



MLMP Updates

An e-Newsletter of the Monarch Larva Monitoring Project

mlmp.org

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Milkweed, Monarchs, and More!

Bob and Gail Morris, volunteers for MLMP since 2009, were highlighted in Phoenix Homes and Gardens. This article illustrates how their Arizona yard turned from a landscape void of diversity to one that attracts monarchs, birds and other wildlife.

[Read the full article...](#)

Natural Fibers Corporation was established in 1987 in an effort to produce and market milkweed products. They offer down pillows and comforters made from the silk of milkweed pods and natural milkweed oil that can be used for pain relief. The company promotes the establishment of milkweed habitat by providing seeds for land management, butterfly gardening, and butterfly farming.

[Visit Natural Fibers Corporation Website...](#)

Watch the [trailer](#) for [Crowe's Nest Media](#)'s newest DVD (Your Backyard: Life and Adventures of the Amazing Monarch Butterfly). This educational DVD provides amazing footage of the entire monarch life cycle and is great for all ages! Special bonus features include "How to" sections, testimonials, behind the scenes, and more.



Milkweed Seeds photo by Tom Collins

MLMP—Then and Now

From 1996 through 2011, 17,560 unique monitoring events have been reported to the Monarch Larva Monitoring Project online database ([mlmp.org](#)). It began in 1996 with one site monitored by U of MN MonarchLab staff and students. From there reports grew exponentially. In 1997 there were 191 monitoring events and 19 volunteers. In 2011, 1618 monitoring events were reported by 123 volunteers.

In addition, from 1999-2011, 9,573 wild monarchs have been reared by MLMP volunteers who reported information on them to the parasitism study of MLMP. In 1999, 28 records were reported and in 2011 there were 780.

Data have been reported from 726 different milkweed sites by 489 volunteers in 452 cities and 42 states. In the first few weeks of 2012, three sites have reported data (two in California and one in Florida), and two new, enthusiastic volunteers have joined the project!

If you have data from previous years that have not been entered, we still want your findings! Log on to our website at [mlmp.org](#) to enter data or if you have any questions or concerns, email us at info@mlmp.org.

Migration Update: Report your winter monarch sightings!

The Journey North website has a recent report from citizen scientist Duane Miller, who observed monarchs roosting in Alabama to Journey North in mid-January: "There were Monarchs in flight and feeding on various flowers including Lantana across the entire area covered... Noted were several groups of 6 to 8 and numerous single individuals throughout the wooded area." MLMP observer Mary Kennedy reported finding monarch eggs, caterpillars, and adults in San Antonio TX on January 21. These reports, along with many others, are helping us understand monarch winter behavior. If you see monarchs outside of traditional roosting sites in Mexico and California from November—March, please report your sightings as anecdotal reports to MLMP or to Journey North (www.learner.org/jnorth). The MLMP data fields allow for more precise details on sightings of eggs or larvae that will be useful in understanding monarch winter behavior, but your data will be used no matter where you report them.

More on Monarch Winter Breeding by Kelly Nail

Most monarchs migrate from their northern breeding grounds and spend winters in the oyamel forests of central Mexico. However, fall monarch reproduction has been documented in the southern U.S. for at least the last twenty years. The exact reasons for this behavior are not known, but several possible explanations do exist. One possibility is that some individuals from the northern U.S. might continue breeding as they migrate to Mexico, leaving behind offspring in the southern U.S. as they pass through during the fall and winter months. Monarchs might also be induced to start reproducing by abundant tropical milkweed (*A. curassavica*) that is available throughout the fall and winter.

Offspring of the migrants can then continue on to Mexico or continue living in the southern U.S., where they may or may not continue breeding. In order to determine which one of these scenarios is most likely occurring, we are analyzing records of monarch sightings reported to the MLMP and Journey North. These analyses will help us determine what is causing monarchs to breed in the southern U.S. during the fall and winter. Stay tuned for conclusions!



Monarch Stopover in Texas
Photo by Tom Johnson

Honoring our Volunteers: THANKS!

15 Years

Pat Landry (MI)
Pete and Sanny Oberhauser (WI)
Gayle Steffy (PA)

14 Years

John and Marlene Weber (MN)

13 Years

Mary Bishop Kennedy (TX)
Susan Payant (MI)
Cindy Petersen (MN)
Barbara Powers (VT)

12 Years

Sharon Duerkop (WI)

10 Years

Amy Alstad (MN)
Brian Bockhahn (NC)
Ilse Gebhard (MI)
Chris Goodwin (MB)
Eric Johnson (WI)
Tim, Jan and Colin King (MN)
Kip Kiphart (TX)
Paul Lipman (MA)
Jessica Miller (WI)
Karen Oberhauser (MN)
Ray Sullivan (WI)
Gillian Tuttle (NC)

9 Years

Jane Borland (TX)
Gail Gilliland (MN)
Karen Goellner (MO)
Deb Marcinski (OH)

