

Different Types of Nectar Plants:

Indian Blanket Flower (*Gaillardia pulchella*)

Purple Coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*)

Joe Pye Weed (*Eupatorium purpureum*)

Scarlet Sage (*Salvia coccinea*)

Mexican Sunflower (*Tithonia Torch*)

Zinnia, Dahlia Mix (*Zinnia elegans*)

Blue Sage (*Salvia farinacea*)

Chia (*Salvia columbariae*)

Blazing Star (*Liatris*)

Bergamot or Bee Balm (*Monarda fistulosa*)

Maximilian Sunflower (*Heliathus maximilanii*)

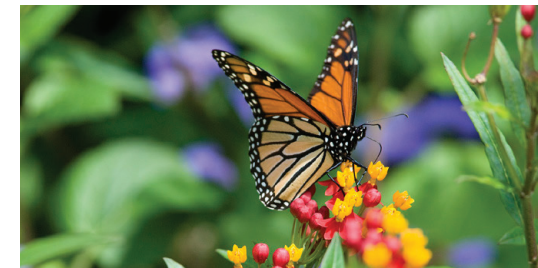
Goldenrod (*Solidago rigida*, *S. speciosa*)

New England Aster (*Aste novae-angliae*)

Monarch Butterflies Annual Life Cycle

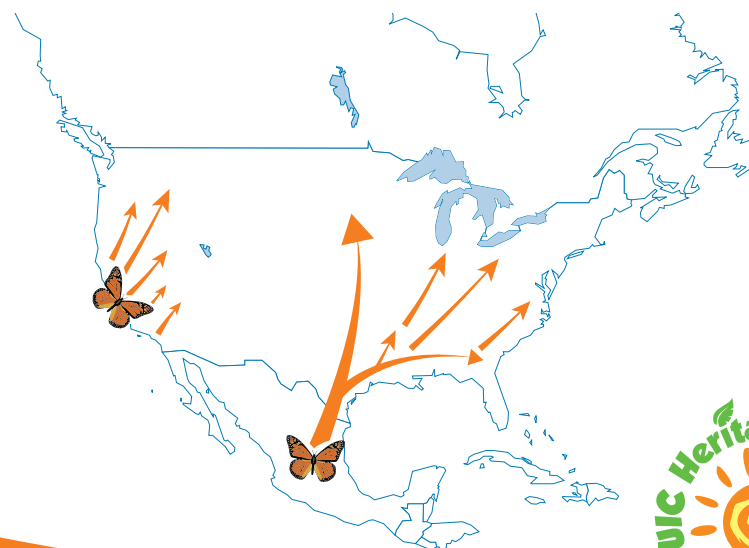
	Hibernation	1st Generation	2nd Generation	3rd Generation	4th Generation
Hatching Period	February March	March April	May June	July August	September October
Life Span	4-5 Months	2-6 Weeks	2-6 Weeks	2-6 Weeks	6-8 Months
Activity	Awakens, Mates	Flies North, Mates	Mates	Mates	Flies South & Hibernates

Monarch Butterfly Habitat



Did you know that the monarch butterfly population has dropped 80% below the historic average in the last 20 years? There are many factors contributing to its decline, but one major factor is the destruction of the monarch butterfly habitat. Monarch caterpillars feed exclusively on milkweed, which has become less available due to pesticides and prairie destruction. Planting a butterfly garden can provide food and shelter for these beautiful bugs so that they can continue to migrate from North America to Mexico each year.

Spring/Summer Monarch Migration Route



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Establishing a Monarch Butterfly Habitat

Size of Planting Area: at least 100 square feet

Exposure: at least 6 hours of sun per day

Drainage and Soil Types: low-clay soil with good drainage is ideal

Shelter: plants should be close together and spaced, but not overcrowded

Milkweed Plants: at least 10 individual milkweed (multiple species is recommended)

Nectar Plants: at least 4 annual, biennial, or perennial nectar plants that will provide nectar for the butterflies throughout the seasons

Management: water and weed regularly (Mulch, fertilize, or amend the soil, remove dead stalks, eliminate the use of insecticide and remove invasive plants.)

Milkweed

Milkweed plants serve as shelter and food for monarch larvae, which are caterpillars with yellow, black, and white bands. Female monarch butterflies lay their eggs underneath the leaves of milkweed plants, where they are safe from predators. Once the eggs hatch, the caterpillars feed solely on milkweed, although the plant's "milk," or white latex, is poisonous to many animals. Since the monarch caterpillars feed on milkweed, they absorb the plant's acidic and poisonous substances, which are stored in their bodies throughout their life. This serves to protect monarchs from predators throughout their life.

Different Types of Milkweed:

Butterfly Milkweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*)

*Common Milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*) - preferred variety

Swamp Milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*)

Narrowleaf Milkweed (*Asclepias fascicularis*)

Showy Milkweed (*Asclepias speciosa*)

possibly not native to the region

Whorled Milkweed (*Asclepias verticillata*)

Poke Milkweed (*Asclepias exaltata*)

Nectar Plants

Nectar plants should be grown in warm and sunny areas, protected from wind by large shrubs, hedgerows, or fences. Nectar plants provide food for pollinators such as bees and butterflies. Nectar is a kind of sugar water that contains amino acids, proteins, organic acids, and vitamins. It serves as a fuel and is the only source of energy for pollinators. Butterflies need sugar to fuel their search for mates and egg-laying sites.

