

Milkweed and Monarchs



*Let's Bring
Monarch Butterflies
Back to the
Southern Oregon!*

Tom Landis - Native Plant Nursery Consulting

Akimi King - U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Sheila Colyer – U.S. Forest Service

Monarch Butterfly
(*Danaus plexippus*)

Why Monarchs?



- Iconic - Most Well-Known Butterfly in the World
- They can fly over 40 miles per day & migrate 1,000 to 2,000 miles to overwinter
- Their populations are declining drastically
 - Perhaps most importantly...

Butterflies are Pollinators



Pollinators are Very Important For Fruit Production

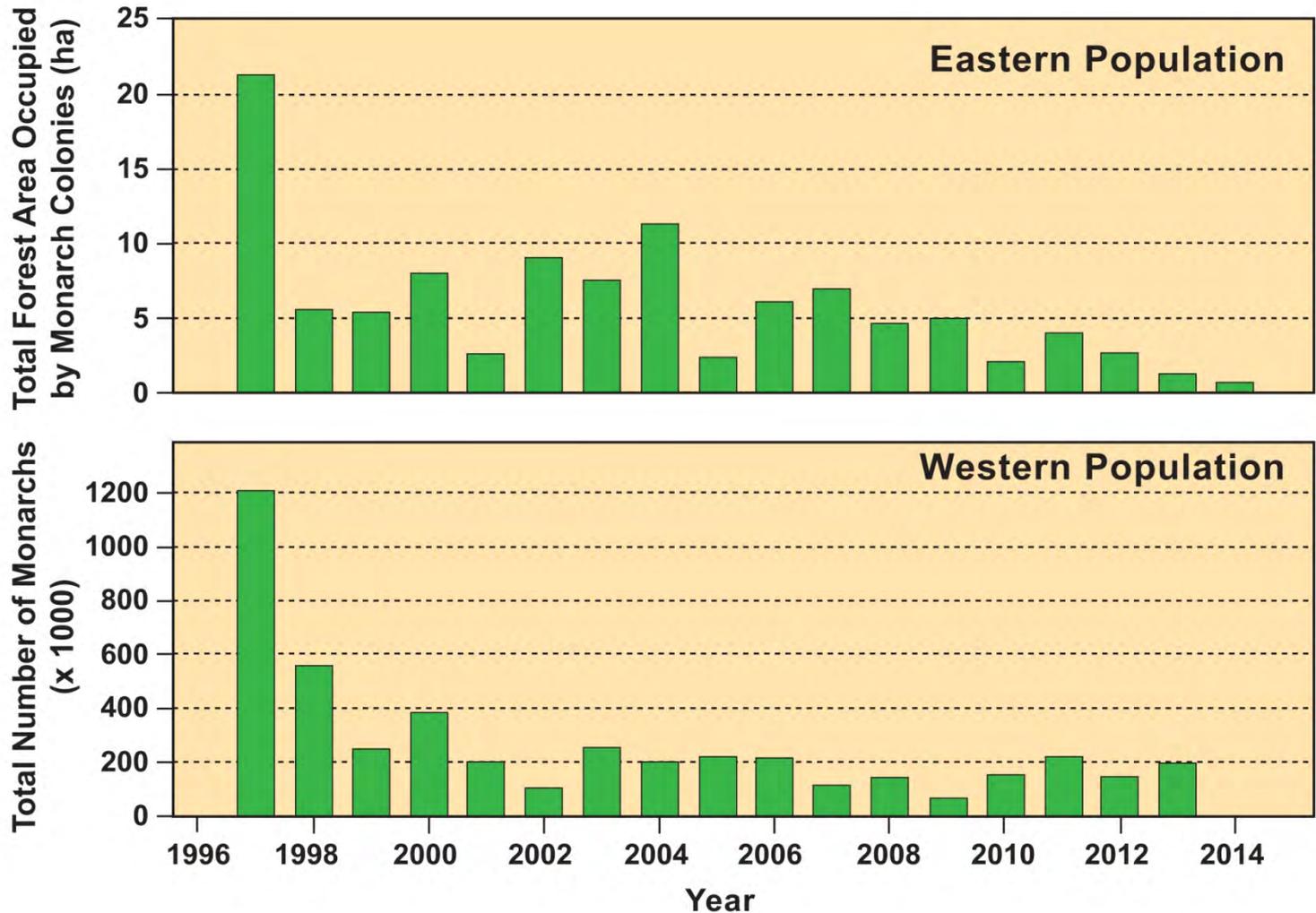
Other pollinators: bees, birds, bats, ants, beetles

