

Discounted Pollinator Seed Mix For Farms in Pennsylvania



**AUDUBON SOCIETY OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA (ASWP)
OFFERING 50%-70% OFF OF CUSTOM POLLINATOR SEED MIX FOR
AGRICULTURAL LANDS IN PA**

WHAT

A custom seed mix developed for Monarchs and Bumblebees in Pennsylvania is available at a discount for agricultural land. The seed blend includes over 20 species of native plants, including:

- 3 types of milkweed (host plant for Monarch butterflies)
- Native nectar plants that provide 3 seasons of nectar and beauty
- Native grasses for bumblebee habitat and erosion control

WHY

This project will benefit both farmers and pollinators, including the Monarch Butterfly, which was just classified as Endangered by the IUCN. Native pollinators are important for crop pollination. Farms can provide critical habitat for native pollinators. Native pollinators such as the Monarch butterfly and bumblebees are experiencing steep population declines. Field and road borders, fallow fields, and areas near streams and ponds are ideal locations to incorporate pollinator habitat without impacting production.

HOW IT WORKS

With funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Monarch and Pollinators Conservation Fund, ASWP is able 50%-70% of this custom seed blend for use on agricultural land through 2022, or when funds are exhausted. The remaining cost of the seed mix can be paid with private funds or funds from other programs such as Conservation District initiatives or NRCS.

DISCOUNT TIERS

The available discount is based on restoration project size as follows: a) 1 - 2.49 acres: 50% off, b) 2.5-4.99 acres: 55% off, c) 5-7.49 acres: 60% off, d) 7.5-9.99 acres: 65% off, and 10+ acres: 70% off.

PROGRAM CONTACTS

Sarah Koenig, Conservation Director: skoenig@aswp.org or (412) 963-6100 x26

Tim Byan, Whetzel Land Steward: steward@aswp.org or (412) 963-6100 x11



Photo: George Reese



Monarch and Bumblebee Seed Mix

Available at a 50%-70% Discount for Farms in Pennsylvania

Through 2022 or Until Funding is Exhausted

Overview

Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania (ASWP), in partnership with Ernst Conservation Seeds, developed a custom native seed mix to support Monarch butterflies, bumblebees, and other imperiled pollinators. With funding from the [National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Monarch Butterfly and Pollinators Conservation fund](#), ASWP is able to cover 50%-70% of the cost of the seed mix for agricultural land in Pennsylvania through 2022 or until funds are exhausted.



Information on site prep, maintenance, and other important information to ensure a successful habitat restoration project is provided below, along with Additional Resources and References.

Table 1: Discounted Seed Mix Tiers

The available discount is based on the size of the habitat restoration project.

Project Size (Acres)	Discount Available	Approximate Seed Cost Per Acre for Farmer*
1 – 2.49	50%	\$120
2.5 – 4.99	55%	\$108
5 – 7.49	60%	\$96
7.5 – 9.99	65%	\$84
10+	70%	\$72

**Plus shipping. Cover crop must be purchased separately and is not covered by this program.*

Seed Mix

- Little Bluestem
- Virginia Wildrye
- Wild Senna
- Marsh Blazing Star
- Appalachian Beardtongue
- Mistflower
- Aromatic Aster
- Zigzag Aster
- Purple Coneflower
- Lanceleaf Coreopsis
- Butterfly Milkweed
- Golden Alexanders
- Gray Goldenrod
- Swamp Milkweed
- Common Milkweed
- Hairy Beardtongue
- Smooth Blue Aster
- New England Aster
- Blackeyed Susan
- Oxeye Sunflower
- Licorice Scented Goldenrod
- Narrowleaf Mountainmint
- Partridge Pea
- Ohio Spiderwort
- Wild Bergamot

How It Works

Interested parties should contact Sarah Koenig, ASWP Conservation Director, at skoenig@aswp.org or (412) 963-6100 x26 or Tim Byan, Whetzel Land Steward, at steward@aswp.org or (412) 963-6100 x11. The discounted seed is only available for agricultural properties, including urban farms.

Depending on the site of the habitat restoration project (Table 1), ASWP is able to cover the cost of 50-70% of the seed blend (not including shipping) for agricultural land through 2022 or until funds are exhausted. Discount is for a seeding rate of 6 lbs. / acre. The remaining costs can be covered with private funds or funding from other programs and projects. ASWP will ship the seed mix to your location.

