



NEWS from the CATSKILL MOUNTAINS SCENIC BYWAY

A project of the Central Catskills Collaborative

Sceniccatskills.com

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SCENIC BYWAY ENCOURAGES PLANTING FOR POLLINATORS

June 15, 2020: An initiative is underway to encourage the planting of pollinator friendly gardens, roadsides and wild patches along the Catskill Mountains Scenic Byway (Route 28 from Olive to Andes).

A trio of demonstration gardens in the Village of Margaretville has recently been planted, joining existing garden sites elsewhere on the Byway. Look for the colorful “Pollinators Welcome!” signs that denote these sites, created in Margaretville on parcels owned by the Village of Margaretville, the Open Eye Theater and Freshtown Market. Kelley Edkins of HoneyBee Herbs and Erwin Karl created these installations with funding from the Margaretville Rotary Club, Margaretville Telephone Company, the Margaretville Garden Fund and individual contributors.

The effort to create welcoming habitat for bees, butterflies, hummingbirds, moths and other winged creatures was inspired by Maralene Manos-Jones (“the Butterfly Lady” of Shokan) who has spent decades raising the alarm about the plight of stressed monarch and other butterflies and advocating for their preservation. Learn more about this issue and the work of Manos-Jones at spiritofbutterflies.com.

The Central Catskills Collaborative, made up of representatives of the Towns of Olive, Shandaken, Middletown and Andes, and the Villages of Fleischmanns and Margaretville, decided at Manos-Jones’ suggestion to turn the Scenic Byway into a “pollinator pathway.” Municipalities, businesses, organizations and individual homeowners are urged to plant flowers, herbs and blooming shrubs and trees to provide sustenance for the pollinators that are an indispensable part of the food chain and, not incidentally, bring much joy to our lives.

The NYS Department of Transportation is considering guidelines for NYS Byways that would adjust mowing schedules and improve pollinator access to flowering plants. The NYC Department of Environmental Protection has revised mowing protocols to as much as possible avoid cutting weeds and wildflowers before they flower, and to preserve milkweed, which Monarchs in particular rely on for food and habitat.

To view the award-winning, eight-minute film, “Save the Pollinators,” produced by Catskill Mountainkeeper, visit catskillmountainkeeper.org. More information on the Catskill Mountains Scenic Byway is available at sceniccatskills.com.