



What You Need to Know About Insects and How You Can Help to Protect Them

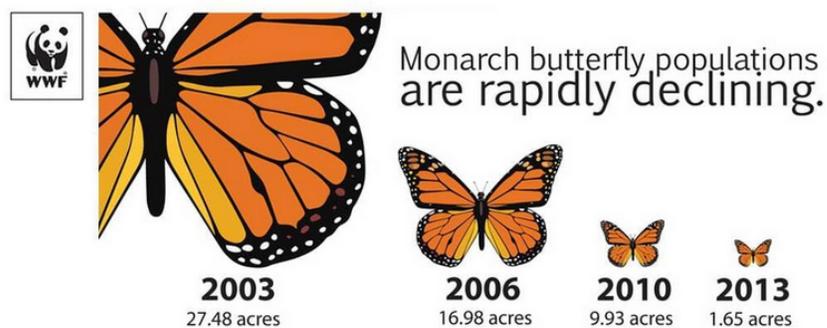
- Insects make up about 80% of all the world's known species. Tragically, over the past four decades, scientists have observed a 45% decline in the overall insect population.

Why We Need to Protect Insects

- Insects pollinate most of our plants and flowers and without them, we would not have a stable source of food.
- Insects themselves are a source of food for thousands of other species and humans and without them our global ecosystems would collapse.
- Insects aerate our soil and aid in the process of recycling nutrients for use by other animals including humans.
- Many insect species play a role in keeping harmful insects from destroying and degrading crops
- In the United States alone, insects contribute at least \$57 billion to the global economy.

Threats to Insects

- **Climate Change:** Of all the species on Earth, insects are the most sensitive and susceptible to the consequences of climate change. Current projections indicate that by the end of the century, nearly half of all habitat for insects would be unsuitable as a result of global warming.
- **Habitat Loss:** Agricultural expansion, proliferation of pesticides, pollution from waste facilities, and commercial development are causing irreversible damage to the habitat of insects.
- **Pesticide Use:** Widespread and indiscriminate use of pesticides and herbicides kill living insects, their offspring, and their habitat. Some have been banned because they also cause cancer and other fatal illnesses in humans!
- **Invasive species:** The introduction of invasive species may lead to significant problems ranging from population declines to habitat destruction and eco-system collapse



Butterfly population is relative to number of acres inhabited during seasonal hibernation.

How to Help Protect Insects - Avoid Pesticides: The risks associated with pesticides are now considered by many scientists to greatly outweighs the benefits: pesticides are rarely targeted to one species, instead killing many other insects and even other wildlife and plants species that encounter these chemicals, including those that are vital for pollination or biological control.