**TOOLKIT FOR GARDENERS**

**RECOVERING AMERICA’S WILDLIFE: URGENT ACTION NEEDED**

We have created this simple toolkit to help you take easy actions to engage your network and urge Congressional representatives to vote YES and pass the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act. Please adapt/customize as you wish.

**Cover Letter to use with your name to your network of gardeners:**

**ADD DATE 2022**

**To the Gardening Community**

From using native plants to transform yards into wildlife habitat to meeting the Million Pollinator Garden challenge, gardeners can be a powerful voice for the future of wildlife and native plants. And we need them now, with a third of North America’s species—including monarch butterflies, hummingbirds, and bumblebees—at increased risk of extinction. Today, we have an opportunity to directly address the crisis with proactive conservation aimed at preventing beloved species from becoming endangered.

Please rally your fellow gardeners to help pass the historic [Recovering America’s Wildlife Act](http://www.nwf.org/recoverwildlife), which dedicates the most significant investment in wildlife conservation in a generation to state wildlife agencies and tribes. **The time is now.** **Our goal is for bill passage by this summer.**

This simple toolkit is designed to help you enlist fellow gardeners to take meaningful and easy-to-do actions to support this bill. We are racing toward the finish line, let’s work together to send the bill to the President’s desk!

Thank you,

ADD YOUR NAME HERE

**MENU**

**TOOLKIT FOR GARDENERS**

1. **Share this letter with gardeners**
2. **Share these social media**
3. **Run this News alert**
4. **Sample script for calling Congress**
5. **Add your group to the sign-on letter of support**
6. **Examples of pollinators/garden wildlife that will benefit**
7. **Benefits to gardeners**
8. **Source of funds**
9. **More Resources**

1. **Share this letter** with members of gardening clubs and other gardening groups via all channels you use—from newsletters to Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. Feel free to customize.

**To my fellow gardeners,**

I have exciting news for the future of bees, butterflies, hummingbirds, and all pollinators facing accelerating threats. This is our moment to pass the federal [Recovering America’s Wildlife Act](https://www.nwf.org/Our-Work/Wildlife-Conservation/Policy/Recovering-Americas-Wildlife-Act), the most significant investment in wildlife conservation in a generation. Will you join me in asking your members of Congress to support this urgently needed legislation? **Our goal is to pass this bill this summer. The time to act is now.**

We have no time to lose. More than a quarter of North American bumblebee species are at greater risk of extinction. Many butterflies—from monarchs to checkerspots—are in trouble, too, as are a third of all turtle species. Bats (insect eaters and pollinators) are the most threatened of all North American vertebrates.

The bipartisan Recovering America’s Wildlife Act will dedicate $1.3 billion for state-level conservation and $97.5 million to tribal nations annually. This funding is essential for the future of 12,000 species at risk—from tree frogs to native wildflowers. The focus is on proactive and voluntary conservation to prevent species from becoming endangered.

We know from success stories that we can bring back wildlife, if we care enough, work together, and invest in their future. That’s exactly what this Act will do with climate resilient solutions—from conserving and restoring habitats to engaging more people in planting pollinator and bird-friendly gardens

Even with only 5 percent of what’s needed to address the wildlife crisis, states and tribes and their partners have delivered promising successes—showing what’s possible with an increase in funding. The magnitude of the solution must match the magnitude of the problem.

For instance, Wisconsin’s Bumble Bee Brigade (200 trained volunteer community scientists) found the rusty-patched bumblebee at sites in 12 new counties—key data for carrying out best management practices for this federally endangered species.

Will you join me in making sure the children of tomorrow will know a hummingbird hovering among wildflowers and the wondrous migration of monarch butterflies?

