

READING EAGLE

# HOME & Garden

SUNDAY 2.23.20

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**ON THE COVER:**

As a sign of spring, regional gardeners are already seeing some crocuses appear. As for garden planning, see Page 6. ADOBE STOCK.



**10 Butterfly preserve**  
Audubon International creates monarch habitat on golf course.

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Andy Andrews  
Special Sections Editor

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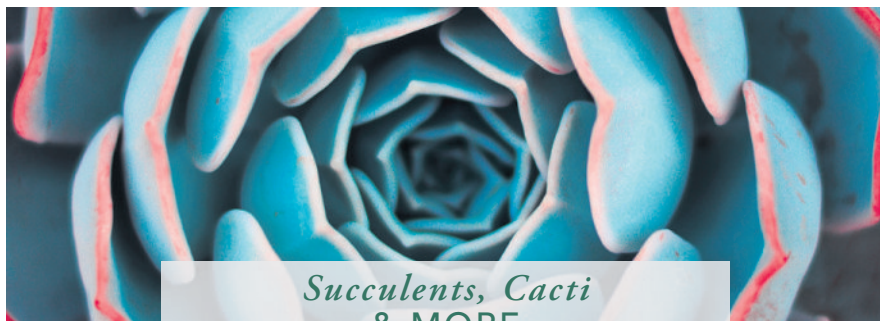
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## TIME

# You can easily shift to daylight saving time

## StatePoint

Spring is just around the corner, which means that so, too, is daylight saving time, which begins Sunday, March 8.

While many people look forward to the start of DST all winter long, seeing it as a marker of warmer, longer days ahead, making the actual shift is not always so simple for your body, mind or schedule.

Here are a few ways to “spring forward” with ease:

- Expect mornings to be a bit touch-and-go for the first several days. You may be extra groggy as your body adjusts to the new schedule.

Luckily, there are plenty of eye-opening ways to energize your morning, including getting some exercise, even if it's just a quick 5-10-minute routine; playing up-tempo music; hydrating; and eating a healthful, protein-rich breakfast. And of course, there is always coffee.

- Likewise, it may take a few days before you start to feel sleepy at your typical bedtime. Create a wind-down routine in the evenings that will help relax you and get you primed to feel sleepy. This can include meditation, journaling and shutting down devices that emit blue light.

- You'll already be losing an hour of the weekend when DST starts, so don't waste any time manually setting your watches and clocks forward. For those who prefer a simple time-keeping device, this process can be simplified. For example, by linking the Casio Edifice EQB1000D-1A to a smartphone, you can get the correct time not only in your current location, but for more than 300 cities around the world, making travel smooth-sailing as well. The watch accounts for both time zone and daylight saving time status of your current location, giving you one less to-do on



ISTOCK VIA GETTY IMAGES PLUS

Don't let the transition to daylight saving time on March 8 create undue stress for you and your family. With some smart strategies, you can adjust to the change with ease.

this already short weekend. just your schedule gradually minutes at a time in order to  
 If you like to eat meals over the space of four days give your stomach a chance  
 at a fixed time, you can ad- by bumping meal times 15 to catch up with the clock.

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## LANDSCAPING

# Beauty inside, outside

## Indoor, outdoor aesthetics vital to senior living facilities



COURTESY OF BATES LANDSCAPING LTD.

Shrub maintenance is a year-round activity for Bates Landscaping Ltd.

**By Michael C. Upton**  
*Reading Eagle correspondent*

If it looks like home, it feels like home. This sentiment echoes through all aspects of living into life's golden years, whether it is a condo in a retirement community or a room in a skilled-care facility.

"The built environment is an important theme which should be considered when trying to improve the sense of home," write authors from Fontys University of Applied Sciences, Quinnipiac University School of Nursing, and others in a 2016 study ti-

tled "The Factors Influencing the Sense of Home in Nursing Homes."

According to the report, environmental factors are not always addressed in practice. Architects, designers and care professionals should "work together in the creation of optimal designs."

Inside and out, those recommended practices are taking place here in Berks County.

