

THE RECYCLER

Newsletter of Recycle Rutherford, Murfreesboro, Tennessee

Spring 2014

What's Happening to Monarch Butterflies?

Next Meeting:

NEW DATE: Mon. June 2, 2014, 7 p m.

**Courtroom/Commission Chambers,
Second Floor**

Rutherford County Courthouse

One of the joys of summer is seeing butterflies in our yards and gardens, but according to a variety of news sources (see links on page 2), the likelihood of spotting a gorgeous orange and black monarch butterfly is significantly less in 2014 than in the past. As with much of nature, there is not one simple explanation for the dramatic reduction in the numbers of these beautiful beings. Damage to their breeding habitat, destruction of the forests they winter in, excessive ecotourism, extreme weather—these are examples of things that impact the monarchs.

To help sort out the complexities of this troubling issue, **Dr. Andrew Brower**, professor of biology at Middle Tennessee State University and **an internationally recognized expert on butterfly evolution, will speak at our annual meeting on Monday, June 2. His presentation is titled "Monarch Butterfly Migration: An Endangered Phenomenon?"**

Brower, who holds degrees from Cornell and Yale, received MTSU's Distinguished Research Award in 2012. The author of more than 60 peer-reviewed articles, Brower conducted postdoctoral research at the American Museum of Natural History in New York. He held the Rice Chair of Systematic Entomology at Oregon State University prior to coming to MTSU.

A recognized scholar in his own right, Brower grew up with parents who were entomologists, and he followed in their footsteps collecting and studying butterflies. His mother was recognized for her research on butterfly mimicry and his father was acclaimed for his study of the migratory pattern of the monarch butterfly.

The recipient of research grants that total more than a million dollars, Brower has conducted field work in South America. He presents seminars and symposia and is an experienced speaker who has

appeared before both scholarly and lay groups. This is truly an exceptional opportunity to hear an expert speak on a timely topic and to find out if we, as individuals, can make a difference.

Come and bring a friend; don't miss the opportunity to learn about beautiful monarch butterflies and what can be done to save them!

Ecologist Brower has joined scientists from around the world as a participant in the Tree of Life Project, a web-based "family tree" charting genetic connections among all living things. The collaborative effort has resulted in some 10,000 web pages of information.

Annual Elections to Be Held

Recycle Rutherford holds elections each April at the annual meeting; in general, officers and part of the board are elected in even years for two-year terms, and approximately half the board is elected in uneven years, providing for staggered terms.

The nominating committee, as prescribed by the organization's bylaws, was chaired by Past President Gib Backlund and included board member Rachel Cornett and non-board member Mac Nolen. They nominate the following:

Officers: Term: 2014 - 2016

President	Glenn Himebaugh
Vice President	Linda Hardymon
Secretary	Rachel Cornett
Treasurer	Rick Racker

Board: Term: 2014-2016

Suma Clark	Crystal Mallory
-------------------	------------------------

Ed Arning is continuing on the board. If you are interested in serving on Recycle Rutherford's board, please call 687-3497 or contact a member of the board.

Reminder: To renew your membership, please see the form on page 3. Dues are only \$25 per year.

Clean the Air in Your Home: Grow House Plants

We know plants remove carbon dioxide from the air, but did you know some plants remove chemical toxins from the air in your home?

Spider Plants aid in absorbing formaldehyde, styrene, carbon monoxide, and benzene from the air. These plants do not require much light, but one spider plant is able to effectively filter a room of 200 square feet.

Aloe Plants are credited with increasing oxygen levels in your home. They have been found to absorb formaldehyde, carbon dioxide, and carbon monoxide.

English Ivy has been shown to reduce 60 percent of airborne mold and 58 percent of airborne feces after being placed in a room for only six hours.

Snake Plant or Mother-in-law's Tongue not only cleans the air, but it is almost indestructible. If you want to start with an easy-to-grow plant, this is the one to choose. Snake plants remove toxins from the air and require little light.