Tell your friends. Enlist others. Let’s pass the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act this summer! [TAKE ACTION.](https://support.nwfactionfund.org/page/27217/action/1?_ga=2.61411372.1095605684.1647359298-1334846324.1647359298)

Thank you,

(Signature)

**2. Share social media:**

GARDEN FOR WILDLIFE SOCIAL MEDIA (TWITTER/FACEBOOK/INSTAGRAM) POSTS

* A ruby-throated hummingbird can sip nectar from a thousand flowers in a single day! All pollinators need our help. Urge Congress to pass the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act. #recoverwildlife   
  PHOTO: [Ruby-Throated hummingbird. Jim Hudgins/USFWS.](https://www.flickr.com/photos/usfwsmidwest/43227522614/)
* Monarch butterflies, bumblebees, and meadowlarks are among a third of North America’s wildlife facing higher risks of extinction. Let’s plant hope for wildlife this spring. Pass the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act. Join gardeners taking action now. #recoverwildlife.   
  PHOTO: [Rufous hummingbird. Tom Koerner/U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service](https://www.flickr.com/photos/usfwsmtnprairie/51351059599/)
* “We are like butterflies who flutter for a day and think it is forever.”- Carl Sagan. Will you make this day matter for wildlife forever? Take action to pass the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act. #recoverwildlife

PHOTO: [Swallowtail butterfly Andrew MacLachlin/USFWS](https://www.flickr.com/photos/usfwsnortheast/5984863550/)

* Gardeners registered a million pollinator gardens. What if a million gardeners called for Congress to save pollinators today by passing the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act? Plant the seeds of a better world for wildlife. Take action. #recoverwildlife

PHOTO: [Pollinator garden Courtney Celley/USFWS](https://www.flickr.com/photos/usfwsmidwest/20256415805/)

* What would gardening be without bird song, bee buzz, and hummingbird hum? Keep wildlife in our gardens and in our lives. Pass the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act. Take action. #recoverwildlife

PHOTO: [Bees on pickerel weed Mike Budd/USFWS](https://www.flickr.com/photos/usfwsmidwest/50090017018/)

* A third of North American bat species are in trouble. Bats eat insects that harm crops and some are flower pollinators. Their flights at sunset are magical. Help bats and all wildlife—pass the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act. Take action. #recoverwildlife

PHOTO: [Bats in flight Nick Hristov/NPS](https://www.flickr.com/photos/193079646@N03/51203217828/)

* Bats protect us while we sleep—they snap up tons of mosquitoes and crop-damaging insects. Others pollinate night-blooming flowers and spread fruit seeds. But bats are in trouble. Let’s protect them by passing the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act. Take action. #recoverwildlife

PHOTO: [Hanging bat Travis Largent/USFS](https://www.flickr.com/photos/kaibabnationalforest/48883404596/in/album-72157623554551055/)

* Weighing less than a cracker, a single monarch butterfly can fly 250 miles in a day. But in the past twenty years, monarch numbers have plummeted by 90 percent. Save the monarch. Pass the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act today. Take action. #recoverwildlife

PHOTO: [Monarch butterfly Jim Hudgins/USFWS](https://www.flickr.com/photos/usfwsmidwest/43299273534/)

* Turn the tide for turtles! Freshwater turtles struggle from polluted waters and dangerous roads that slice through their habitat. Let’s help turtles survive and clean up water for all. Tell Congress to pass the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act. Take action. #recoverwildlife

PHOTO: [Western painted turtles Courtney Celley/USFWS](https://www.flickr.com/photos/usfwsmidwest/28230237088/in/photolist-2gjLmGn-2gjbyAT-25CA8Qo-H568u4-25CA9Yq-2gjbSFu-2gjbyYM-H56914-2ixfuBU-2mgrSd8-25CAaMj-2m7kCfe-YV9EZm-ECZegP-V9LWTc-ug7HSE-ZeCprE-VKo85Y-ULx922-26CPALG-279vLMt-2k5PDfv-83soeG-bWbuwX-WfaSxv-K1BkXE-2795quh-K1BkXu-9W7vkf-2gKiz64-rqYPM1-2gKixH4-2iHYfQX-H3FoPX-sjtMJ9-HhLzAi-Tei6RU-bzCSo1-H3hr4D-rvTKUk-rc4i6q-27HegRr-TRjux6-Us4zqW-TRjvPV-Ttp2QF-U7Sgfs-HY4L2H-sYTTuA-9Rkj9T/)