### SENSE OF BEAUTY

Monika Lee needs to have a good sense of beauty. As president and CEO of Artistry International

Inc., Lansdowne, Delaware County, she works with staff, owners, and interior designers to select custom framed prints and other artwork for highly visible spaces, many of which are large retirement facilities and nursing homes.

"We provide artwork that comes with all the design services necessary," Lee said.

Each different location calls for distinct artwork. A painting suitable for a lounge will not work well in a hallway. Lee relies on an inventory of artwork to fit the right piece with the right place.

"We can bring a full-size image into a place and (staff) can see how it works," Lee said. "We are hands on and face-to-face."

Lee received a degree in fine art with a concentration in carpentry from Kutztown University. A senior year of independent study created the business plan for what became Artistry International.

"I wanted to sell high-end art to corporations," Lee said, but was not happy with how she originally presented her plan. So she went out and "hit the streets, and I started in with (several retirement)

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COURTESY OF MONIKA LEE

**Monika Lee of Artistry International Inc. at one of her most memorable jobs sites, the Missionary Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Muhlenberg Township.**

communities.”

Lee’s artistic touch can be seen at Genesis Health-Care sites around Berks County. One of her most memorable experiences was working with the Missionary Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, 51 Seminary Ave., Muhlenberg Township. For the missionary project, Lee used the organization’s existing material, framed it with acid-free matting and preservation glass and mixed the old images in with new artwork.

“It was a mix of the old and the new,” Lee said. “Basically, you tie in whatever is special and make it stick out.”

One of Lee’s first jobs was outfitting a new hospital complex with 800 pieces of new and stock art in 80 days. She works with murals, too.

“We are able to think completely out of the

box and do whatever is needed,” Lee said.

She has been running the business for 32 years and learned a lot about how people interact with art, especially in retirement communities.

“If people come from farms, they may really be into scenes — although they look fresh and new — that are of horses, stables, tractors and things they relate to,” Lee said. “Sometimes (organizations) just pick what they like. What they don’t realize is that older people don’t see certain colors well: greens, browns, grays. If you’re picking abstract (paintings) with those colors, it just looks like mud to most elderly people going by.”

#### LANDSCAPE DESIGN

Dealing with mud, and all other aspects of nature, is Melissa Blake’s job. At Bates Landscaping Ltd.,



COURTESY OF BATES LANDSCAPING LTD.

**Hydrangeas and other perennials make great summer welcoming flowers.**



COURTESY OF BATES LANDSCAPING LTD.

**Melissa Blake understands the importance of conveying happiness through landscape design.**

West Chester, landscape design is her specialty

“My overall goal is to just bring people a sense of happiness,” Blake said.

As a designer, Blake al-

ways looks at residential living facilities in a different light.

“Every business is different,” Blake said. “There are different visual attractions for each business. The front entrance always must look good, especially for a senior-living facility. And then there are little specialty areas, such as side entrances or common areas. We always try to make high impact on those areas.”

An abundance of annual and seasonal flowers can bring smiles to the faces of residents and visitors.

“There’s different little nuances for every type of property,” Blake said.

Because of the attention

these locations get, they require more maintenance than other businesses, whether it is 24-hour snow removal in the winter or making sure the bulbs come up in spring. Daffodils and tulips are part of Blake’s signature. Facilities vary, but living centers can receive anywhere from four to eight changes of flowers throughout the year.

“We also do regular trimming to make sure the shrubs are nice,” Blake said. “The same thing with the weeds. We just want everything to look nice at whatever time of year it is.”

When it comes to shrubs, Blake makes sure to plant a variety that will flower at different times of the

year or provide nice colors in the fall. In the summer, she often relies on hydrangeas and roses. And not to forget winter she always incorporates evergreens, including some that may produce red berries for another touch of color.

An example of her work is Arbour Square at West Chester.

“They want to make a high impact, so we do everything in multiple visits throughout the year,” Blake said. “It gives us the opportunity to be creative. There’s always something going on in the different regions of the facility.”

