

Backyard Bloom Boost Program

Program Timeline and RISWCD/Landowner Requirements

Program Timeline:

- Application period: January 15, 2026, to March 15, 2026
- March 2026: Site visits will be conducted by RISWCD to assess locations and assistance will be provided to residents for designing their garden plots.
- April 30, 2026: All 2026 garden layouts will be finalized.
- May 1, 2026: Garden site preparation will begin.
 - Plant delivery is scheduled for May 2026 (delivery dates & times will be set up in May).
- End of May 2026: All planting and mulching must be completed.
- May 2026 to Fall 2029: Garden site monitoring by RISWCD to ensure sites are being managed correctly.
- Fall 2029: The program concludes.

Rock Island County SWCD will

- Coordinate with a local nursery to source native plants suitable for pollinator habitats and deliver plants to garden sites.
- Register each site as a Monarch Waystation through Monarch Watch, providing certified habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinators.
- Assist with designing garden sites.
- For residents with mobility challenges or disabilities: Organize with Steam on Wheels, a local organization whose students will assist with site preparation.
- Provide each garden site with a yard sign to promote the program.
- Monitor each site over a three-year period using the “Sleep-Creep-Leap” model to track plant establishment and growth.

Landowner will

- Prepare garden site using one of following methods:
 - Smothering existing grass with plastic
 - Tilling
 - Applying chemical treatment such as glyphosate, depending on site conditions and resident preference.
- Mulch garden site to control weeds.
- Complete all planting and mulching by the end of May.
- Manage garden site over a three-year period. This includes
 - Watering plants
 - Removing unwanted “weeds”
 - Mulching when necessary (after initial mulching in May 2026)
- Display Backyard Bloom Boost signage near garden site.
- Provide necessary information for garden site to be registered as a Monarch Waystation.