* The rufous hummingbird holds the migration record of 4000 miles—farther than any other hummer. One bird flew from Florida to Alaska. Are you gardening for wildlife in that flight path? Share your garden photo and take action for more pollinator gardens to help our struggling wildlife. Pass the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act #recover wildlife. Take action. #recoverwildlife

PHOTO: [Rufous hummingbird Tom Koerner/USFWS](https://www.flickr.com/photos/usfwsmtnprairie/51351059599/)

* When I planted a pollinator garden, my yard became so lively I never wanted to come inside! What if everyone with even a tiny space planted just one native plant? Pass the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act with funding to enlist more wildlife gardeners. Take action. #recoverwildlife

*(encourage sharing a photo)*

3. **Run this NEWS ALERT** in your newsletter, on your website, action alert notices, and other places you use for outreach. Note: there’s a one paragraph version with the ability to link to the longer article. Or link to this blog: <https://blog.nwf.org/2022/04/calling-all-gardeners-dig-in-now-to-pass-the-recovering-americas-wildlife-act/>

**Urgent Action: Pass the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act**

We need everyone who cares about pollinators and native plants to rally for the passage of the federal Recovering America’s Wildlife Act. With broad support in Congress, this bill offers our best hope for addressing a major wildlife crisis. More than a third of species are already imperiled or at risk of extinction.

This bill will make the most significant investment in wildlife conservation in a generation. Please ask your congressional representatives and Senators to support the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act. **Our goal is a floor vote in the House and Senate by summer.**

[ACT NOW.](https://support.nwfactionfund.org/page/27217/action/1?_ga=2.62469292.1095605684.1647359298-1334846324.1647359298)

***Continue Reading (link to more below or run the entirety of the release).***

The Recovering America’s Wildlife Act offers holistic health care—focusing on prevention, wellness, and recovery to keep species out of the equivalent of hospital emergency rooms. For the more than 1,600 species listed as threatened and endangered, the funding is critical for life-saving measures, too.

Time is short, especially for pollinators. Of the roughly eight hundred butterfly species in the United States, 17 percent are at risk of extinction. More than one-quarter of North American bumblebee species are facing some degree of extinction risk.

Recovering declining populations of pollinators is critical for the future of gardening, as well as for our food supply. Farmers rely on pollinators for growing crops and on insect-eating birds and bats, too.

What can we expect? State fish and wildlife agencies, tribes, and many partners are ready to hit the ground running with proactive wildlife action plans in place to accelerate recovery; restore, repair, and link habitats; and reintroduce species to their former homes. Habitat investments in forests, grasslands, and wetlands also yield clean water, flood prevention, and carbon capture.

We’ll see expanded efforts to plant native milkweed for monarch butterflies that have dwindled in numbers by 90 percent; increased access to native plants and seeds; more education on the value of wildlife-friendly and pollinator gardens; more community science on behalf of pollinators; and new wildlife-related jobs.

The Recovering America’s Wildlife Act will create an estimated 30,000 direct jobs and generate over $93 billion in total economic activity—good news for our economy and for pollinators.

Our history shows when we take action, wildlife recovers, like bald eagles soaring off the endangered species list in 2007. We also know that every new pollinator-friendly garden makes a difference—helping bees, butterflies, birds, and linking habitats across urban, suburban, and rural America.

Please [ACT](https://blog.nwf.org/2019/09/birds-in-crisis-how-one-bill-can-help-our-nations-winged-wonders/) today and spread the word. Let’s pass the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act by summer!

4. **Sample Script** to Call Congress

As a gardener, I care deeply about serious declines in many butterflies, bees, and hummingbirds that pollinate flowers and crops. I’m alarmed to see monarch butterflies dwindling by 90% in the past two decades. That’s why I’m calling you today. Will you vote for the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act (HR 2773 and S. 2372) when it comes to the floor? This legislation is our best chance to address the crisis in time. We can bring back pollinators and wildlife in trouble—if we pass this bill! The Act has broad bipartisan support for proactive voluntary conservation. Can I count on you to work to pass this bill immediately?

