



MATTHAEI BOTANICAL GARDENS
AND NICHOLS ARBORETUM
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

1800 N. DIXBORO RD. ANN ARBOR, MI 48105

December 21, 2015

Chris Lapinski
223 Green Hills Dr.
Saline, MI 48176-9546

Dear Mrs. Lapinski:

I am writing in full support of your efforts to recommend the black swallowtail (*Papilio polyxenes*) as the official butterfly for Michigan Garden Club as well as for the State of Michigan. Butterflies are very charismatic with the general public and are an effective way of getting people interested in conservation efforts. The black swallowtail is an excellent candidate for our state butterfly. This large distinctive butterfly can be found in variety of habitats in Michigan and uses both garden plants and a variety of native wildflowers, including the native milkweeds that also support monarch butterfly populations. It is also a permanent resident of the state, unlike other species of butterflies such as the monarch that migrate each year.

I believe that having a state butterfly so designated will help call attention to the plight of pollinators in general and will help in addressing the harmful use of neonicotinoid pesticides that threaten many valuable insects. The fact that the black swallowtail uses a variety of open habitats—open fields, prairies, oak openings, and marshes—can also serve to help people understand the need for protecting networks of open lands as habitat.

I deeply appreciate your efforts to promote the black swallowtail and will be glad to help in any way that I can.

Best regards,

Robert E. Grese, Director

Professor, School of Natural Resources and Environment
Theodore Roosevelt Chair of Ecosystem Management

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