



The Gabby Gardener

Garden Club of DeLand

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President's Corner



What a wonderful feeling to be back in the Clubhouse for the General Membership meeting! Our speaker, Master Gardener Julie Warner gave an excellent presentation on Propagation. The new air conditioner performed

flawlessly. Thank you to the Hospitality Committee for orchestrating the meeting setting and refreshments, and the Milkweed Circle for their warm greetings and the opportunity drawing.

Our Seed Bank collaboration with the Friends of the DeLand Library, Volusia Master Gardeners and the DeLand Library is off to a strong start. Well over 600 packets of seeds have been picked up! Thanks to Shanda Hébert for her display photographs and our busy seed counters for the individual packets.

Please mark your calendars for our **Plant Sale** on Saturday, October 8th from 8am to 1pm at the GCD clubhouse and **Monarch Magic** at Bill Dreggors Park on Saturday, October 15th from 9am to 12pm. Nature Strolls with Jim Vanover resume on October 31st at **Dunlawton Sugar Mills Gardens** in Port Orange. The Book Club continues to meet monthly year-round. Creative Corner's **Origami** will soon be back. Garden visits have already resumed. You can also take advantage of Circle programs as well. Please just check with the Circle president to make sure there is room.

Circle Around

September found all our Circles welcoming their members back and reconnecting. Please remember that Members-at-Large and Affiliates are always welcome to join circle activities as long there is space. October brings a variety of speakers, field trips and activities.

Thanks to our volunteers for keeping our surroundings beautiful at the Downtown Planters, Clubhouse grounds and the Sensory Butterfly Garden

Gardening for the Future

GCD General Meeting

Thursday, October 6th, 5:30pm,
General Meeting at the Clubhouse
(865 S. Alabama Ave.)

Meeting Speaker: Brittney Morton Council/
Master Gardener Coordinator Urban
Horticulture Agent
Topic: Florida Friendly Gardening

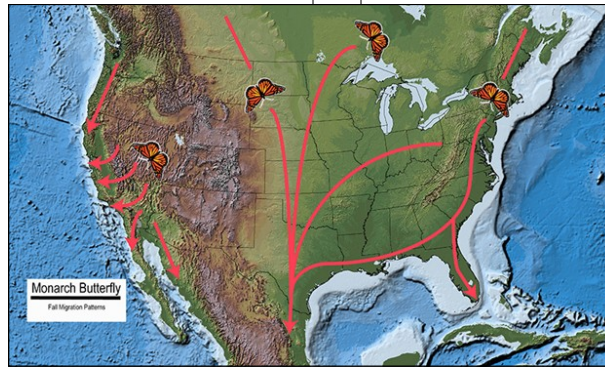
Monarchs, Migration and Milkweed

Monarch butterflies may be the most recognized butterfly in the U.S, but they are found throughout the world. Monarchs can be found in South America, Portugal, southern Spain, parts of the Mediterranean, Australia and the Pacific Islands including Hawaii, but it is only the northern portion of the Western Hemisphere that the monarchs migrate-- no other place in the world. [1] Monarchs have begun their biannual migration and will show up in Florida early to mid-October. The majority of monarchs who come to Florida will head to the St. Marks National Wildlife refuge, one of the top five viewing sites for monarch migration in the United States, pause for a few days to refuel on high energy nectar plants, and then begin the most perilous leg of their journey over the Gulf of Mexico heading to the Sierra Madre Mountains of Mexico. There is a smaller portion of monarchs that head down Florida's east coast to winter in South Florida/Miami and Key West and a few even travel further to the islands of the Caribbean. There is a relatively small population of monarchs that stay in South Florida,

not migrating elsewhere, which has caused some concern and research as to why these monarchs do not migrate. Scientists have come up with a few possible reasons, the presence of nonnative milkweed that does not get cut back and weak and/or diseased individuals that cannot make the flight seem to be the top focus of the research.

