



Brainerd Library Butterfly Garden is a Certified Monarch Waystation

The Brainerd Library Butterfly Garden is now a [Certified Monarch Waystation](#)! What, pray tell, is that you may ask? Does this conjure visions of a quaint little inn for butterflies? Would it have little butterfly beds in pretty bedrooms with floral print wallpaper? Would it have a fine restaurant for them to dine? Is there a good source of water? Is there a place for them to warm up? Is there a suitable suite for babies to hatch?

Yes, it does—just not like the vision above.

There is a sign that says, “Certified Monarch Waystation”. Marissa Lehmacher, the children’s librarian, applied for the certification and the sign. That is to show people that this place has all the things a monarch needs. Of course, the butterflies can’t read that but in butterfly speak, there is a sign at the butterfly garden advertising all of the features they need, mentioned above.

The garden has milkweed, in fact several types. Without this, they would just keep flying to a place that *does* have it. This is the ONLY plant that butterflies will lay their eggs on. No milkweed? No monarchs. Please read this article by the US Fish and Wildlife Service, “[Spreading Milkweed, Not Myths](#)”. The eggs hatch into teeny tiny caterpillars. These teeny tiny caterpillars eat the leaves of the milkweed plant. They eat and eat and eat and become bigger and bigger and bigger until they morph into a chrysalis.

As a chrysalis, they just hang looking beautiful, but nothing like a butterfly. Several weeks later, the wings become visible through the outer coating and then, Voila! A beautiful monarch butterfly is born. Once the wings are dry it can fly and does—to the closest yummy flower. The butterfly garden has a constant supply of flowers that they like (fine dining). There are several bushes and many trees nearby for shelter from weather and sleeping (the pretty bedrooms) and a mud puddle for sipping. The mud supplies minerals. There is also a flat rock in there which holds the sun’s heat for them to warm up on. They are cold blooded and can’t warm themselves the way people can. The Haddam Garden Club keeps the garden weeded, watered and generally garden-worthy.

There are [certain requirements](#) outlined by [MonarchWatch.org](#) one must meet to become a certified waystation. They are not difficult to meet.

Since only a small portion of monarch eggs and caterpillars become butterflies in the wild, Marissa and the garden club are bringing caterpillars inside and rearing them on the desk in the children’s department. It is very exciting for children and adults alike to see this spectacle. I suggest that you stop into the children’s department – often, to see the changes that take place. And while you’re at it, check out the garden outside. Just please don’t touch the plants. Especially the milkweed. [It can be toxic](#) to eyes and skin.

A Couple More Thoughts...

The next meeting of the Haddam Garden Club will be October 9 at 10 at the Community Center in Higganum. After the meeting there will be a program on Drying and Pressing Flowers by Anna Gianelli. The public is welcome to attend the program at 11:30.

This month's recipe from "[Digging In](#)", the cookbook by the Haddam Garden Club, was submitted by Barbara Stellenwerf. She describes it as an old Haddam recipe, handed down. "Totin'" as in carry to a potluck dinner.

Totin' Casserole

1 8 oz package of broad noodles
2 TBSP butter
2 lbs. ground beef
2 cups tomato sauce (canned ok) 2 TBSP flour (opt)
2 cups small curd cottage cheese
1 cup sour cream
1 tsp salt
½ cup chopped onions
¼ cup chopped ripe olives
2 TBSP chopped green peppers

Butter a 3-quart casserole. Cook and drain noodles. Sauté meat in butter. Drain. Stir in tomato sauce (and flour). Simmer 10 minutes. Combine onions, peppers and olives; add cheese, cream and salt. Place half of the noodles in casserole, then cheese mixture, then the other half of the noodles. Top with ground beef and sauce. Bake 30 minutes at 350. Let stand 10 minutes before serving.

Note: Can be frozen. It is better made in advance and heated in the oven the next day.