Rubber Plants excel at removing toxins from the air, particularly formaldehyde. They require minimal lighting and are very easy to take care of. One precaution with rubber plants: the leaves can be toxic. You might want to avoid this one if you have pets.

--Linda Stevens

Can I Help Create a Worldwide Sustainable Food System?

In an article titled "Gardening Globally," in the April-May 2014 issue of *MaryJanesFarm*, the writer outlines concerns about the failures of industrial agriculture—it's not sustainable; staggering percentages of the world's population is starving; diet-related diseases are rampant in "developed" countries; and the ailing agricultural system is taking a terrible toll on the environment. The article goes on to suggest that there are practical contributions that an individual can make toward creating a worldwide sustainable food system:

Begin close to home by buying food grown locally. This simple shift will put dollars directly into the local farming economy. If you need help finding sources, go to LocalHarvest.org.

Request locally grown (preferably organic) products from your hometown grocer and encourage others to do the same. Store managers usually are eager to accommodate customer requests, and you can encourage the process by providing a list of local growers.

(continued on page 4)

Information Pertaining to Monarch Butterflies Abounds

The National Resources Defense Council (NRDC) frequently has articles on the monarchs; here is a sample:

http://switchboard.nrdc.org/blogs/sfallon/glyphosate_and_monarchs.html

The *New York Times* last year carried an interesting article on the forests in Mexico where the monarchs winter:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/16/opinion/the-dying-of-the-monarch-butterflies.html?>

National Geographic, in late January, reported on a December 2013 survey of monarch butterflies:

<http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2014/01/140129-monarch-butterflies-mexico-animals-science-environment-migration-nation/>

In a recent *New York Times* article, there was an appeal to the White House for help:

<http://dotearth.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/04/14/white-house-pressed-to-protect-ailing-monarch-butterflies/>

The World Wildlife Fund reported in February on the decrease in migration numbers:

<http://www.ibtimes.com/monarch-butterfly-grave-danger-disappearing-migration-reaches-record-low-1552802>

The Associated Press distributed an article asking citizens to cultivate milkweed:

<http://www.wandtv.com/story/25263270/officials-save-monarch-butterfly-plant-milkweed>

Flight Behavior, Barbara Kingsolver's seventh novel, published in late 2012 by Harper Collins, addresses global warming and the failings of public education through the story of a 28-year-old Tennessee woman with a husband and two children. Dellarobia Turnbow is literally stopped in her tracks on her way to an adulterous rendezvous by trees glowing with an "orange glaze," that she interprets to be a "vision of glory." The vision turns out to be monarch butterflies who, in a world gone awry, strayed off course on their way to the wintering site in Mexico. A colony of butterflies and a frustrated young woman have both deviated from their optimal flight paths. Kingsolver skillfully weaves the two stories together and the reader comes to understand and appreciate the complexities and the tragedies in both sagas.

Celebrate Earth Day: Saturday, April 26, 2014

Murfreesboro's 13th annual Earth Day Celebration is scheduled from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, April 26, on the historic downtown square. **Trees—Let the Green Be Seen** is the theme of this year's event.

Major sponsor **Murfreesboro Electric Department** (MED), will help participants get started on "letting the green be seen" in their yards by **giving away 500 redbud trees seedlings** at their booth on a first-come, first-served basis. The MED announcement explains that trees are a vital part of our communities, increasing home values by 15 percent or more, making the air we breathe healthier by removing carbon dioxide and producing oxygen, and providing homes for wildlife. The release further points out that if "shade trees are planted east and west of your home, they can cut your cooling costs by 15-35 percent."

Activities will include free popcorn, hotdogs and drinks, and door prizes. There will also be games and other kid-specific activities. Close to thirty booths providing information on earth-friendly topics and services are expected. **Recycle Rutherford will provide one of the booths; if you would like to help with the booth, call 615-687-3487.**

Entertainment will include MTSU's Jazz Ensemble; Creative Rhythm, a local percussion ensemble; and the Eclectics, featuring premier guitarist Larry Pinkerton and Friends. Organizers are expecting a record number of visitors to attend this year's event.