There has been a lot of research over many years as to the how and why of this very long and difficult trip, there are so many questions and the scientists do not have all the answers, but they have made some startling discoveries. One of the most important discoveries is called "diapause" where migratory monarchs go into a reproductive diapause-which is the monarchs equivalent of hibernation. This diapause allows for a single monarch butterfly to fly from Canada to Mexico, more than 3000 miles, and exist in the cold mountains until its return migration begins in February. These migratory monarchs stay in a juvenile stage of development that does not give them the urge to mate. [2] Monarchs that come across milkweed in bloom on their migration journey south will

come out of diapause and become sexually active again laying eggs, once they start to lay eggs they will not go back into dia



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pause. A warm climate and continuous growing milkweed season keep the species hanging around throughout the year in southern Florida. In North and Central Florida cold winter temperatures can kill them, monarchs from South Florida and those migrating from Mexico repopulate the area. [3] Monarchs can't fly unless they can warm their muscles to 55°F. They can't even crawl below 41°F. Although monarchs can save energy when they are cold, the cold also makes them vulnerable to predators. January and early February is the coldest time of the year. This is a really critical time for the monarch, if the butterfly is also WET, there is only a 10%-20% chance of survival for the monarch.[4] The other issue with monarchs in Central and North Florida in January and February is the lack of nectar plants to give them the energy to survive the cold temps. To assist the monarchs in their migration journey you can provide them with nectar plants for their return trip to Mexico and cut back all nonnative milkweed so they do

not stop their journey and start laying eggs.

Research on monarchs is ongoing and over the past year some new insights have come out. Monarchs prefer to lay eggs on the young tender leaves of the milkweed plant rather than the older leaves. Entomologists at Michigan State University state "The re-

sults are published in the current issue of Biological Conservation, and they show that strategic grassland management benefits monarchs in two ways. First, monarchs lay more eggs on young milkweed – new growth after mowing – the sole food source for the butterflies in their larval stage. Second, fewer predators visit immature milkweed; more come during its mature stages, such as when it flowers.

"Monarch butterflies scout young milkweed to lay their eggs," said Nate Haan, MSU postdoctoral research associate in entomology and the study's lead author. "And in terms of a food source, milkweed is

more like spinach when it's young and comparable to cardboard as it ages." [5] For the home gardener keeping all milkweed, native and nonnative, trimmed down will do a couple of things; encourage monarchs to lay more eggs

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and assist controlling the OE, aphids and other pests away from the plants. The collective research on tropical milkweed is all telling us one thing - it's bad for migration. 1) It leads to less-optimal wing development for long-distance flight; 2) it makes monarchs want to become reproductive, even if they are migrants; 3) it increases local and population levels of OE, which we already know hinders migration potential; and 4) it actually reduces their flying ability!" [6]

For the monarchs to accomplish the long and difficult journey to Mexico or the Caribbean they need plants high in nectar-fuel. The best fall nectar plants for monarchs are native golden-rod, Ironweeds, garberia, blazing stars, snow square stem, narrow leaf yellowtops, Joe Pye Weed, saltbush.[7]

[1] <https://monarchjointventure.org/monarch-biology/global-distribution>

[2] <https://www.monarchwatch.org/press/press-briefing.html>

[3] <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/fl/newsroom/releases/?cid=NRCSEPRD363613>

[4] <https://journeynorth.org/tm/monarch/sl/2/Text.html>

[5] <https://msutoday.msu.edu/news/2019/mowing-for-monarchs>

[6] [https://www.monarchscience.org/single-post/a-complete-summary-of-the-previous-and-new-science-on-tropical-milkweed-and-monarchs?](https://www.monarchscience.org/single-post/a-complete-summary-of-the-previous-and-new-science-on-tropical-milkweed-and-monarchs?fbclid=IwAR2M8eZC678JCNyEqjziIaSZBmBixgDoYbnKf0IHVd2l8wmLR3rToTRPOE)

[fbclid=IwAR2M8eZC678JCNyEqjziIaSZBmBixgDoYbnKf0IHVd2l8wmLR3rToTRPOE](https://www.monarchscience.org/single-post/a-complete-summary-of-the-previous-and-new-science-on-tropical-milkweed-and-monarchs?fbclid=IwAR2M8eZC678JCNyEqjziIaSZBmBixgDoYbnKf0IHVd2l8wmLR3rToTRPOE)

[7] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yzgEtiAlnrs&t=10s>

Written by Dorothy Caldwell



Thank You!

Many thanks to
Henry Barnard
for installing our new
parking signs at the
entrance of our drive.

Organized by the
Milkweed Circle with
members of other
circles participating.

This event is planned
with families in mind.
There will be plants
available for sale.

Crafts for the
children, baked goods,
picture taking with
Monica the Monarch

and naming of the monarch caterpillar. A new addition
this year is the Pollinator Parade where those in costume
can stroll through the nectar walk to the monarch migra-
tion. Come and join in the fun and learn more about the
Garden Club of DeLand, gardening to attract butterflies
and how to have your garden certified as a Butterfly
Sanctuary Garden. **Saturday, October 15**
9-12 Pollinator Parade to start at 10:30. Bill Dreggors
Park (corner of Stone St. & Wisconsin Ave.)



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