement with these groups and associated opportunities to create monarch habitat.

Phoenix Arts & Culture Department engages with a variety of capital projects that have an art component and promotes the inclusion of native milkweed and nectar plants when the projects include landscaping. The City of Phoenix has implemented a stipulation for re-zoning cases that requires the planting of native milkweed and nectar plants, when included. Phoenix Office of Environmental Programs is engaged with the Arizona Monarch Collaborative to expand the availability of native milkweed species and expand the inclusion of these plants in private and public projects.

Plant or maintain a monarch and pollinator-friendly demonstration garden at City Hall or another prominent or culturally significant community location.

Where is the demonstration garden located and how does this location relate to the cultural significance of the monarch (if relevant)? (Please provide an address or coordinates, if possible)

In 2024, Audubon Southwest planted a monarch garden at the Rio Salado Audubon Center at Central Avenue and the Salt River near downtown Phoenix. This site is along the city's first major river ecosystem restoration project. The Audubon Center is also a cultural hub for the area, including hosting events curated by the Sagrado, a local art organization whose mission is to empower community through art, culture, and design.

What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to complete this effort?

Audubon Southwest, Tiger Foundation, Arizona Sustainability Alliance, Arizona State University, Rio Reimagined, City of Phoenix Parks and Recreation Department

What is the size of the demonstration garden (in acres)? Please limit your answer to only the number of acres in the answer field below (e.g., 0.5 acres). For reference, 1 acre = 43,560 square feet and is about the size of a football field without the end zones. Note: 1 acre = roughly the size of a football field.

1.0

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Earn or maintain recognition for being a wildlife-friendly city by participating in other wildlife and habitat conservation efforts (i.e., National Wildlife Federation's Community Wildlife Habitat program).

What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to complete this effort?

Audubon Southwest, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department

What program was launched or maintained to complete this effort? (Please include a link to the program, if possible)

The City is designated as an Urban Bird Treaty City (https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/a440e0355a8946458045966938961523) and a Biophilic City (https://www.biophiliccities.org/phoenix#:~:text=Phoenix%20is%20home%20to%20more,municipal%20parks%20in%20the%20country.).

Host or support a monarch butterfly festival that is accessible to all residents in the community and promotes monarch and pollinator conservation, as well as cultural awareness and recognition.

Upload any relevant documents, images, or other attachments related to your effort on this action.

English Nature Fest PHX Flyer_red.pdf

Upload any relevant documents, images, or other attachments related to your effort on this action.

Espanol Nature Fest PHX Flyer_red .pdf

Upload any relevant documents, images, or other attachments related to your effort on this action.

IMG_6914.JPG

How many estimated individuals attended the event? Please limit your answer to only the number of individuals reached in the answer field ((Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only), e.g. 500)

400

What was the date of your festival?

October 19, 2024

What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to complete this effort?

Main planning partners were: City of Phoenix, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, ASU Rio Reimagined, Corazon Latino, and Audubon Southwest. Event sponsors were: Arizona State Parks, Butterfly Wonderland, Wildlife World Zoo, Phoenix Zoo, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation, Desert Botanical Garden, Waste Management, and Sealco.

Please describe the details of your monarch butterfly festival and how you ensured the event was accessible by all residents in the community (e.g., events, length, notable successes, outreach, location).

In 2024, Phoenix held our 4th annual NatureFest PHX (formerly Urban Wildlife Conservation Day). This event celebrates community and nature and was attended by at least 400 people. Over 40 community partners participated in the event, all related to conservation and nature themes. Educational presentations included a demonstration on tagging monarch butterflies by Southwest Monarch Study. A 3K Walk for the Wild with a nature photography tutorial occurred. Nature drawing tutorials featuring the monarch butterfly and nectar plants was a huge draw in the Kids Art Zone. Other activities included making native seed balls that participants could take home, other wildlife presentations, interactive nature sculpture, river clean up, pollinator planting, and tree planting. The event continues to grow year over year and this year the marketing efforts were particularly successful in bringing in families. Event materials were provided in English and Spanish. Use of local food trucks and artists was prioritized. The location at the Rio Salado 7th Avenue trailhead is in the audience target area and easy to access and is ADA-accessible. Next year, the opening of the lightrail on Central Avenue and the use of shuttles is expected to expand access even further.

Integrate monarch butterfly conservation into the city's Park Master Plan, Sustainability Plan, Climate Resiliency Plan or other city plans.

What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to complete this effort?

Multiple community outreach groups, Village Planning Committees, youth engagement, online surveys, PlanPHX Roadshow

What is the status of this action? Please limit your answer to either "complete" or "in progress" in the answer field below.

Adopted by City Council; Complete

If this action is Complete, please include the date it was completed and share a 1-2 sentence description. Please include a copy of the policy by uploading or linking below.

