

West Vincent Pollinator Pitstop Garden Program

Because what's good for pollinators is good for people!



The West Vincent was designed by the Environmental Advisory township in native

1) provide residents with free and low-cost native plants that benefit our pollinators and birds and beautify our world and 2) to raise awareness of loss of biodiversity, risks of pesticides, the negative outcomes of our lawn monoculture, ways to keep your leaves on your property, protecting plants from deer, and the physical and mental health benefits of being in and connecting with nature and our neighbors.

Pollinator Pitstop Program West Vincent Council to blanket our flowers. The goals are to

The project began in the fall of 2021 with the preparation of our first demonstration Pitstop Garden in Evans Park, the park in which our township building sits. Our aspiration is to plant and maintain Pitstop gardens in each of our WV parks. In early November, 2021, we held a demonstration of the easy way to convert lawn to garden – the lasagna method. We collected Amazon boxes and bagged leaves and rocks, laid out the 12' x 4' garden, and placed a small temporary fence around it to hold in the leaves. We then put down the cardboard, placed rocks on top to hold it down, and put about 2' of leaves on top. We left it to sit for the winter, with a Pollinator Pitstop Hatching sign in front.



The project continued in January. The EAC held a free butterfly milkweed seed giveaway on a very cold Saturday in January. We gave out plastic milk jugs to anyone who didn't have one, and we handed out written instructions, which were on our webpage with an instructional video. There was a line of cars through the township parking lot, with dozens of people cold-sowing native plants for the first time!

Next, in March, the Girl Scouts planted 650 butterfly milkweed plants, which were raised inside under ideal (for milkweed) conditions so that they would bloom the first year. These plants were given away at our Community Day in mid-May, where we also held a partridge-pea seed ball activity for the kids. EAC members wore butterfly wings – we felt really goofy, but it ended up creating great energy and being a real conversation starter! We had enough plants for our township gardener to plant them throughout our park and our Community Garden space.

At the end of May, after the soil had warmed up, we finally planted the Pitstop Demonstration Garden. Several families had purchased the full complement of Pitstop Garden plants through the Ludwigs Corner Horse Show Assoc., so they followed along and planted a similar garden at home. Our lasagna method had worked perfectly! The grass had died, the cardboard was completely gone, and there were just enough leaves left to serve as a pretty mulch. The 4' x 12' design had been selected to be easy to reach into from the front to weed. The planting was quick and easy, as the soil under the "lasagna" was light and easy to dig in. The final step of the garden preparation was to lay down flat stones, with landscape fabric underneath, so it would be easy for the lawn crew to mow around it.

Many people showed up for the planting – some of them first time gardeners! So far, we have 179 households participating in this program. We are all gardening together and learning

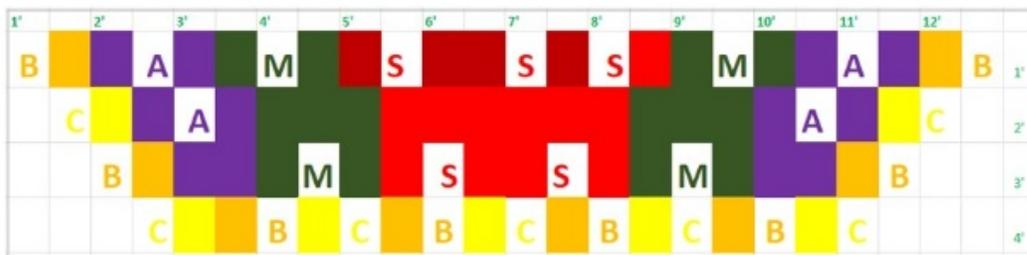
together. Some of our goals for next year are to add spring and fall nectar sources, trees, and shrubs, and to demonstrate plants with deep roots for stormwater maintenance.

At the end of the 2022 school year, the West Vincent Elementary School hosted an environmental day based around our Pitstop program. Regular classes were suspended for the day, and the children participated in educational sessions mixed with hands-on learning, centered around the Monarch butterfly theme. Each child participated in seed planting, making seed balls, and creating a drawing of their version of “What Makes a Butterfly,”(sun, rain, soil, children with watering cans, etc., etc.), and the resulting 650 six-inch square drawings were woven into a paper quilt, which will hang in the school lobby.

Our community has been enriched by this program.

Our Pollinator Pitstop Demonstration Garden is located in Evans Park, just to the right of the parking lot on Rt. 401, between St. Matthews Rd. and Fellowship Rd., Chester Springs, PA.

Pollinator Pitstop Garden Design



Each square is 12". Front edge is curved to make it easy to mow around.

Plant suggestions

- S** Scarlet Bee Balm - 5 plants
- M** Mountain Mint - 4 plants
- A** Anise Hyssop - 4 plants
- B** Butterfly Milkweed – 8 plants
- C** Whorled Coreopsis – 7 plants