

May - Week 2

Return of Monarch Butterflies

The Monarch butterfly is the only butterfly known to make a two way migration like birds do! Monarchs cannot survive the cold Minnesota winters, so they migrate to a warmer climate in the Sierra Madre Mountains in Mexico. They return to Minnesota, often arriving in May. Monarchs can typically be found in fields, parks, and prairies where milkweed and native flowers grow. Monarchs are attracted to these areas because as adults they feed on the nectar of a variety of flowers and they eventually lay eggs on the underside of milkweed leaves.

Be on the lookout for the first returning monarch in your area. Over the past ten years the first monarch butterflies have arrived in the twin cities metro area between May 10 and June 1. In your journal, record the date of your first monarch butterfly sighting. How does the date of the first monarch in your area this spring compare to the recent dates of first monarch sightings in the twin cities? Like all living things, monarchs are interconnected with the nature around them. Write a paragraph describing the environmental conditions you think a monarch requires to survive upon their arrival. Do you see evidence of those conditions in your area? What would happen to the returned monarchs if these conditions were not in place upon their arrival? Finally, sketch a diagram of a monarch butterfly. Include a sketch of a plant that you may see it on as well.



Weaver Lake Elementary's pollinator garden attracts many Monarchs.