MED personnel will be on hand to provide information and sign people up for the **Tennessee Valley Authority's Green Power Switch program**, which gives customers an opportunity to purchase power that has been produced by renewable resources such as wind, solar, and biogas. For more information on this program, visit www.greenpowerswitch.com or contact MED.

Swap Plants and Seeds: Saturday, April 26, 2014

Master Gardeners of Rutherford County is holding the group's annual plant and seed swap on Saturday, April 26 **from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Lane Agri-Park Community Center, 315 John R. Rice Blvd.**

The public is invited to bring plants, seeds, cuttings, bulbs, trees, and house plants. Plants should be labeled. **For every plant brought, one plant can be taken home.** Individuals who do not have any plants to swap may bring a canned vegetable. One plant may be taken for every canned item brought. The food will go to the Rutherford County Food Bank.

In addition to the plant swap, there will be gardening demonstrations, displays, a silent auction, and door prizes. Attendees will also have opportunities to "Ask a Master Gardener." This may be any gardening question or participants can bring a clipping of any diseased plant for which they want help.

MED's mascot, **Louie the Lightning Bug**, will be at Earth Day to bring greetings. Also appearing will be the **Pillsbury Dough Boy**, representing sponsor General Mills, and **Mr. Wegs**, the company's environmental mascot signifying a commitment to conservation.

Other sponsors include Rutherford County, city of Murfreesboro, Tennessee Valley Authority, Kroger, Lewis Bakery, MaxShred, All-in-One Recycling, Rutherford County Schools, and Murfreesboro City Schools.

For more information and rain location, contact Amy Byers, Murfreesboro Electric Department at 615-494-0407.

4 The Recycler, Spring 2014

Can I Help Create a Worldwide Sustainable Food System?

(continued from page 2)

Grow your own. Homegrown food isn't a pipe dream, no matter where you live or how little space you have. A kitchen windowsill can host an herb garden; containers on a deck or patio can hold lettuces and tomatoes; removing a circle of your lawn can grow an all-you-can-eat zucchini crop; raised beds can turn a yard with poor soil into a productive garden.

Give a little; help a lot. If you'd like to donate to an organization that is doing great things for global food security, check out Heifer International (Heifer.org). Based on the simple idea of giving families a source of food rather than short-term relief, Heifer provides animals and training in progressive agricultural practices and helps build strong communities because each project participant agrees to assist another family in need.

Dates to Remember

Earth Day 2014

Saturday, April 26, 2014, 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Historic Downtown Square

Master Gardeners' Plant Swap

Saturday, April 26, 2014, 9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Lane Agri-Park Community Center

Annual Meeting—Recycle Rutherford:

Monday, June 2, 2014, 7:00 p.m.
Rutherford County Courthouse
Speaker: Dr. Andy Brower

Household Hazardous Waste Collection

Saturday, November 1, 2014, 8:00 a.m. - Noon
Murfreesboro Mulch Facility
4765 Florence Road

2013-14 Officers and Board

Recycle Rutherford holds elections each April at the annual meeting; in general, officers and part of the board are elected in even years for two-year terms, and approximately half the board is elected in uneven years, providing for staggered terms. However, in April 2013 the election included the office of president to complete the term.

The officers are listed below with the board members, who are elected each April and serve staggered terms. The date indicates when the term of each ends. The board meets monthly on first Mondays at 6:15 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church, 210 N. Spring Street.

Glenn Himebaugh, president
Linda Hardymon, vice president
Gib Backlund, secretary/past president
Linda Stevens, treasurer

Board Members:

Ed Arning, 2015 Suma Clark, 2014
Rachel Cornett, 2015 Rick Racker, 2015

**Contact Recycle Rutherford:
615-687-3497**

www.recyclerutherford.org

Like us on Facebook!

**Reminder: To renew your membership,
please see the form on page 3.**

Dues are only \$25 per year.

We don't want to lose you!

This newsletter is printed on recycled paper.