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## GARDENING

# Only a month 'til spring

## Flowers, vegetable plantings make happy gardeners

By **Marylouise Sholly**  
*Reading Eagle correspondent*

Spring is on its way!

While the new season may be here soon, already the hearts and minds of gardeners such as Nancy James of Perry Township and Brian Ringler of Maiden Creek Township are in the season.

Even if they can't be out in the sunshine, planting and weeding, these veteran gardeners are patiently waiting, planning what to put where and imagining the blooms they'll be getting from the bulbs planted last fall.

James has so many flowers planted on her property that she calls it her "yard-en."

The part-lawn, part-garden is home to all sorts of spring flowers and perennials, from asters to zinnias.

"My house is built on a bank, so when we moved here, I started to plant flowers on the bank," James said, explaining that taking care of the plants was a lot easier than mowing the bank, which is tall enough to contain two flights of stairs.

Surrounded by farmland, a stream running through the property, it was a setting that only required a few flowers to be perfect, so James continued to plant flowers here and there.

What started out as an infatuation blossomed into true love, as her affection for flowers grew like a weed.

### FAVORITE FLOWERS

Husband Kenneth doesn't have to tiptoe through the tulips, but he'd better not step on the crocus, one of



COURTESY OF NANCY JAMES

**A large, bright-pink hibiscus has been thriving in Nancy's garden since the 1980s. It is one of her favorite blooming plants.**

James' favorite spring flowers.

"I told my husband: Don't walk on my lawn when the crocus are coming up," James said.

A few years ago, after visiting Winterthur Museum and Gardens in Delaware, James was so impressed by the sweeping lawn full of crocus that by the time she arrived home, she knew just what her own lawn needed.

"It was beautiful," she

said. "So when I got home I went to Lowe's and they had crocus bulbs on sale, and I thought: Hello! and bought 500."

Moles and voles enjoy the tastier aspects of crocus, but James has found peppermint oil or garlic flakes each do a nice job of keeping the critters away.

While James greatly enjoys her flowers and working in her garden, she also has a mission; to share blooming plants with ev-

eryone.

Nancy James is the Johnny Appleseed of perennials.

"My plants are all over Berks County, Schuylkill County and Lebanon County," James said. "My mission is to give plants away, and I don't charge for them."

"You need to divide perennials to keep them healthy, but when you divide them, don't toss them: Find an organization and

donate them," James said.

Every year, her extra perennials get taken for a ride.

"Last summer, I took five trunk-loads of flower cuttings to Habitat for Humanity," James said. "I thought there must be somebody out there who needs them."

She doesn't dig up her tulips and daffodils, however, because she wants the bulb plants to naturalize, or multiply.

"If you have a plant you really like, use rooting hor-

mone," James said. "When I cut or trim something, like lavender or butterfly bush, I'll dip it in rooting hormone to start new plants."

"Woody plants are harder to start, but it's worth a try," James said. "Gardening is hit or miss."

### BLUEBIRD LADY

James is also known as the Bluebird Lady.

"Since 2000, I've been feeding the bluebirds, and I have seven that live here

year 'round," she said.

James, 71, has had two knee replacements but doesn't plan to slow down when it comes to gardening.

"It's hard to maintain everything, but I don't know what I'd give up," James said. "To me, it's my outside gym."

Her large, semi-tropical hibiscus plants are also some of her favorites.

"I bought them at the Leesport Auction, and I've had them in since the '80s," James said. "Some of the bushes are two feet wide at the base. People will actually stop and take pictures.

"I've had people tell me: 'They don't live through the winter,' and I say: 'How many do you want?'" James said of her thriving hibiscus.

James extends her love of plants to Christmastime, when she hosts free greenery centerpiece "how-to" seminars in her heated garage.

With a holly tree and 15 hemlocks on her property, James has plenty of material to work with.

"I cut bunches of greens and teach how to make fresh greenery bowls," James said. "It's free and I love teaching people how to do it.

"We have Christmas music going, and spiced cider and people make cookies and bring them," he said. "It's so much fun. I can't wait until fall so I can use the greens for that

"So I use what I have and I give away what I have: That's my mission," James said. "And come spring, I'll be out there, checking my flower beds."

