

Sandbox Repurposed

by Ursula Lynch

My grandchildren never took to this sandbox because they are used to the wonderful vast Eastern long Island beaches. I had thought it would be of help with my grandmotherly childcare. Most of the sand landed on my lawn or in my house via pants cuffs and shoes.

I wanted to get rid of the sand but not the wonderful wooden frame of the box. This year my husband and I had the opportunity, thanks to Hurricane Sandy, to replant our garden. Our goal was to select deer proof, low maintenance and cost effective plants.

The location of the sandbox would be a colorful accent in the garden if planted with the right perennials.

I came upon milkweed as an idea for the sandbox planting having read Barbara Kingsolver's book "Flight Behavior" and various South Fork Publications urging to plant milkweed to help out the diminishing Monarch population. Telepathic, Joy Cordery, wrote in the May-June 2014 Voter, suggesting to plant milkweed for the Monarchs.

I mail ordered from Rose Franklin's Perennials in Pennsylvania, three different kinds of milkweed plants: Tropical Milkweed, Common Milkweed and Swamp Milkweed all have different colors, orange/yellow, purple and pink. I planted in the middle of July, when the plants arrived in good condition, in a sandbox filled with potting soil.

The Tropical Milkweed is blooming now orange and yellow at end of August and the start of September. The other varieties are healthy and growing, but show no bloom yet.

I am very happy to report that on Sept 4th I spotted three Monarchs circling and settling on the vibrant flowers and leaves,



The beautifully repurposed sandbox.

where they could and hopefully will lay their eggs. I have a decoy yellow butterfly planted amongst the milkweed (see photo) to give the Monarchs the idea to come. My vision is to have created a haven for the Monarchs in my garden for years to come.

Facts:

Milkweed is the only plant on which Monarchs will lay their eggs. Because they are poisonous plants (I wore gloves to plant), Monarch caterpillars, who feed on them, are protected from predators.

Milkweed is perennial except the Tropical variety, whose seeds I will collect in the fall for planting in the spring.

Milkweed is totally deer proof.

Milkweed is drought resistant after the plants are established.

Green Tips

Good Advice About Good Food

by Joanne McEvoy-Samborn

- Take your bananas apart when you get them home from the store. If you leave them connected at the stem, they ripen faster.
- Store your open chunks or wedges of cheese in aluminum foil. It will stay fresh much longer and not mold.
- Peppers with 3 bumps on the bottom are sweeter and better for eating. Peppers with 4 bumps on the bottom are firmer and better for cooking.
- Add a teaspoon of water when frying ground beef. It will help pull the grease away from the meat while cooking.
- To make scrambled eggs or omelets rich add a couple of spoonfuls of sour cream, cream cheese or heavy cream before beating them up. (Not great for people watching their cholesterol!).
- To ripen hard avocados place them in a brown paper bag with or without a banana peel depending on how fast you need the fruit ripened. After cutting into the fruit, add some lemon juice to retard the browning. After making avocado dip place a thin layer of water over the top of the dish, and then pour off when ready to serve this will stop the browning of the dip.

This article was sent to me by a friend who has since passed away so I do not know the source. This will be one of several articles for Green Tips in the coming months; if anyone has suggestions or tips please feel free to contact me.