Laura Molenaar (MN)
Anna Newton (MN)
Jan Sharp (WI)
Annette Strom (MN)
Jennifer Unkles (MA)

8 Years

Marie Booth (MN)
Denny Brooks (MI)
Judy Brupbacher (TX)
Sondra Cabell (IA)
Maureen Clark (NY)
Jessica Hegna (MN)
Donna Kemp (WI)
Janet Mukai (IA)
Darlene Pinchot (PA)
Kim Smart (NC)
Kristin Steinmetz (MA)

7 Years

Walter Brown (TX)
Carol Cullar (TX)
Sarah Dalton (OH)
Deb Dicks (WI)
Jill Faubert (FL)
Cheryl and Angelica Huffman (IN)
Stephanie Jacob (MD)
Vi La Belle (MN)
John Lawrence (NY)
Karl Pauli (VA)
Kathy Phelps (IL)
Joseph Przypek (VT)
Sherry Skipper-Spurgeon (CA)
Mary Vanderford (MN)
Ruth Vollrath (WI)

Grit Youngquist (MN)

6 Years

Laura Bell (MN)
Carrie Benham (MI)
Susan DeGroff (MI)
Albert Eurs (CA)
Duane Flynn (NC)
Audrey Fox - Patterson (PA)
Peg L. Goldman (NY)
Dexter Sharp (WI)
Tim Vargo (WI)

5 Years

Charles Cameron (NC)
Dick Clayton (MN)
Julia Cutshall (PA)
Virginia de Wolf (TX)
Pat Geving (MN)
Susan Hebel (WI)
Don Luce (MN)
Gail Manning (TX)
Doris Moeller (NY)
Debi Nitka (WI)
Joyce Pearsall (NC)
Meg Plona (OH)
Carolyn Rock (WI)
Diane Rock (WI)
Molly Schweinfurter (MN)
Jen Snyder (OH)
Ron and Linda Straight (MI)
Mary Stuesser (MN)
Linda Tanner (MO)
Mary Anna Thornton (WI)
Jeffrey Wiles (MN)

Volunteer Spotlight

Kip Kiphart — Bergheim, Texas

In 2002 Kip Kiphart started on his journey with the Monarch Larva Monitoring Project. After moving to Texas Hill Country in 2001, he was inspired by another outstanding volunteer and trainer, Mary Kennedy, to get involved with MLMP. He attended a training session at Bamberger Ranch in Texas to become a trainer and ever since has been reporting data and helping to conduct monitoring trainings and promote monarch and habitat conservation. Cibolo Nature Center in Boerne, TX is home to many of the well-known trainings that he and other monarch experts present. In the upcoming year, there will be eight monarch training events at the nature center in spring and fall including: Texas Monarch Monitoring Project; Monarchs, Milkweed, and MLMP; MLMP@CNC Back Porch Review; and K-12 Teacher Workshops

In addition to the trainings at CNC, Kip gives presentations throughout the state at a number of different functions including Texas Master Naturalist events, garden club meetings, and this year he will be presenting at the 2012 Monarch Biology and Conservation Meeting at the University of Minnesota Landscape Arboretum in June. With these experiences, Kip meets many “really, really neat people”. His favorite part about being involved with MLMP is meeting and interacting with so many different people. The knowledge and passion for monarchs that Kip shares with those that he meets greatly impact the successes of monarch citizen science and conservation.



An Endangered Royal Flight

The Monarch emerges from its jeweled chrysalis
wings creased and limp
then, empowered by gentle movement,
it is strong enough to
fly from flower to flower, seeking
nectar and a mate

Several generations later, at summer's end,
instinct directs the royal flight south
Over established, yet unknown routes
until it reaches the Mexican Sierra
Mountain sites, owned by ejidatarios,
lovingly loaned to the butterflies

In Canada, US, and Mexico, this regal insect
needs flowers to nectar, milkweed for nurseries,
Oyamel firs for protection and
respite from northern winters
Its survival is a challenge to scientists,
government officials, and landowners

Can three countries act as one to save the
Monarch Butterfly and its wondrous migration?

-S. Oberhauser
Morelia, Mexico 1997

[Be creative, submit your monarch artwork or photography here!](#)

Monarch Monitoring Tip: Make sure to update your MLMP profile if your contact information changes. If we have questions about data that you have submitted, an up-to-date email address or phone number is important!



Interesting Link: Raise your interest in wildlife and natural landscaping to new heights and achieve professional level expertise to improve your habitat with [Windstar Wildlife Institute's](#) home-study courses.

Reader Feedback: Please email us with any

interesting findings or unique events that you would like to share in future e-newsletters. We would love feedback and suggestions for things you would like to read about. If you have other questions about monarchs, [Ask The Expert](#)

Contact us at Email: info@mlmp.org or call 612-625-8304