#### CAUGHT INTEREST

For Brian Ringler, 67, Maiden creek Township, it's the vegetable gardens that have caught his interest.

"Once you get into gardening, it's really amazing," Ringler said. "If you just think about it, you have this tiny seed — and you can hardly see — and you put it in the ground, take care of it and get this awesome plant."

Ringler grew up on a 40-acre family farm near Birdsboro but, as a kid, didn't give much thought to the garden on their property.

As a career truck driver, Ringler had little time at home until he retired.

Then he needed something to do.

"It started as a hobby, and then it just took off," Ringler said. "I had read about the upside-down tomato plant and I tried it — I tried my best — but it just didn't work. So, like everybody else, I started with tomatoes."

After growing scallions and peppers of all colors, Ringler branched out into zucchini and eggplant. While they performed well, those two vegetables probably won't be invited back to Brian's garden.

"If my wife doesn't want to cook with it, I won't bother planting it," Ringler said.

Wife Pamela is from Jamaica, and loves to cook with okra, he said.

"Okra is hard to get around here, so I thought I'd grow my own," he said.

With the right kind of mulch, his okra grows like crazy, he said.

#### MORE ROOT VEGETABLES

This year, Ringler is planning to grow more root vegetables; beets, carrots, parsnips and radishes.

"I try to concentrate on vegetables that are super-healthy or that are expensive to buy," Ringler said. "My wife and I love juicing vegetables, so whatever you can juice, I'll plant."

Pamela even makes an okra smoothie that they both enjoy.

Ringler's constant care of his garden produces not only healthy vegetables, but an attractive, colorful plot.

"I just have a small yard and a small garden, but my sister came over last year to see it and she was amazed," Ringler said.

Ringler's garden has extended into more hobbies. He makes his own sauces



COURTESY OF DAWN TILDEN

**Gardener Nancy James gives seminars on making Christmas centerpieces in her garage.**

and learned how to can jalapeno peppers.

The Ringler garden is all organic, and helped by the compost pile they maintain all year.

This year, Ringler sent soil samples to the Penn State extension office to monitor his garden's pH.

"When you have the proper pH, not only does it help the plants grow, but it helps to keep insects away," Ringler said. "When plants are superhealthy, they're more resistant to insects."

Ringler is also learning about companion planting. Certain plants and herbs grow better when planted near each other.

"Basil is supposed to enhance the flavors of tomatoes, and nasturtiums grow well near cucumbers and also attract pollinators," Ringler said. "If you research, you find there are plants who really like to be near each other."

Gardening is like anything, Ringler said. The more you learn, the more



COURTESY OF NANCY JAMES

**A pink star magnolia bush near bright yellow and red tulips heralds the arrival of spring in 2019 at the home and garden of Nancy and Kenneth James in Perry Township.**

you realize there's even more to learn.

"I'm just a small-scale gardener, but it's fascinat-

ing," Ringler said. "Every day that's a nice day, I'm out there, planning, getting the soil ready. I'm to-

tally into it."

Contact Marylouise Sholly: [specialsections@readingeagle.com](mailto:specialsections@readingeagle.com).

## HOME IMPROVEMENT

## Create the living space you always wanted

NAPS

Look up “basement” in the dictionary and you’ll see cellar, vault — even crypt. But with a little effort and some design flair you can make your basement come alive and reclaim valuable living space.

Create the workout room you always wanted. A dramatic home theater. Or a spacious office, playroom or craft area. If you can reimagine your basement, you can remodel it:

- **Make a plan:** An accurate floor plan will help you visualize the end result, especially if you’re dividing rooms, adding a pool table, a large sectional or a projector and theater seating. Dozens of design apps can help you create a virtual, 3D floor plan. A few

to consider are Home Designer Suite, Sweet Home 3D, Home Design 3D and Google Sketchup. Check to see if you’ll need a permit for improvements.

