

## **Cues to Care**

Whether you have a native planting already underway or are just in the planning stages, considering ways to show intention can go a long way to gain understanding, acceptance and perhaps even win over others to your choice to introduce a more sustainable and habitat providing landscape. The value of taking these extra steps may be relative to your setting and location, being most beneficial in more urban and high visibility settings where more traditional landscapes consisting of manicured lawns and formal gardens are still predominant.

### **Here are a few ways to demonstrate purpose for your project:**

- Design with plant height and form in mind.
- Keep a mowed edge to frame and contain.
- Remove especially larger noticeable weed species.
- Install signage to show plan or purpose.
- Install paths to encourage entry and exploring.
- Add bird houses and benches to invite humans and birds to a pausing place.
- Use the site for events and educating others.
- Register site as a Monarch Way Station, Wildlife Habitat, Certified Bird Habitat....etc.

Over the years we have successfully implemented these actions as needed on numerous projects and have found that not only is this beneficial for the project owner, but also for others noticing that "something different" is happening on your property. Displaying care helps to educate others questioning this currently non-traditional landscape choice and even "win over" new followers to consider more sustainable landscaping practices. You may think of yourself as an ambassador for native plants!