



Milkweeds for Monarchs: The St. Louis Butterfly Project Plant Care Tips



Whorled Milkweed
Thin and cut back new growth when the plant becomes overcrowded.

Purple Coneflower
Divide clumps when the plant becomes overcrowded (about every 4 years). It will provide birds with seeds and also self-seed if some of the seed heads are left in place.

Goldenrod
Divide clumps when the plant becomes overcrowded.

Common Milkweed
Remove seed pods before they split open, and thin and cut back new growth when the plant becomes overcrowded.

New England Aster
Pinching back stems several times before mid-July will help limit plant height to 4 feet, promote bushiness and perhaps lessen the need for staking. The plant will self-seed in optimum growing conditions. If the foliage has become unsightly or unwanted self-seeding is occurring, the plant can be cut to the ground after flowering.

Butterfly Weed
Butterfly weed does not transplant well due to its deep taproot, and is probably best left undisturbed once established.

Black-Eyed Susan
To prolong the bloom, you may deadhead the plant. Divide clumps when the plant becomes overcrowded.

Since all of the STL Monarch Mix plants are native to Missouri, they will not require highly specialized care. However, these simple measures specific to each plant will go a long way in helping your garden flourish. Also, the entire garden should be watered during times of drought, checked for weeds, and cut back in the fall. These plants require no fertilizers, though it is a good idea to add mulch around the plants. Please avoid using chemical products, such as pesticides, near your garden.

Gardening Terms

Deadhead- Remove dead flowers by snipping them with pruning shears or scissors.

Divide Clumps- If the plant becomes overcrowded, dig up the unwanted portion and transplant or share with friends.

Overcrowding- Plants look spindly, rather than bushy, and do not have room to grow.

Pinching back- Remove the new leaves and buds at the end of the stem to encourage branching. This should be done before the flower buds get large.

Seed pods- Either remove seed pods while still green to prevent the seeds from spreading, or let the pods dry on the plant and collect the seeds for future use. When the pods turn brown and start to split, save the seed to plant later.

Self-seeds- This means the plant will drop seeds which should grow the following year.

Staking- This is done if a plant gets too tall and starts to droop. Place a stake in the ground very near the plant and loosely tie the plant to the stake to give it support and help it stand up straight.

Thin and cut back- To avoid plant crowding, cut until there is adequate space between plants. Do this either shortly after buds appear in early spring or once flowering is finished in the fall.

Swamp/Marsh Milkweed
Does best in a low spot and tolerates more moisture than the other plants. Do not transplant once established, as plants have deep taproots. Remove seed pods prior to splitting. Thin and cut back new growth when plant becomes overcrowded.

Bee Balm/Bergamot
This plant needs good air circulation, so make sure it has room. You can deadhead the plant to prolong the bloom period.



Milkweeds for Monarchs is an initiative of the City of St. Louis Office of Sustainability. For more information on this or other sustainability initiatives in the City of St. Louis, Contact Catherine Werner, Sustainability Director, Office of the Mayor WernerC@stlouis-mo.gov or visit stlouis-mo.gov/sustainability

