

THE GREAT GARRETT COUNTY POLLINATOR PATHWAY

NEW GERMANY STATE PARK

Welcome to the Great Garrett County Pollinator Pathway! Your mission will be to visit distinct natural areas found across the eastern region of Garrett County to learn and understand how green spaces create important pollinator corridors through Mountain Maryland and the Eastern Continental Divide.

STATION #1: NATIVE PLANT GARDEN

Begin your quest at the Native Plant Garden next to New Germany Lake. This garden was established in 2009 with a mission to highlight the beauty and value of plants that occur naturally in the region. Look in and around the garden to find the answers to your first three clues for the crossword puzzle on page 5.

#2 Down: The Maryland state flower is the _____. Can you find it in the garden?
Hint: The scientific name is *Rudbeckia hirta*.

#6 Down: This tree is pollinated exclusively by the wind. It has white bark and grows very large. There is one located at the beach entrance.

#3 Down: Find the common name for the plant identified with the scientific name of *Monarda didyma*. The flower of this plant is a favorite among hummingbirds. Once you have found it, gently feel the stem (don't pull!). This plant is considered a mint species, and therefore has a square stem.

Action Item: How can you add native plants to your garden or yard at home to enhance pollinators and support a healthy ecosystem? List your favorite ones from our garden here for your future reference:



PARK QUEST 2022

STATION #2: ICE HOUSE LOOP

Next, make your way across the beach and past the boat ramp where you will find the trailhead to the white blazed trail. Proceed a short distance along the trail until you see an inconspicuous mound of rocks in the woods, to your left, between the trail and the lake. Then see if you can answer the next three clues to the crossword puzzle.

#11 Across: This is the remaining foundation of a historic _____ house, which gives this trail its name. Its contents were cut from the frozen lake each winter and stored inside for the community to use when needed.

#9 Across: Just as humans store resources for future use, so do some pollinators! This type of insect collects pollen on their legs and stores it in their hive for future use by their colony.

#10 Across: The foundation has been mostly reclaimed by nature. What is the name of the predominant shrub in this area? *Hint:* It blooms for a short time in late spring or early summer and its large flowers are a favorite among many insects!

Action item: Humans are excellent at building creative structures to benefit communities. What are some things you can do to support pollinators in addition to adding native plants? Need ideas? Scan the QR code to visit the National Wildlife Federation's Wildlife Habitat webpage and learn what features your garden should have in order to benefit wildlife.



BIG RUN STATE PARK

STATION #3: MONROE RUN TRAIL

Next, travel south down New Germany Rd for about three miles, turn left onto Big Run Rd, and follow it about five miles to Big Run State Park. Big Run State Park is home to the trailhead of the Monroe Run Trail, which is a 9.6 mile out and back hiking trail. The Monroe Run Trail parking lot is located off Big Run Road near campsite 63. Walk toward campsite 62 to find the trailhead. Stretch your legs with a short walk to the first stream crossing, and then search for answers to the next four clues.

#12 Across: This type of fungi uses spores rather than seeds to reproduce. They are pollinated by insects, birds and the wind, and grow abundantly in moist areas like the Monroe Run Trail.

#4 Across: As you look around at the Monroe Run trailhead, you will see lots of pine, spruce and hemlock trees. These trees keep their needles year round and are referred to as _____. Most are pollinated by the wind dispersing their cones.

#8 Across: The shady forest helps maintain ideal water temperatures for this fish, a popular managed fishery in the region. These fish feed on a variety of insects, including larval forms of predatory insects, like dragonflies. Predatory insects consume other pollinating insects. This important food web helps balance healthy populations of insects.

#1 Down: Trail systems are opportunities for humans to unknowingly transfer pollen, seeds, or insects to different locations. They can be captured on clothing or gear, in the tread of boots or on your pet's fur. Sometimes, these hitchhikers are invasive species and threaten native species if they become established. Can you identify the name of an aquatic invasive species that threatens frequently visited streams in Maryland? *Hint:* Look for a sign about waders.

Action Item: After you spend time outdoors, how can you prevent the transfer of unwanted species to new locations? _____

For more information on how Maryland encourages responsible boating practices, visit the boat launch found near the intersection of Big Run Rd and Savage River Rd.

CASSELMAN RIVER BRIDGE STATE PARK

STATION #4: CASSELMAN RIVER BRIDGE

For your final station, travel back up Big Run Rd and turn right onto New Germany Rd. Drive about eight miles to the end, then turn left onto Rt. 40, and travel just over one mile until you see Casselman River Bridge State Park on your right. Stretch your legs by walking the length of the bridge and back. Stop and read the signs to learn about the history of the bridge. Just as this bridge along the National Road was once essential for people to migrate west, urban parks and gardens are important for pollinators as stopover habitats and environmental refuges. Casselman River Bridge State Park is a small but mighty location ideal for many pollinators due to its diverse assortment of native plants, varying habitats and access to water. Walk down the steps toward the gazebo, then explore the banks of the river and the base of the bridge to help find the answers to the final three crossword clues.