- **Banish water:** Does your basement pass the smell test? If your lower level has moisture problems, your nose will know. Besides a musty smell, moisture leaves other clues, including dark, saturated concrete block walls, flaking paint or condensation. Consult a basement waterproofing contractor if you have any concerns before you begin remodeling.

- **Elevate your ceiling style:** Stained or sagging ceilings also point to excess moisture. Identify the cause and make repairs. Then replace the old ceiling with coffered ceiling tiles. Some

of Armstrong Ceilings’ coffered options resist moisture and mold and stand up to humidity.

- **Like the look of wood?** Check out Armstrong WoodHaven Ceiling Planks. They’re available in a variety of finishes, although WoodHaven Classic White planks is the do-it-yourself favorite.

- **Beautify floors and walls:** Beautiful, versatile flooring options are abundant today. Before you choose, think about how you’ll use the space. Consider structural issues, too.

Creating a playroom or cozy retreat? If moisture isn’t a worry, add warmth and softness underfoot with carpeting or an area rug.

If your subfloor is smooth and even, vinyl is hard to beat. Whether in tile, sheet or plank form, the styles are

versatile and the material is water-resistant or waterproof.

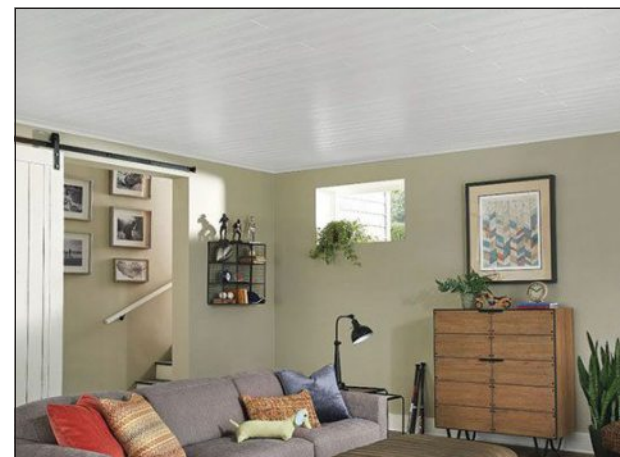
If you’re adding a basement gym, consider rubber interlocking tiles. They absorb shock and you can install them yourself.

You’ll discover abundant wall-covering options, too, such as wainscoting, paneling and beadboard. Subtle grass cloth wallpapers add sophistication. Peel-and-stick cork wall tiles create design interest and absorb sound.

Whatever your choice, be sure to waterproof the walls before you cover them.

- **Make a statement:** Once you’ve landed on the look you love, whether it’s traditional, farmhouse or mid-century modern, personalize your décor to make it your own.

Display cubes or built-in shelving with lighting are great options for showing



NAPS

**When you get down to it, you can live up your basement and create a great deal of living space.**

off your trophies, baskets, pottery or collectibles. For color and warmth, mix and match a variety of pillows and plush throws.

To personalize your walls, without making a permanent design commitment, consider wall decals. Their elegant patterns and bold images add instant interest.

Use every type of lighting — general, task and accent — to bring your basement out of the shadows. Mirrors are another great way to add light, and the illusion of space.

So don’t let your lower level go unloved and unused any longer. Let the transformation begin.

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## OUTDOOR STORAGE

# Turn a simple shed into a livable oasis

StatePoint

Once the domain of lawn mowers and gardening tools, today's backyard sheds are being repurposed into unique, functional spaces (think she-shed, bunkhouse or even a bar pub) complete with plumbing and electricity.

Here are tips from the experts on how to turn a simple shed into a backyard oasis.

"Quite often, we are seeing that homeowners are adding electricity to backyard sheds and using decorative interior lighting to make a statement, just as lighting would be used in the interiors of a home," said Jennifer Kis, director of marketing communications for Progress Lighting, Greenville, S.C.

Backyard sheds are widely available at garden centers, hardware and home stores in a variety of architectural styles, from traditional to modern. Sheds range in size, from small (under 80 square feet), medium (approximately 90 to 120 square feet) and large (ranging from 144 to 288 square feet.) Choose a size appropriate for the use: for example, a gardener's getaway or she-shed may be on the smaller size. A bunkhouse or bar shed will need to be larger.

