

Garland's Mayor, Douglas Athas has taken the **MAYOR'S MONARCH PLEDGE**

Visit the National Wildlife Federation website. www.nwf.org



Mayors and other local government chief executives are taking action to help save the monarch butterfly, an iconic species whose populations have declined by 90% in the last 20 years. Through the National Wildlife Federation's Mayors' Monarch Pledge, cities and municipalities are committing to create habitat and educate citizens about how they can make a difference at home. **There are four steps to taking and implementing the pledge.**

1. **Take the pledge.** By taking the Mayor's Monarch Pledge, Mayor Athas has committed to restore habitat in our community and to encourage Garland citizens to do the same.
2. **Specify Actions.** Mayor Athas has specified actions that he will take in the next year.
3. **Take Action.** Over the next year we will support our Mayor in taking the specified actions. To assist our community in creating an action plan, Grace Barnett from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department will be meeting with the Mayor and a group of Garland citizens on February 23 for a brainstorming session on how we can effectively restore habitat for pollinators in our community.
4. **Report Progress.** Our community will report our actions on a quarterly basis to the National Wildlife Federation.

What can you do as an individual to save the monarchs?

- Convince your mayor to sign the Mayors' Monarch Pledge from the National Wildlife Federation. (Mayor Athas has signed it for Garland.) Once the leadership of your community is behind such an effort, things begin to happen. The pledge is located at www.nwf.org/mayorsmonarchpledge
- Join an organization such as Loving Garland Green and work with them to assist schools and residents in planting butterfly gardens in their schoolyards.
- If you are a parent, get members of the PTA involved in creating a butterfly habitat at your child's school. A garden is a great backdrop for engaging students in learning many things—from math to art.
- Plant some milkweed in your yard.
- Be sure to visit the websites of all four agencies who are participating in launching this great plan. Many of them offer grants and special support to make it even easier for individuals to save the Monarchs.
- Create a certified wildlife garden in your own backyard. More at: <http://www.nwf.org>

Why bother?

Pollinators are responsible for at least 1/3 of all the food we consume and one half of the fats and oils we eat. In addition to that, we use their fibers for our clothing. Populations of the monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) have dropped an astonishing 96.5 percent over the past few decades, from an estimated 1 billion in the mid-1990s to just 35 million in early 2014.

It is no surprise that communities are waking up to the importance of pollinators and are taking serious steps to protect them and increase the existence of their habitats. The I-35 corridor from Texas to Minnesota is known as the pollinator highway. A program is now in place and supported by several federal agencies as well as local communities along the way to plant 100 miles to either side of this roadway with pollinator-friendly plants including the milkweed in particular.