

Butterfly Club lends Monarch a helping plant

ch butterflies have been spotted
Queens County. In and around
nia, they have also been con-
breeding. The beautiful and mes-
ing Monarch Butterfly is a Species
in Nova Scotia. It is listed as "Spe-
ncern" by COSEWIC, the Commit-
the Status of Endangered Wildlife
ada.

s amazing creature travels over
m in the fall, from Canada to
", says Brennan Caverhill, MTRI
eer and Species at Risk Steward-
iologist in Kejimikujik National
"It is sometimes known as 'the
king' because it is most active
he thunder rolls, and there is elec-
n the air."

e Monarch is threatened by habi-
ss throughout the wintering
s in Mexico, pesticide use along
gration route in the United States,
imilar factors here at home", says
a Lavers, Executive Director of
ersey Tobeatic Research Institute
in Kempt.

t's why a group of people in
County and around southwest-
va Scotia have developed a "But-
Club" which encourages members

to plant their own butterfly garden,
including native plants like Yarrow,
Asters, and Boneset. Adult butterflies
feed on the nectar-rich flowers, but the
most important flowers are native
Swamp Milkweed plants, which have
been grown by local organic farmers at
Wild Rose and Pleasant Hill Farms.

The Monarch relies exclusively on
Milkweed plants for growth and sur-
vival, because adults will only lay their
eggs on this plant. When caterpillars
feed on Milkweed leaves, they become
poisonous to birds and other predators.

Caverhill and Lavers are two of sever-
al biologists at Kejimikujik and MTRI
who have been encouraging Queens
County residents to plant Milkweed in
their gardens. With help from volunteers
and expert students from Clarke Ruther-
ford Elementary in Cornwallis, who
planted their own butterfly garden last
year, a model garden was planted in June
at MTRI. Members who join the "Butter-
fly Club" agree to plant their own chem-
ical-free garden, and provide important
habitat for the Monarchs and many oth-
er butterfly species that call Nova Scotia
home. VanDyk's Health Juice Products
have also joined the effort by planting a



A Monarch Butterfly rests on a flower.

similar garden in West Caledonia.

Caverhill and Lavers were recently
grocery shopping in Caledonia and spot-
ted numerous monarchs at the MTRI

that make this part of the world a special
place."

As a fundraiser for MTRI, Diane Clapp

B&B.

Upon closer inspection, they found a garden full of Milkweed, many small green eggs on the undersides of the plant, and all kinds of fat yellow, black, and white striped Monarch caterpillars. The new owners of Aunt Nettie's, Pat and Chuck Grocock, were surprised about all the attention.

"We were thinking of re-planting some of the gardens, but now that we know how important the Milkweed is, we'll be sure to keep it," says Pat Grocock. "We're now full fledged members of the Butterfly Club and we're learning about native plants and insects

farmers markets and selling swamp milkweed plants.

"By encouraging the creation of more butterfly gardens among your family, friends, and communities, the team hopes to spread beauty and awareness about not only the Monarch Butterfly, but also other species at risk throughout Nova Scotia," says Clapp. "There are over 40 species at risk living in Nova Scotia, and we can do lots to help!"

For more information about the club, species at risk, and MTRI, call 682-2371, check out www.speciesatrisk.ca and www.merseytobeatic.ca - and visit an organic farmer near you!



A Monarch Caterpillar slides along a leaf.

603