

Grants Enhance Gardens & Zoo

Butterfly Gardens are Blooming

Bramble Park Zoo is on a mission to grow more plants that attract butterflies, bees and other important insects. For many years, the zoo has planted and maintained such plants on the zoo grounds. Now, with the help of a grant from the Watertown Area Community Foundation, the Bramble Park Zoo is taking the effort a step further. The zoo has been distributing such plants to others in the community via the Master Gardeners at the Farmers Market on Saturdays and also through the zoo's Roots & Shoots programs.

For the ideal outcome, you need both host species and nectar species plants, explained Dan Miller, Bramble Park Zoo director. Each participant receives five plants: 2 Rose Milkweed for Monarchs to lay their eggs upon; 1 Blazing Star and 2 purple coneflower plants.

. The project is a win-win, Miller says. "Monarchs are becoming rare and it's a good project for the kids in Roots & Shoots." Participants need to register their garden on the plant-grow-fly website through partner Blank Park Zoo in DesMoines, IA (they receive this information with their plants). Gardeners name their gardens and they receive a number and certificate for their efforts and we will continue to do some follow-up.

The project is going well and the plants are almost gone, reported Miller.



Dakotah Names on Signs

The Bramble Park Zoo and the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate have partnered to give zoo visitors a closer look at the Dakota while viewing the exhibits. After months of working with the elders of the tribe, the zoo now displays a sign with the Dakota name and meaning at many of the animal exhibits. The Watertown Area Community Foundation awarded a grant in 2016 to the Lake Area Zoological Society in support of the project.

The project has been really interesting, said Dan Miller, Bramble Park Zoo executive director. "A lot of the Dakota terms really mean something. For instance the Dakota name for Prairie Dog means 'squeaky noise they make.'" Likewise the name for otter means, 'They're busy, busy, busy.' The name for bees is such because of their buzzing sound.

"Less than 60 people can speak the Dakota language," Miller continued, adding that he has learned that the tribe is in the process of creating a curriculum for kids. As for the zoo project, in addition to the signs are some other historical artifacts of the Dakota that were either received through donations or are part of a loan from Augustana Western Studies.



NEWLY PLANTED – Emily Tisher is proud of the butterfly garden she recently planted with the help of her family. Bramble Park Zoo Roots & Shoots members received the plants in an ongoing effort to increase numbers of butterflies, bees and other important insects. The project is being conducted in partnership with Blank Park Zoo in DesMoines, IA. Participants register their gardens on Blank Park Zoo's website. The goal through the partnership is to register 1,000 pollinator gardens by the end of summer. Emily's garden she named 'Batuchca' was number 938.



LEARNING AT THE ZOO – Zoo visitors Rhiannon Larson (left) of Watertown and her cousin Karena Frost of Clarksville, TN; take in some of the Dakota exhibits at the Bramble Park Zoo. The exhibits and signs with Dakota names are the result of a partnership with the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate. The Watertown Area Community Foundation awarded a grant to support the project