

Saint Mark's Butterfly Garden



List of Plants as of 9/1/2015

<i>Name of Plant</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i># planted</i>	<i>type</i>
Amaranth	2015	3	A
Butterfly Bush	2014	1	P
Catmint	2014	2	P
False Indigo	2015	4	P
Joe Pie Weed	2014		P
Lesser Calamint	2015	2	P
Milkweed	2014	6	P
Monarda (Bee Balm)	2014		P
Penstamon	2015	2	P
Purple Cone Flower	2014		P
Rue	2015	2	P
Sedems	2014	6-7	P
Turtleheads	2014	2	P
Veronica	2014	2	P
Yarrow	2014	3	P

As the second year of Saint Mark's Butterfly Garden draws to a close, we can celebrate the planting (and survival!) of 15 different kinds of pollinator-friendly plants, all donated by volunteers. So far, the garden has attracted several different kinds of bumble bees -- very important pollinators -- and some butterflies.

Lodged against the walkway outside of the church's education building, the garden is difficult for deer to penetrate, except around the edges where even a 5' tall wall did not deter them from munching on some sedems, and the stair railing along the side was not a

match for deer interested in the milkweed plants. And the rabbit! (or rabbits..). Most of the plants are deer and rabbit resistant, but the beautiful turtleheads were gradually munched by a bunny who has not signed on yet to the importance of protecting nectar sources for butterflies and bees.

Most afflicted by pests were the swamp milkweeds planted along the stairway. (Milkweeds are central to any butterfly garden, not only for the nectar they provide to butterflies and bees, but also because of their central role as the only host plant for the endangered Monarch butterfly.) Deer got to them early in the season, until Dave Bennett installed some plastic netting along the railing. As they revived and seed pods grew, we learned the meaning of the word disgusting when the otherwise harmless milkweed bug laid eggs in the milkweed seed pods. They eat the seeds, but not much more. Then came the orange aphids roosting on the stalks and eating leaves. They deter monarch butterflies from laying eggs on the milkweeds. All in all, the milkweeds were a grave disappointment. The milkweeds will come back to do battle next year, and we hope to watch for the pests and remove them by hand when necessary.

Next year we hope to add some black eyed susans, the state flower of Maryland, and a great nectar plant. Church members wishing to donate some sprouts from their gardens should contact Alison Bennett or Carol Wood.

We are also looking into perennials that act as host plants for local butterflies . This year we planted red amaranth, an annual that re-seeds itself and is the host plant for the Common sootywing butterfly, a Maryland native.

The garden was tended by a gaggle (hive) of church and visitor volunteers over the past two years: (in alphabetical order)

Alison Bennett

Dave Bennett

Li Jen Chen

her daughter Iris (age 4)

Lynn Hill

Tom Hill

Lucy Leuchtenberg

Tom Leuchtenberg

Amie Orr

Mary Palmer

Nancy Shea

Judy Wagner

Carol Wood,