



Monarch Migration in Ontario

Join the project!

[#CWFMonarchAmbassadors](https://twitter.com/CWFMonarchAmbassadors)



The Monarch Butterfly

Iconic for their beauty and long-distance migration,

Monarch butterflies are in steep decline across North America due to habitat loss, pesticides, and climate change. Monarchs are important to conserve not only because they're Endangered, but because of their role as an "umbrella species." This means that protecting Monarch habitat can indirectly protect hundreds of other meadow and grassland species.

In summer, Monarchs breed in Ontario and other areas of southern Canada. From May through July, Monarchs feed on wildflowers, breed, and lay their eggs on milkweed plants. Milkweed is the sole food source for Monarch caterpillars.

In late August, the butterflies begin an incredible journey to their winter habitat. This southbound migration is completed by a single Monarch generation - called the 'super-generation' - who travel about 3600 km to the Oyamel fir forests in central Mexico. The following spring, Monarchs begin a multi-generational migration back north, following the milkweed plants as they grow.

#MonarchMysteries

Monarch butterflies migrate during the day. At night, they roost on trees or shrubs, where they often form large groups of butterflies. In order to preserve the Monarch, we need to identify, conserve, and restore both the habitat that Monarchs use for roosting, as well as the habitat they use while actively migrating.

This is why we need to know more about the migratory routes of Monarchs through Ontario. And we need your research assistance to collect information about them! Your observations will be used to develop scientific models that predict where the most important Monarch fly-ways and roosts occur throughout Ontario.





Monarch Ambassadors

At CWF, we also want to identify the specific habitat requirements for roosting and actively migrating Monarchs. This will help us prioritize our conservation and restoration work.

Thanks to community scientists like yourself, we've completed a preliminary study to determine the habitat requirements of roosting Monarchs. However, we still need more data to improve our models as well as determine the migratory pathways used in Ontario.

This map (left) shows the suspected main migratory flyways used by Monarch butterflies in Ontario. If we can get thousands more observations collected by community "Monarch Ambassadors," we can put together a much finer picture of the areas most important to migrating Monarchs.



Join the iNaturalist project!

#CWFMonarchAmbassadors
#MonarchMysteries

- Watch the [Monarch Ambassador video](#) to learn more!
 - [Register](#) to become a Monarch Ambassador!
 - *To see every step* of how to record observations on your phone or computer, watch the [iNaturalist tutorial video](#).
 - Submit your Monarch sightings to iNaturalist. Our project is called [Monarch Migration in Ontario](#).
 - You can record the number of Monarchs you observed, whether the observation is a butterfly or roost, and the time and distance you travelled.
- We're also measuring the relative abundance of actively migrating Monarchs by performing point counts at set locations, random locations, and surveyor-defined locations. During the point counts, additional information is recorded such as migratory behaviour and direction of travel. If you'd like to help with this kind of data collection, please [contact us](#) and we will provide you with additional methodology.



MONARCH HABITAT
RESTORATION

RESTAURATION DE L'HABITAT
DU MONARQUE



**Thank you for helping Monarch
butterflies!**

[Canadian Wildlife Federation does extensive
research and restoration for Monarch butterflies
and other pollinators. Read more here.](#)

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