

Richland Soil and Water Conservation District

Conservation, Education and Stewardship

1495 West Longview Ave. Suite 205B, Mansfield, Ohio 44906

www.richlandswcd.net • 419.747.8686 • Fax: 419.747.8689



Visit us on Facebook



For Immediate Release

September 29, 2022

Help Monarch Butterflies by Collecting Milkweed Seed Pods

MANSFIELD, Ohio- It's the time of year when the leaves start to change color and our thoughts turn to collecting Common Milkweed seed pods. Richland Soil and Water Conservation District (Richland SWCD) is partnering with the Ohio Pollinator Habitat Initiative (OPHI) to collect Common Milkweed seed pods to help foster habitats for Monarch butterflies.

Milkweed seed pods are starting to mature to the point where they can be harvested. Start scouting fields and if pods appear slightly gray and are dried out, they are ready to pick. Seeds inside should be brown before harvesting. Last year's massive statewide seed collection effort was spearheaded by the Ohio Pollinator Habitat Initiative (OPHI), which is working to get the word out about why monarch butterflies are disappearing and help partners create monarch habitat. Milkweed is the only host plant of monarch butterflies, meaning it's the only plant monarch butterflies will lay eggs on and the only plant monarch caterpillars will eat. Milkweed also provides a food source for many other pollinators. The Monarch butterfly population continues to decline and one of the reasons for their decline, is the lack of milkweed.

You can help the Monarch butterfly by collecting Common Milkweed seed pods and dropping them off until November 15 in the green and yellow container outside the Richland SWCD office located at 1495 W. Longview Avenue, Suite 205 B, Mansfield.

How to collect Common Milkweed seed pods:

- Become familiar with common milkweed to avoid harvesting pods from similar plants such as hemp dogbane and swamp milkweed.
- If the center seam of the pod pops with gentle pressure, they can be picked.
- Don't collect pods that are already open, as they might be infested with insects.
- Place collected pods in paper bags or paper grocery sacks. Plastic bags collect unwanted moisture and lead to pods molding.
- On the bag, please write the date you collected the pods and the county you collected them from.
- Keep the pods in a cool, dry area until you can deliver them to the RichlandSWCD office.
- Only collect from your property or property you have been given permission to go on; do not trespass.

During the winter, seeds from this year's milkweed seed pod collection will be removed from the pods to be distributed for planting next year. If you want free milkweed seeds with planting instructions, you may pick them in the hallway outside the Richland SWCD office.

If you have questions about collecting milkweed seed pods or other Richland SWCD programs, please call 419.747.8685 or go to <https://richlandswcd.net/services/water/rain-gardens>.

Richland SWCD develops, implements, and assists landowners, government agencies and our partners with a wide range of natural resource conservation programs.

Programs and assistance of Richland SWCD are available without regard to race, color, religion, sex, gender identity, age, national origin, ancestry, disability, or veteran status.

##

For more information contact:

Theresa Rozic Sutter

Community Relations Coordinator

419-747-8685 or sutter.theresa@richlandswcd.net

*** Serving all Richland County Landowners with Conservation Assistance***

Programs and assistance of the Richland Soil and Water Conservation District are available without regard to race, color, religion, sex, gender identity, age, national origin, ancestry, disability or veteran status.