Table 2: Additional Details About Seed Mix

Common Name	Scientific Name	Monarch Host Plant	Bumblebee Superfood	Bumblebee Immunity Support	Spring Nectar	Summer Nectar	Fall Nectar	Clump Forming Grass (Bumblebee Nesting Habitat)
Little Bluestem	<i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i>							◆
Virginia Wildrye	<i>Elymus virginicus</i>							◆
Purple Coneflower	<i>Echinacea purpurea</i>		◆		◆			
Lanceleaf Coreopsis	<i>Lanceleaf coreopsis</i>				◆			
Blackeyed Susan	<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>				◆			
Oxeye Sunflower	<i>Heliopsis helianthoides</i>				◆			
Ohio Spiderwort	<i>Tradescantia ohiensis</i>					◆		
Wild Bergamot	<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>			◆	◆			
Wild Senna	<i>Senna hebecarpa</i>					◆		
Marsh Blazing Star	<i>Liatris spicata</i>				◆			
Appalachian Beardtongue	<i>Penstemon laevigatus</i>				◆			
Mistflower	<i>Eupatorium coelestinum</i>						◆	
Aromatic Aster	<i>Aster oblongifolius</i>		◆				◆	
Zigzag Aster	<i>Aster prenanthoides</i>		◆				◆	
Butterfly Milkweed	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	◆				◆		
Narrowleaf Mountainmint	<i>Pycnanthemum tenuifolium</i>				◆			
Golden Alexanders	<i>Zizia aurea</i>				◆			
Gray Goldenrod	<i>Solidago nemoralis</i>		◆				◆	
Swamp Milkweed	<i>Asclepias incarnata</i>	◆				◆		
Common Milkweed	<i>Asclepias syriaca</i>	◆				◆		

Common Name	Scientific Name	Monarch Host Plant	Bumblebee Superfood	Bumblebee Immunity Support	Spring Nectar	Summer Nectar	Fall Nectar	Clump Forming Grass (Bumblebee Nesting Habitat)
Hairy Beardtongue	<i>Penstemon hirsutus</i>					◆		
Smooth Blue Aster	<i>Aster laevis</i>		◆					
New England Aster	<i>Aster novae-angliae</i>		◆					
Licorice Scented Goldenrod	<i>Solidago odora</i>		◆				◆	
Partridge Pea	<i>Chamaecrista fasciculata</i>					◆		

Planting Information

The following is an outline of the planting process. *It is strongly recommended that the information in the Additional Resources and References section is reviewed in detail prior to planting.*

Site Prep

Prior to planting, the thorough and complete removal of noxious, invasive, or undesirable species is critical for a successful pollinator meadow. Solarization and herbicide treatment are frequently used for site prep. If using herbicide, please be sure to follow label instructions and best practices from the Xerces Society, available here: <https://xerces.org/sites/default/files/publications/19-045.pdf>. Additional information on site preparation can be found here: <https://www.ernstseed.com/resources/planting-guides/uplands-meadows-and-pollinators-planting-guide/>

Seed Sowing (Pollinator Seed Mix & Cover Crop)

Following site preparation, the seeds may be sown in either spring (after chance of frost) or fall (after the first frost). Seeding options include hand-seeding, broadcast seeding, or no-till drill seeding. Seeds should be planted at a rate of 6 pounds/acre and should be mixed with an appropriate cover crop at a rate of 30 lbs. per acre. The native seed mix and cover crop should be seeded at the same time.

Cover crop helps stabilize the soil and minimize competition from undesirable species.

- If planting between 1/1 - 7/31, cover crop should be oats at 30 lbs. / acre.
- If planting between 8/1 – 12/31, cover crop should be cereal rye at 30 lbs. / acre.

Maintenance / Establishment

During the first year of growth, when the vegetation reaches 14-16", it should be mowed to a height of 8-10" with a string trimmer or other equipment capable of mowing at this height. Mowing lower than 8" is detrimental to planted species and can promote growth of undesirable species. Mowing is necessary only once per year starting in year 2 of growth, preferably at the end of winter or very early spring. Targeted invasive species management (manual or spot spraying with herbicide) should be conducted during year 1. Monitoring of the meadow and pressure from invasive plants during years 2 and beyond helps to ensure long-term success of the meadow.

Additional Resources and References

Promote Pollinators in Agricultural Landscapes (NRCS): includes background on the importance of helping native pollinators on farms and how/where that can be done:

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/plantsanimals/pollinate/farmers/>

Organic Site Preparations for Wildflower Establishment (Xerces Society): includes step by step instructions, regional timelines, and checklists. <https://xerces.org/publications/guidelines/organic-site-preparation-for-wildflower-establishment>

Uplands, Meadows, & Pollinator Planting Guide (Ernst Conservation Seed): includes details on site preparation and maintenance. <https://www.ernstseed.com/resources/planting-guides/uplands-meadows-and-pollinators-planting-guide/>

Guide to the Life Cycle of a Meadow (Ernst Conservation Seed): includes information on cover crops, life cycle of a meadow, and barriers to successful establishment.

<https://www.ernstseed.com/resources/planting-guides/life-cycle-of-a-meadow/>

Monarch Butterflies, Weeds, and Herbicide (Xerces Society): includes best practices for herbicide application to avoid harming pollinators. <https://xerces.org/sites/default/files/publications/19-045.pdf>

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