Decide whether this will be a do-it-yourself project from the ground up, or whether a prefabricated shed best meets your needs. Check with your local planning department to comply with codes and guidelines.

Decide if the shed will mirror the architectural features of your home. Keep in mind that because sheds are not tall, the roof will be visible and should be considered as part of the design.

When turning a backyard shed into a dream bunkhouse at her lakeside home, designer, artist and owner of Meme Hill Studio, Amie Freling Brown put this to the test.

"I'm obsessed with the tiny living concept and the she-shed movement," said Freling Brown. "When we decided we needed more sleeping space for our 750 square foot lake house, we knew it was time to create our own tiny house."

Choosing a 10-by-12-foot classic backyard shed with

a gambrel roof, gable vents, transom windows and 7-foot walls to give top campers in the bunk beds more headroom, Freling Brown transformed a simple shed into a bright, nautical farmhouse-inspired bunkhouse, complete with electricity for an overhead light, two wall lanterns and electrical outlets.

The hand-painted wood grain texture of its overhead pendant inspired Freling Brown's choice of reclaimed wood paneling for the ceiling, creating an unexpected décor detail. She added vinyl plank flooring that would stand up to sandy, wet feet from the lake.

Beadboard-paneled walls painted in a semi-gloss white make the most of the reflected light, adding to the



COURTESY OF MEME HILL STUDIO

**By transforming a shed into a livable oasis, extending your home's living space is both trendy and easy.**

small space's open, airy feeling. As a contrast to the light palette of the bunkhouse interior, she used color in coordinating bedding, nautical decor and navy furniture, as

well as accessories make it warm and inviting.

For more lighting tips, trends and inspiration, visit Progress Lighting at [progressltg.com/Lighting](http://progressltg.com/Lighting).

## POLLINATION

# 'Bee' thankful for pollinators



NAPS

The cranberries in your cranberry sauce, and many other fruits and vegetables, owe their continued existence to pollinators such as honey bees.



NAPS

Honeybees and other pollinators play a significant role in pollinating many fruits and vegetables, so it's imperative we help feed them, too.

NAPS

When you gather with family or friends around the table for holidays this coming spring, consider just how much pollinators contribute to your favorite dishes.

Whether you're recreating your grandmother's famous apple pie or forging new traditions in the kitchen, honey bees and butterflies are essential to the bountiful harvests that fill tables and spread cheer. As you dig into your favorite holiday dishes, take a moment to "bee" thankful for pollinators and the nuts, fruits and vegetables that depend on them to grow.

Many go-to holiday drinks would be lost without pollination. You can thank pollinators for Easter flowers and foods, which grow thanks to pollinators. Even some plants that are self-pollinating, such as peaches, rely on pollinators to grow. If you're looking to try something new, consider adding peach puree to your champagne for festive Bellinis.

Pollinators help make your table more "green" in every way, whether you're dining on brussels sprouts or a green bean and onion casserole. Whether your main dish comes with "stuffing" or "dressing," it will go well with cranberries: one of many

Anyone can play a role in supporting pollinators. For one thing, you can educate friends and family about the important role of pollination in many foods they eat. For another, you can bring the bees to your yard by planting the following:

- Lavender
- Coneflower
- Rosemary
- Sunflower
- Sage
- Lamb's ears
- Catnip
- Bells of Phacelia
- Redbud
- Black-eyed Susan
- Aster
- Oregano
- Verbena
- Yarrow

fruits reliant on pollinators.

Contemplate the importance of pollinators over a slice of pie made with cherries, blueberries or blackberries. Along with the vanilla you may add to the pie filling, these berries can be added to the list of plants requiring pollinators' services.

Honeybees and other pollinators play a significant role in pollinating many fruits and vegetables we eat each day, so it's imperative we help feed them, too. Feed a Bee, an initiative of the Bayer North

American Bee Care Program, increases pollinator food and habitat by supporting local groups who plant wildflowers in their own communities across the U.S. To date, Feed a Bee has supported nearly 180 organizations in all 50 states by providing more than \$700,000 in funding to create or expand pollinator gardens.