5. [**Sign our letter to Congress**](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScvMgnygWgk_nLeygYJ4tTVpX4bCDpFG_cbbZ_tOPA_JRwUlg/viewform)**.**[1700+ groups](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ZNDlhIf9fs_g4LaRUauRxfc97UhHGhap/view?usp=sharing) have already signed, help us get to 2000! (Gardening groups already signed on include Garden Clubs of America, Pine Ridge Gardens, Santa Barbara Botanic Gardens, Atlanta Botanical Garden, Colorado Native Plant Society, Native Plant Society of Texas) Please add your group or chapter. Note: the system takes care of duplicate entries.

6. **Examples of Pollinators and other garden wildlife that will benefit from the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act.** Examples and stories are powerful—showing threats, success, and what’s possible with investment. Feel free to use these examples from various states to add to other actions and customize for your area.

**Baltimore Checkerspot Butterfly (Maryland):** The elegant Baltimore checkerspot was named Maryland’s State Insect in 1973. At the time, it was found in over 15 counties and was considered a relatively common species. Over the last few decades, however, Baltimore checkerspots have declined considerably in Maryland, likely due to habitat loss and deer browse of the caterpillar host plant. In 2012, federal, state, and county agency representatives, university professors, local schools, and nature and education center staff came together to form the Baltimore Checkerspot Recovery Team. With help from Recovering America’s Wildlife Act, this coalition would bolster the population of Baltimore checkerspots through captive rearing and release programs and habitat conservation and enhancement.

**Monarch Butterfly (Midwestern States):** The monarch butterfly’s long distance, multi-generational migration is a wonder of the natural world. Unfortunately, habitat loss in the Midwest and on their wintering grounds in Mexico has provided a one-two punch. Eastern monarchs have declined by 90 percent in only two decades, and are being considered for endangered species listing. Funding from the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act will help midwestern states rebuild dwindling monarch populations by planting native plants, including milkweed, to restore habitat. These actions will help other pollinators in trouble, benefiting farmers, gardeners, and the economy.

**Monarch Butterfly (California):** Western monarch butterflies depend on the California landscape for breeding and overwintering habitat. Unfortunately, severe drought and loss of milkweed acreage has provided a one-two punch. Western monarchs declined by a catastrophic 86% from 2017-2018, and they are being considered for endangered species listing. But California doesn’t need to wait for federal action. Recovering America’s Wildlife Act presents a rare opportunity to protect monarchs by directly funding conservation efforts that cross national borders.

**Endangered Butterflies (Michigan):** The Karner blue butterfly, Mitchell’s satyr butterfly, and Poweshiek butterfly are endangered species, with only a few known populations of Mitchell’s satyr and Poweshiek skipperling left in the world. Funding from Recovering America’s Wildlife Act would support critical conservation efforts to recover these species from the brink of extinction. Actions to conserve these species include minimizing threats to these species, research, and reintroduction efforts.

**Indiana Bat (Kentucky):** During the summer, an Indiana bat will eat as many as 3,000 insects every evening, including many crop pests. Unfortunately, disturbance of the caves Indiana bats depend on led to significant population declines and ultimately required a listing under the Endangered Species Act. The newest threat is white-nose syndrome, a fungus that has caused unprecedented mortality in many bat species. To date, Kentucky’s Indiana bats have avoided major declines from the disease and have even helped rebuild populations elsewhere. This makes protecting Kentucky’s Indiana bats even more important. Funding from the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act could help Indiana bats by protecting the colonies that are as-yet unaffected by white-nose syndrome and funding research into how to stop the disease.

**Native Prairie and Wildflowers (Iowa):** The Iowa Department of Natural Resources’ Prairie Resources Unit grows more than 65 species of Iowa-origin prairie grasses and wildflowers that once covered 70-80% of the Iowa landscape. These plants are now bringing the prairie back to public lands. Several of these plant species are host plants for at-risk caterpillars. Increased funds will allow them to grow additional host plant species to help a growing list of butterflies. The Prairie Resources Unit routinely partners with local gardening/conservation groups, colleges, and other civic organizations to teach about native plants and their importance to Iowa’s heritage.

