

How to attract monarch butterflies and all kinds of pollinators to your garden.

In 2016 after watching a green worm (black swallowtail caterpillar) eating most of our only potted parsley plant and wondering all over the patio it got me curious enough to google: “ why a green worm don’t want to eat my parsley anymore”. It didn’t take me long to find out what was happening and therefore by the summer of 2017 after planting a dozen of parsley plants I attracted quite a few females swallowtails who laid many eggs of which we’ve raised about 50 adults during that summer.

As I was learning more everyday about my new adventure there was something that I need it to know that early summer and went back to google for answers, this time in my search I used the word butterfly and took me to so many monarch butterfly pages where in a short while I’ve learned about the population and migration declining, their survival struggling due to the lack of loss habitats among other things.

And so the first thing I did was order a few milkweed plants online right away and by the spring of 2018 I’ve added over 50 milkweed plants of all sizes plus some natives and non flowers to our cemented back yard. Once I’ve realized the important of having more native plants to attract more butterflies species as well as other pollinators I added a few more every year to notice that some of them don’t do so good in pots and containers, therefore I always keep a few non natives flowers that will bloom until late fall.

After researching this topic and attending a few online webinars I’ve learned that many experts did mentioned that planting some non native flowers in our gardens it’s not a mortal sin, it’s actually a good thing to do especially where there is a lack of a real garden space like ours and many other’s that don’t have any true garden space at all. (Some have actually suggested 70% native- 30% non.)

Unfortunately many folks have been told by some well written online articles that non native flowers have no place in our gardens, and that creates many long and animated discussions in the social media groups where most gardeners gather to share their views about pollinators in general.

In my humble idea we’re all adults and therefore we should all do more research on any topic we find interesting to know more about it, we then should take and apply what we think is the right thing to do and or what works best for us without trying to convince the whole world to follow our advice.

There is an old Italian saying: “ Vai in piazza e chiedi consigli, poi vai a casa e fai come ti pare.”

This is from Google translate: “ Go to the square and ask for advice, then go home and do as you please.”

These are the present native and non plants and flowers that have constantly attracted hundreds of butterflies and bees in our humble cemented garden during our short summers breeding seasons since 2018.

Natives: Common Milkweed, Swamp Milkweed, Butterfly Weed, Cone Flower, Blackeyed Susan, Bee Balm, Ironweed, Wild Columbine, Blazing Star, New England Aster, Goldenrod, Jo Pye Weed, Anise Hyssop, Giant Anise Hyssop, Hop Tree, always adding and experimenting new species.

Non natives, annuals and herbs: Tropical Milkweed, Butterfly Bush, Zinnia, Lantana, Mexican Sunflower, Rue, Parsley or any herbs for the black swallowtails butterflies.

For more information and proofs please visit our garden located at: 1158 Erie St. E. Windsor. ON from June to September, or check out our web site: www.savethemonarchbutterfly.ca