For more information about bees and how you can support pollinator health, visit [www.FeedABee.com](http://www.FeedABee.com).



COURTESY OF MARCUS GRAY

For home gardeners who want to help sustain butterflies, the monarchs need to feed on late-blooming plants, such as asters or goldenrod.

## HABITATS

# Butterfly preserve

## Audubon International creates monarch habitat on golf courses

By **Marylouise Sholly**  
*Reading Eagle correspondent*

This is not your Grandpa's golf course.

Today, updated management practices use integrated pest control management instead of chemicals to control weeds, attention is given to reducing water usage and butterfly preserves are thriving amid the golfers.

Audubon International and the Environmental Defense Fund have partnered to create Monarchs in the Rough, a program that creates monarch butterfly habitat in out-of-play areas on golf courses across North America.

This initiative gives free, regionally-appropriate milkweed seeds to golf courses, enough to plant at least one acre of new habitat and technical assistance to get the seeds started.

The "rough" refers to less-maintained areas in and around golf courses.

Launched in 2018, the Monarch in the Rough initiative includes 650 golf courses, creating more than 900 acres of butterfly habitat that stretch from Canada to Mexico.

Golf properties occupy 2.3 million acres across the country, but use only 30% of that area for the actual game, giving them ample opportunities to establish

plantings for butterflies, said Marcus Gray of Audubon International, Monarch in the Rough program manager.

"We're working hard to change the image of golf courses, as they are often the last remaining open space in many communities," Gray said. "We need as much habitat for butterflies as we can get, and this is a concerted effort to save and protect these butterflies."

### Situation dire

Within a generation, the situation for the monarchs had become dire.

"The monarch population has declined by 90% in the past 20 years, and that

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loss is linked to the loss in habitat,” said Christine Kane, CEO of Audubon International. “The reasons range from housing and commercial development to changes in agriculture production. Where land couldn’t be plowed earlier, it can be plowed now.

“Milkweed was also viewed as a weed, but now we understand the important role it plays for the monarch.”

The Environmental Defense Fund and Audubon International were trying to find ways to improve the monarch’s situation and give the well-known black-and-orange butterflies a future.

“We created the program together,” Kane said. “We realized that golf is an industry that requires lots of land, and because only about 30% of the land is used for playing golf, the rest of the acreage that is ‘out-of-play’ could support habitat for butterflies.”

The program was initially funded by a combined grant for \$150,000 from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation with matching funds from the U.S. Golf Association and Audubon In-

ternational.

A pilot program began in California in 2017. Free milkweed seed was distributed nationwide in 2018, and the program took off in August 2018 when the grant was received.

Audubon International began recruiting golf courses, asking those courses located in the monarch’s fly-way from Canada to Mexico, to participate.

“It comes with a pollinator mix of seeds to help support the plot and help other types of butterflies,” Kane said.

### Big enough to eat

The milkweed seeds are generally planted in fall and will take a season to mature. After one season, the plants will be big enough for a monarch caterpillar to eat, Gray said.

The milkweed plant is the only food a monarch caterpillar will eat, Gray said.

Adult monarchs lay eggs on the milkweed, which will form into a caterpillar before becoming a chrysalis. Adult monarchs also drink nectar from the milkweeds, making the plants important to

the monarchs throughout their life cycle.

A number of golf courses in the south-central Pennsylvania area are participating in Monarchs in the Rough, including the Bent Creek Country Club Course in Manheim Township, Lancaster County; the Lebanon Country Club in North Cornwall Township, Lebanon County; the Allentown Municipal Golf Course, Trexler Park, Lehigh County; the Coatesville Country Club, West Caln Township, Chester County; and the Mountain Valley Golf Course in Ryan Township, Schuylkill County.

