



STEWARDS OF OUR EARTH All of God's Creation

Social Justice Committee, Holy Cross Parish, Mt. Airy, October 30, 2022

Bees and Butterflies: Their Extinction Will Affect All of Us

“If rising temperatures and more extreme weather have been stressing you out, know that you're not alone. **Bees** too are experiencing the stress of climate change. New research shows that bees have increasingly shown signs of stress linked to hotter and wetter weather.” (Nina Massey, *Bees Increasingly Stressed by Climate Change Over the Past 100 Years - Study*, Bloomberg, August 18, 2022)

“**Wild bee populations are plummeting.** We've already lost 87% of the Rusty-Patched Bumblebee, 89% of the American Bumblebee, and 93% of the Western Bumblebee over the last two decades.

Scientists have identified a key link contributing to this drastic decline: the use of **BEE-TOXIC pesticides called neonics**. The EPA has reported ‘ecological risks of concern, particularly to pollinators’ -- yet they still plan to approve neonics for the next 15 years! If that happens, vulnerable wild bees won't stand a chance....

[This is important because] **we rely on bees and other pollinators for 1 out of 3 bites of food we eat!** It's hard to imagine life without the food crops that bees are responsible for, like many fruits, veggies, and nuts.” (*Friends of the Earth*, October 6, 2022) [Sign the petition](#) to the EPA to ban bee-killing pesticides.

Another important pollinator, the **monarch butterfly**, is also in trouble. These spectacular orange and black creatures travel up to 3,000 miles on their migration journey across North America, but “these beautiful butterflies have seen a drastic decline in populations due to vanishing habitat, [pesticides], climate change, and **loss of milkweed, the only food that monarch caterpillars feed on.** Since the 1980s, the numbers of Western monarchs have dropped by more than 95%, and Eastern monarchs have dropped by 84% since 1996.” (Catrin Einhorn, *Monarch Butterflies Are Endangered, Leading Wildlife Monitor Says*, The New York Times, July 21, 2022) “While the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service agreed that protections are warranted, the monarch butterfly has not been given strong national protections yet” (*Environment America*, October 15, 2022).

This is where we come in! First, **take the time to plant milkweed now.** This fall, we can help make a difference by planting seeds for the future. [Check out the tips](#) from *Environment America* on when, where and how to plant milkweed to save the monarch butterfly. It is important to understand your local growing habitat and make sure that the seeds you plant are appropriate to your area. **Second, [tell your U.S. senators to support the MONARCH Act today to help save the endangered Western monarch butterfly.](#)**

