



Maintaining Milkweeds White Mountain National Forest

2014 Accomplishments

White Mountain National Forest (WMNF) staff continue to create, maintain, and enhance permanent wildlife openings on the Forest, serving the habitat needs of many wildlife and plant species. Managers maintain approximately 800 acres of openings across the Forest. These range from permanent large fields to small openings, such as the native plant gardens and seed production areas at the Saco and Androscoggin Ranger District offices, Lincoln Woods Visitor Center, and at the Administrative Complex. Depending on habitat and site conditions, prescribed burning or mechanical mowing (or both) are employed to maintain openings. In fiscal year 2014, the Forest treated a total of 84 acres to perpetuate this habitat.

The primary objective in maintaining these openings is to perpetuate a range of herbaceous and shrubby vegetation, and an associated diversity of wildlife species. Monarch butterflies and other pollinators require a diversity of species that flower at various times of year, and Monarchs specifically require milkweed species. Milkweeds are present in many of these openings in healthy numbers as a result of both natural propagation and, at the Administrative Complex, supplemental seeding with New England genetic stock. Without these maintained habitats, milkweeds would be much less common on the Forest.



Swamp milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*) in the White Mountain Administrative Complex native plant garden



A typical wildlife opening on the WMNF

In addition, there are many natural openings on the WMNF, including meadows along rivers and streams, wet meadows and peatlands, and rocky ridges and alpine areas. Some of these habitats contain native milkweed species. Ongoing planning and protection of each of these natural communities provides unique habitat for a host of native plants, their pollinators, and other wildlife species.

Year Project Initiated: 2008

Project completion: ongoing – continued maintenance

Expenditures (FY 14): \$40,000

Contact Person & phone number:

Dan Sperduto, Forest Botanist
603-536-6225;
danielsperduto@fs.fed.us



White Mountain National Forest
71 White Mountain Drive
Campton, NH 03220