



Emphasizing Milkweeds and nectar plants at The Midwin National Tallgrass Prairie 2014 Accomplishments

Enhancing native populations of plants and animals is part of the mission at the Midwin National Tallgrass Prairie since its inception in 1996. The importance of providing habitat for species such as Monarch Butterflies (*Danaus plexippus*) and nectar sources for other pollinators is always a consideration when planning restoration. Providing seed and plant plugs of native milkweed species are included in restoration projects. Midwin is fortunate to have several milkweed species naturally occur on site, such as Swamp Milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*), Whorled Milkweed (*Asclepias verticillata*), Sand Milkweed (*Asclepias amplexicaulis*), Prairie Milkweed (*Asclepias sullivantii*), Short Green Milkweed (*Asclepias viridiflora*) and Common Milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*). Seed is collected from these species for use in future restoration projects. In addition, there are additional milkweed species in production and propagation at the Midwin horticultural facilities, such as Butterfly Milkweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*) and Purple Milkweed (*Asclepias purpurascens*). Midwin works in collaboration with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Morton Arboretum in the recovery and propagation of the threatened species, Mead's Milkweed (*Asclepias meadii*). This species has been grown in production at Midwin to aid in its recovery and work towards propagation of this species will continue into the future. Volunteers continue to monitor butterflies and moths at Midwin each year.



Figure 1. Mead's Milkweed in bloom, 2014. Propagation efforts at the Midwin seed production facilities. Photo by Jennifer Durkin



Figure 2. Monarch caterpillar on Swamp Milkweed at the Route 66 Prairie at Midwin. Photo by Laney Widener, Chicago Botanic Garden

Year Project Initiated: 1996

Project completion: Restoration continues on various restoration projects. Efforts at propagation of Mead's Milkweed will continue into the future to aid in recovery

Report number: 1 (2014)

Expenditures (through 10/2014): \$40,000

Funding: NFWW, NFWF, PIPI
Partners/Contractors/Coop:) U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Morton Arboretum

Contact Person & phone number:
Jennifer Durkin, 815- 423-6370 x 254



**Midwin National Tallgrass
Prairie**
30239 South State Route 53
Wilmington, IL 60481