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November 2024; PlanPHX is the City's General Plan update. The Monarch pledge is included and has a dedicated page that explains the pledge to raise awareness and galvanize efforts to expand crucial habitat. The initiative is highlighted under the Sustainable City section with the goal to protect and celebrate our unique desert landscapes and embrace the benefits of our native biodiversity. The plan is available in English and Spanish. chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.phoenix.gov/pddsite/Documents/City%20Council%20Adopted_PlanPHX%202025

Launch or maintain an outdoor education program(s) (e.g., at schools, after-school programs, community centers and groups) that builds awareness and creates habitat by engaging students, educators, and the community in planting native milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants (i.e., National Wildlife Federation's Schoolyard Habitats program and Monarch Mission curriculum).

What program was launched or maintained to complete this effort? If you are involved with another National Wildlife Federation program, please mention that below. (Please include a link to the program, if possible)

Phoenix Library programming and HeadStart collaborations

How many schools, community groups, leaders, or centers were engaged in this effort? How many of these collaborations and partnerships are "new"? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

2

Please list the names of the schools you are working with.

Booker T. Washington Child Development Center Carl Hayden High School

What resources, if any, are you providing to educators?

The Library provided 192 pollinator seed packets to Head Start teachers at Booker T. Washington Head Start program for their community gardens and an additional 408 seed packets for individual children to take and plant at home. The Library also met with faculty and students at Carl Hayden High School on how to create their own Seed Library. The School's seed library kick-off was in November 2024. The Phoenix Seed Library gave out 300 seed packets in 2024. The Library also held 29 youth programs on monarchs over 2024, including storytimes, STEM, and craft programs. A total of 668 customers attended these events. The Library met with two out-of-state library systems who were looking to start their own seed library.

How many students and educators would you estimate are being reached? Please limit your answer to only number of adults and youths engaged in the answer field (e.g., 200 students and 20 educators).

600 youth, 100 adults

What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to complete this effort?

Booker T. Washington Head Start and Carl Hayden High School.

How many acres of monarch and pollinator habitat have been planted through this effort? Please limit your answer to only the number of acres in the answer field below (e.g., 0.5 acres). For reference, 1 acre = 43,560 square feet and is about the size of a football field without the end zones. Note: 1 acre = roughly the size of a football field.

0.1

What is the maintenance schedule to ensure planted habitat is maintained?

N/A - seeds were provided for schools and individuals to plant and those individuals are responsible for maintenance. No plan was required for them to get seeds. As a result, we also don't have a solid estimate of acreage so the number in the prior question was developed by assuming that 50% of the seed packets were planted with 10 square feet coverage achieved for each packet.

Add or maintain native milkweed and nectar-producing plants in gardens in the community.

Upload any relevant documents, images, or other attachments related to your effort on this action.

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What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to complete this effort?

Girl Scouts, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, ASU Rio Reimagined, Downtown Phoenix Inc., Audubon Southwest, Phoenix Parks and Recreation Department, Phoenix Office of Environmental Programs, Phoenix Police Department, Phoenix Library Department

How many plants were planted? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

3200

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

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The number of plants for some of the projects was not available at the time of this report, but approximately 1.9 acres of new monarch habitat was created in 2024 and habitat installed in prior years was maintained. An estimated number of plants was included above based on the acreages from the projects with a known number of plants. New habitat completed in 2024 includes: 0.11 acre at the Phoenix Crime Lab and the Phoenix Convention Center, both in heart of downtown Phoenix in highly visible locations. Interpretive signage will be added to both of these locations in 2025; 0.04 acre at South Mountain Park; 1.7 acre at Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Area (including the Audubon Center planting).

Launch or maintain a public communication effort to encourage residents to plant monarch gardens at their homes or in their neighborhoods. (If you have community members who speak a language other than English, we encourage you to also communicate in that language; Champion Pledges must communicate in that language.)

Upload any relevant documents, images, or other attachments related to your effort on this action.

Monarch Butterfly Fact Card-Final.pdf

Upload any relevant documents, images, or other attachments related to your effort on this action.

Monarch Butterfly Seed Mix Label - Final_reduced size.jpg

Upload any relevant documents, images, or other attachments related to your effort on this action.

Monarch Butterfly Fact Card-spanish-Final.pdf

Please describe the methods of public communication below (e.g., printed materials, social media, print media).

The City of Phoenix monarch pledge outreach efforts include tabling at festivals and events throughout the year, social media and news interviews throughout the year, Library programming, and including messaging in other city initiatives such as water conservation and stormwater harvesting materials. Outreach materials are provided in English and Spanish. Each September, Phoenix celebrates "Planting for Monarchs Month". October is a great month for planting in the Phoenix area, so September was selected as a key moment to capture people's attention as they are thinking about what to plant the next month. During September, Phoenix makes a daily, concerted outreach effort to share monarch and pollinator messaging and we encourage and provide materials for regional partners to do the same. We also try to capture local media attention, particularly each September, to help spread awareness through interviews and articles with any of our regional partners or ourselves.

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