



## Create a Monarch Butterfly Habitat in Your Own Garden!

**Monarch numbers are declining precipitously due to loss of habitat and the use of pesticides. Only 28,000 overwintering monarchs were counted in 2019, down from a historic number of 10 million in the Western Monarch Migration. Please help us create monarch habitat gardens full of milkweed and nectar plants and refrain from using pesticides so we can save our monarchs.**

### A BIT ON THE MONARCH LIFE CYCLE & CREATING A MONARCH HABITAT

**MONARCH EGGS** During her life span, a female Monarch may lay hundreds of eggs. She deposits these yellowish pinhead- sized eggs on the underside of milkweed leaves, where they will hatch in 3 to 6 days.

#### LARVA/CATERPILLAR

The newly hatched larva feeds voraciously on its milkweed host plant (accumulating chemicals called cardenolides which scientists believe protect adult Monarchs from bird predation). During the next 15-20 days, the 1/16" caterpillar grows to approximately 2" (5 cm) & increases its weight by a factor of 2,700.



To accommodate this rapid growth, the caterpillar must shed its skin four times before it is ready for the next stage of its development.

**PUPA OR CHRYSALIS** The mature caterpillar attaches itself to a sturdy milkweed stem or leaf. After 15-20 hours, the caterpillar sheds its skin, transforming into a green chrysalis, or pupa, decorated with delicate gold spots. After about 10 days, the chrysalis becomes



transparent. When its orange and black pattern becomes visible, the butterfly is ready to emerge.

#### ADULT MONARCH BUTTERFLY

As the chrysalis splits open, the Monarch begins to pump fluid into its crumpled wings and quickly expands into a full-size adult. The butterfly rests for 3 hours or so until its wings dry and harden.

Then it's ready to join in the ongoing cycle of the Monarch migration.

#### SAVING THE MONARCH BUTTERFLY BY CREATING HABITAT

You can create a monarch habitat by planting the milkweed and nectar plants listed below. Select an open, sunny location that the monarchs can find. Turn 3-4" of compost into the soil and level it and plant your plants. Water them until they are established. Use an organic mulch to control weeds. Milkweed goes dormant in the winter, so mark where your plants are located. Add a saucer of water filled with sand and keep full of water so the monarchs can "puddle" to obtain water & minerals.

#### NECTAR PLANTS TO TRY IN YOUR GARDEN

- Verbena lilacina 'De La Mina'\*\*
- Seaside Daisy – *Erigeron glaucus*\*\*
- Wild Aster - *Felicia aethiopica*\*\*
- Common Manzanita - *Arctostaphylos manzanita*\*\*
- Golden Currant – *Ribes aureum*\*\*
- Yarrow - *Achillea*
- Butterfly Bush - *Buddleia*
- Blanket Flower - *Gaillardia*
- Pincushion Flower - *Scabiosa*
- Brazilian Verbena - *Verbena bonariensis*
- Dwarf Sunflower - *Helianthus gracilentus*
- Mexican Sunflower - *Tithonia*
- Alyssum, Cosmos and Zinneas

**\*\*Especially desirable winter blooming species**



#### CALIFORNIA NATIVE MILKWEEDS TO TRY IN YOUR GARDEN

- *Asclepias eriocarpa* (Woollypod/Indian Milkweed)\*\*
- *Asclepias fascicularis* (Narrowleaf Milkweed)
- *Asclepias speciosa* (Showy Milkweed)
- *Asclepias cordifolia* (Heartleaf Milkweed)\*\*
- *Asclepias californica* (California Milkweed)\*\*

**\*\*Especially desirable early emerging species**