



Improving the Stuart Recreation Area Pollinator Garden Monongahela National Forest 2012 Accomplishments

The Monongahela National Forest worked on many fronts to improve the 5,500 square foot pollinator garden it established in 2010 at one of the forest's most visited locations, Stuart Recreation Area. This recreation area receives over 20,000 visitors each year making this an ideal location for public outreach and interpretation regarding the importance of pollinators and their ecological needs.

This year, the garden needed many things to increase its value to pollinators, especially monarch butterflies. First, several new species of plants were purchased and planted in the garden by AmeriCorps volunteers. Species purchased included *Asclepias tuberosa* (butterfly weed) and *Asclepias quadrifolia* (four leafed milkweed), which were purchased by a local grower who obtained native plant material from local genetic stock.

The Monongahela focused on milkweed species specifically to increase the quality of the garden for monarch butterflies. Our goal is to provide a better source of host plants for monarchs. In addition to planting new species, volunteers also assisted in weeding and mulching the garden resulting in 126 volunteer hours and over \$2,600 of in-kind services.

The Forest is hoping to add a monarch Waystation to the garden in 2013 and plans to use seeds from these newly planted milkweed to help establish a rain garden at Petersburg Elementary School.



Figure 1. AmeriCorps volunteers spend an afternoon learning about pollinators and working in the Stuart Garden.



Figure 2. Volunteers find a Monarch caterpillar munching on milkweed.

Year Project 2012

Project completion: Ongoing

Report number: 1

Expenditures (through 10/2012): \$1200

FY12 Funding

Partners/Contractors/Coop: AmeriCorps and Appalachian Forest Heritage Area

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