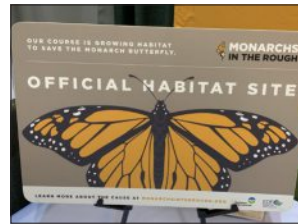
“The novel thing about the golf courses is they have the staff and the budget to maintain these habitats in the future,” Gray said. “I look at these golf courses as a network of reserves for the butterflies.”

Even though their numbers have declined since the 1980s, Gray is hopeful that projects such as Monarchs in the Rough will help their populations to increase.

“We’re just trying to get more habitat in the landscape,” Gray said.

COURTESY OF MARCUS GRAY

**A butterfly preserve on a golf course. Adult monarchs like zinnias, verbena, coneflowers, butterfly bush blooms and blazing star, along with many other perennials.**



COURTESY OF MARCUS GRAY

**Audubon International and the Environmental Defense Fund have partnered to create Monarchs in the Rough, a program that creates monarch butterfly habitat in out-of-play areas on golf courses across North America.**

### Save and protect

Doing butterfly stewardship work can be reward-

ing, but it can also be a battle to save and protect the delicate creatures.

“Conservation work has been going on in earnest for the past five years,” Gray said. “We get reports from golf courses that they are seeing more monarchs, but that’s difficult to tell, and we have a long way to go yet.

“But with the golf courses, we’re getting a whole new sector engaged, and they’re jumping in with both feet. They are actually scaling up and planting more milkweed on their own.”

For home gardeners who want to help sustain the butterflies, Gray said the monarchs need to feed on late-blooming plants, such as asters or goldenrod.

Adult monarchs like zinnias, verbena, coneflowers, butterfly bush blooms and blazing star, along with many other perennials, he said.

Homeowners can find

plants and seeds for monarchs at native plant nurseries or seed companies, and in this area, at vendors such as Ernst Seeds in Meadville, Crawford County; Bowman’s Hill Wildflower Preserve Spring Wildflower Gala in New Hope, Bucks County; and Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square, Chester County.

Some local wildlife conservancies may be able to help gardeners find seeds or plants to help the monarchs and other pollinators.

Audubon International is a partner of the Monarch Joint Venture, the largest collaborative in the world to arrest the decline of the monarch.

Check out the hashtag #MonarchsInTheRough on Twitter or visit their Facebook page for updates from the field: [www.facebook.com/MonarchsInTheRough](http://www.facebook.com/MonarchsInTheRough).

Contact Marylouise Sholly: [specialsections@readingeagle.com](mailto:specialsections@readingeagle.com).

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## HOME AND GARDEN

# Protect songbirds around your house, garden

## StatePoint

Songbirds are not only beautiful, they are a vital component of the ecosystems they inhabit.

If you have a garden, you may have observed this in action.

Unfortunately, millions of wild birds are killed annually by colliding with windows in the U.S. alone. But your family can take action to prevent it from happening on your own property. Here's how:

- Make windows visible

to birds: Special decals that reflect ultraviolet sunlight to your home's windows, particularly those windows that are highly reflective of open sky, have been proven to substantially reduce the likelihood of bird strikes. Those from WindowAlert feature patterns that give the appearance of slightly frosted translucent glass, but glow like a stoplight for birds. The brand also makes a high-tech liquid called WindowAlert UV Liquid, which can be applied between decals for

greater protection. More information can be found at [www.windowalert.com](http://www.windowalert.com).

- Be mindful of bird-feeder placement: Bird feeders are a lovely way to attract beautiful birds to your yard while giving them a place to rest and refuel. Remember, though, bird strikes tend to occur near bird feeders, as feeding birds are easily frightened and are apt to take wild, evasive flight. To avoid this from happening, be sure to use window decals, as well as to position feeders

closer than three feet or farther than 30 feet from windows. Surprisingly, the safest placement is attached to the window itself. Assess the birdfeeders in your yard and make changes as needed.

- Consider other hazards: Other ways you can protect birds on your property include gardening organically, keeping pet cats indoors or in an enclosure and growing native plant and flower species suited to pollinating birds.

"With a few small home

updates this season, your family can save the lives of wild birds and be better stewards of the environment," said Spencer Schock, founder of WindowAlert.



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