#5 Down: This type of berry is related to the blackberry, but rarely cross-pollinates with them. Generally, they are self-pollinators. They are native plants, fruit in mid to late July, and you can locate them in the brushy areas around the gazebo. They are known as Black _____.

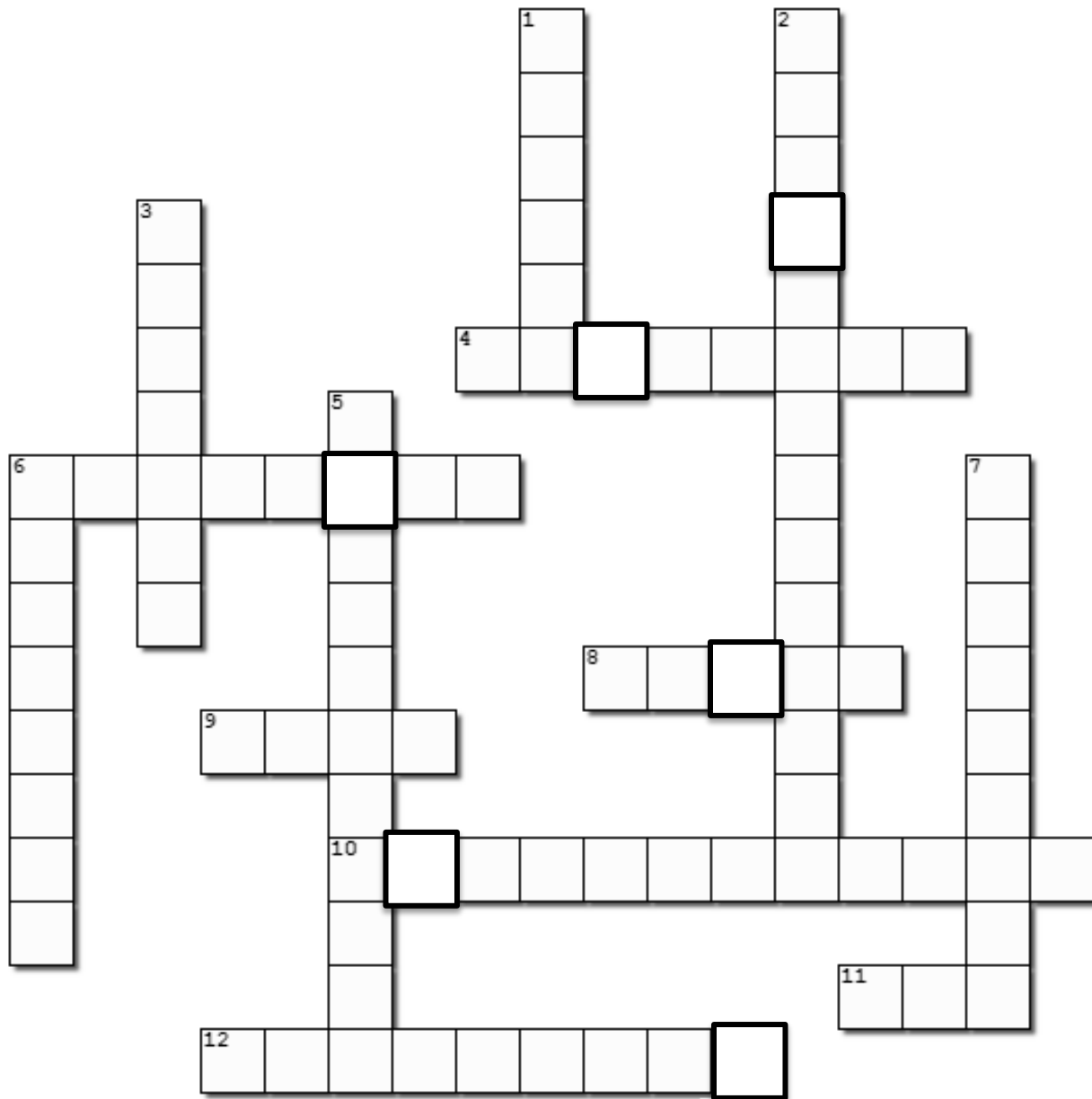
#6 Across: This type of tree is pollinated by the wind, and is known for its characteristic shaggy bark, which can be used to make syrup. You can find one near you at the gazebo. It is a _____ hickory tree.

#7 Down: Plants are purposely left to grow in a natural state along the river's edge and steep slopes to reduce erosion and accommodate native flowers and pollinators. Signs are in place to help identify these areas as a _____ (3 words).

Action item: Can you identify any areas around your home that you can “grow, not mow” to enhance the health and productivity of your yard as a balanced ecosystem? Once you have completed the crossword puzzle, you have officially concluded your quest! Just like a real pollinator, your journey has taken you across many miles and habitats, and through four distinct public parks and forests to accomplish your goal. And now that your work is done, we hope you consider returning to a Maryland State Park to rest and relax before your next Park Quest adventure!

Happy Trails and Pollinator Pathways!

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



To complete your quest, unscramble the highlighted squares in the crossword puzzle to review the answer to the final clue:

This well-known butterfly feeds almost exclusively on milkweed.

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