**Tree Frog (New Jersey):** The Pine Barrens treefrog is a strikingly colored frog with a bright green ground color and a lavender stripe that runs along the sides of its body. The familiar call is a distinctive nasally “quonk, quonk, quonk.” This species requires pristine breeding ponds featuring the acidic waters characteristic of the New Jersey Pine Barrens. While much of the Pine Barrens have been preserved via the state’s land preservation efforts and creation of the Pinelands National Reserve, persisting threats remain of habitat loss, fragmentation, and the destruction or pollution of breeding pools. The Recovering America’s Wildlife Act will fund important conservation for tree frogs and other wildlife.

**Western Pond Turtle (Pacific Northwest)**

Once common, this turtle has plunged toward a potential listing under the Endangered Species Act. Funding from the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act will reduce risks from being struck by cars when crossing roads, control invasive plants that harm nesting sites, provide more nesting habitat and prevent disturbances, provide structures for turtles to bask upon, and protect upland habitat adjacent to water.

**7. Benefits to Gardeners from the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act**

1. **Every pollinator counts**: Pollinators will receive focused conservation attention in every state and on tribal lands—from monarch butterflies to ruby-throated hummingbirds.

2. **More pollinator gardens:** Garden center associations report a 92% increase in demand for pollinator-friendly plants and services in the past few years. The Act will help meet the demand and make a difference for wildlife.

3. **Community science**: Expect more community science and volunteer opportunities to participate in pollinator conservation, and enjoy the rewards of making a difference for pollinators at home or in the field.

**4.** **Invest in state wildlife conservation:**  When everyone contributes to funding for state fish and wildlife agencies, everyone benefits from the resulting conservation of thousands of species and significant habitats -- and the numerous recreational ways, including gardening, to enjoy the outdoors.

**5.** **Invest in tribal nations wildlife conservation:** Funding tribal nations wildlife conservation programs will recognize and provide consistent funding for innovative conservation programs, including pollinator gardens that are also important to cultural heritage.

1. **What is the source of funding for the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act?** The bill is fiscally responsible and ensures saving taxpayer funds in the long run. Currently the funding source for Senate version is civil or criminal penalties, fines, sanctions, and similar federal revenues generated from violations of environmental and natural resources laws and regulations. The key language is that funds available for Recovering America’s Wildlife Act are from “remaining natural resource or environmental-related violation revenue” that “are not directed to be deposited in a fund other than the general fund of the Treasury or have otherwise been appropriated.” The bill text is written so that the source of funding doesn’t touch any existing programs or appropriated funds.

**9. More Resources:**

<https://blog.nwf.org/2022/04/calling-all-gardeners-dig-in-now-to-pass-the-recovering-americas-wildlife-act/>

o  [The Recovering America’s Wildlife Act](https://www.nwf.org/Our-Work/Wildlife-Conservation/Policy/Recovering-Americas-Wildlife-Act) home page

o  [7 Reasons to Support the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act](https://blog.nwf.org/2021/04/7-reasons-to-support-the-recovering-americas-wildlife-act/)

o  [Four Ways to Help our Hummingbirds Fly Home](https://blog.nwf.org/2018/05/four-ways-to-help-our-hummingbirds-fly-home/)

o  [A Safety Net for Butterflies](https://blog.nwf.org/2018/03/a-safety-net-for-butterflies/)

o  [Fact Sheet: The Recovering America’s Wildlife Act](https://www.nwf.org/~/media/Documents/PDFs/Wildlife-Conservation/Fast-Facts-Wildlife-Crisis_10192017.ashx)

o  [Reintroducing Wildlife: Five Species for Hope](https://blog.nwf.org/2022/01/reintroducing-wildlife-5-species-for-hope-2/)

* **Garden for Wildlife** **Resources (add your resources here):**

o  [Million Pollinator Garden Challenge](http://millionpollinatorgardens.org/)

o  [Certify your Habitat](https://www.nwf.org/Garden-for-Wildlife/Certify)

o  [Garden for Wildlife](https://www.nwf.org/Home/Garden-for-Wildlife)

A larger overall toolkit with additional resources is available: <https://affiliates.nwf.org/resources/recovering-toolkit/>

For more information contact:

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