

## Butterfly Garden at LLCC

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Photos by Carol Thaemert, LLCC Staff

What do you call a triangle that attracts butterflies, informs students, and feeds deer? It's Long Lake's Butterfly Garden! Situated on a corner of the old gravel parking lot, it's been a work in progress for many years. Originally planted in asters, Joe-Pye-weed and other wildflowers, it currently has perennials such as columbine, blazing star, bee balm, and swamp milkweed. The boulders that surround it were left behind by glaciers thousands of years ago, and unearthed during construction of the present entrance road.

The garden is an ever-changing window of observation for students and all visitors: butterflies slip in and out among the flowers, moths hide in the foliage, hummingbirds hover, chipmunks sit on the rocks, and deer nibble (regretfully!) at night. There's a bluebird nest box in one corner, and its annual resident pair appreciates the easy insect banquet literally at their doorstep.

Day in and day out, this small triangle of flowers has provided great opportunities for learning.

**Side note:** In the fall, swamp milkweed seed (which produce some beautiful purple flowers) is harvested from the butterfly garden at Long Lake. They are placed into small seed packets and are available at LLCC's canteen. The seeds are free; however, donations are accepted to help maintain the Butterfly Garden.