Populations of All Pollinators are Decreasing Due to:

- Pesticide Overuse
- Habitat Loss
- Effects of Climate Change
- Disease



Monarch Butterfly Population Crash



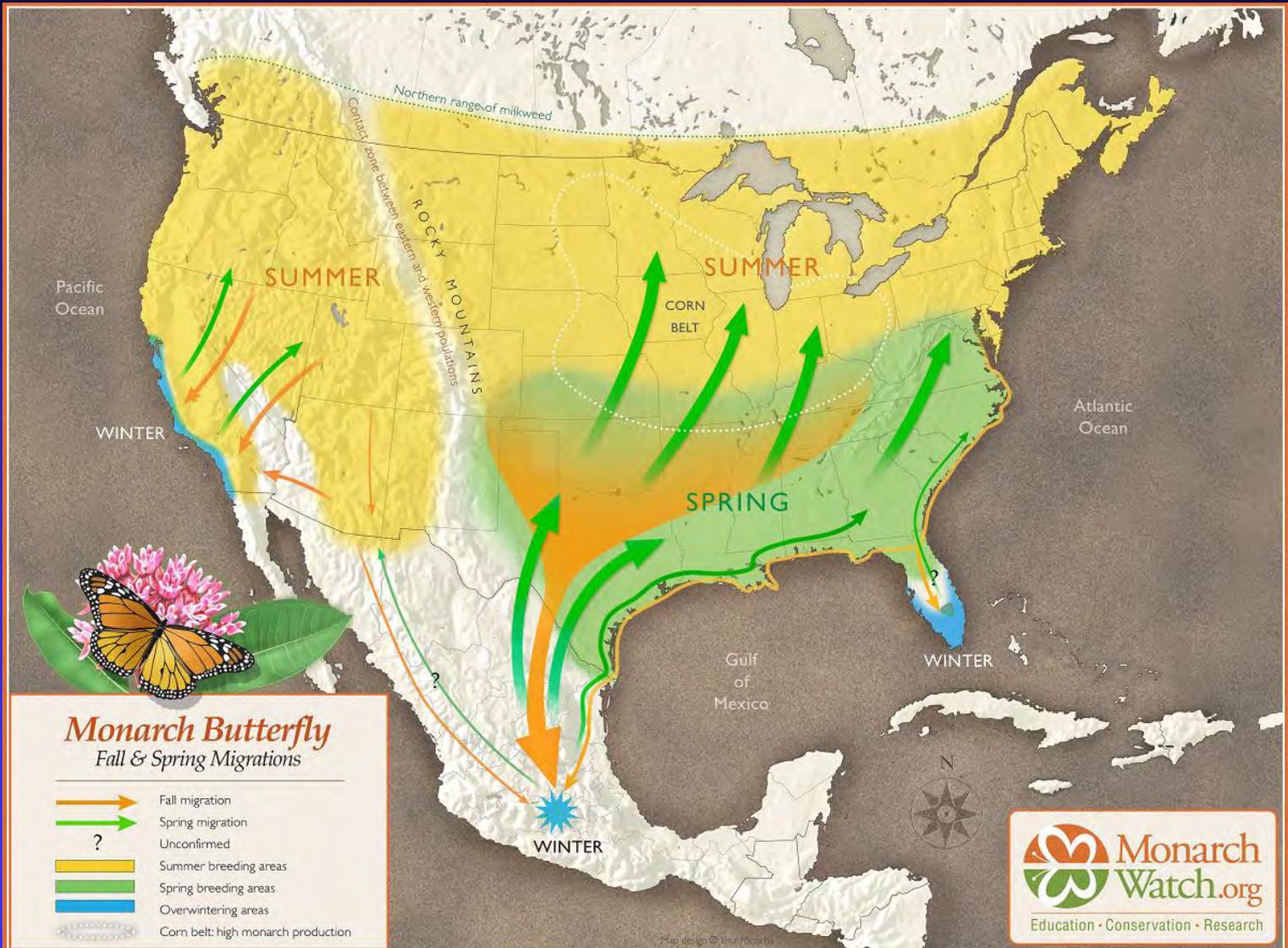
Causes for Population Crash of Monarch Butterflies

- ✓ **Overwinter Habitat Loss**
- ✓ **Breeding Habitat Loss**
- ✓ Disease and Parasites
- ✓ Climate Change
- ✓ Pesticide Use

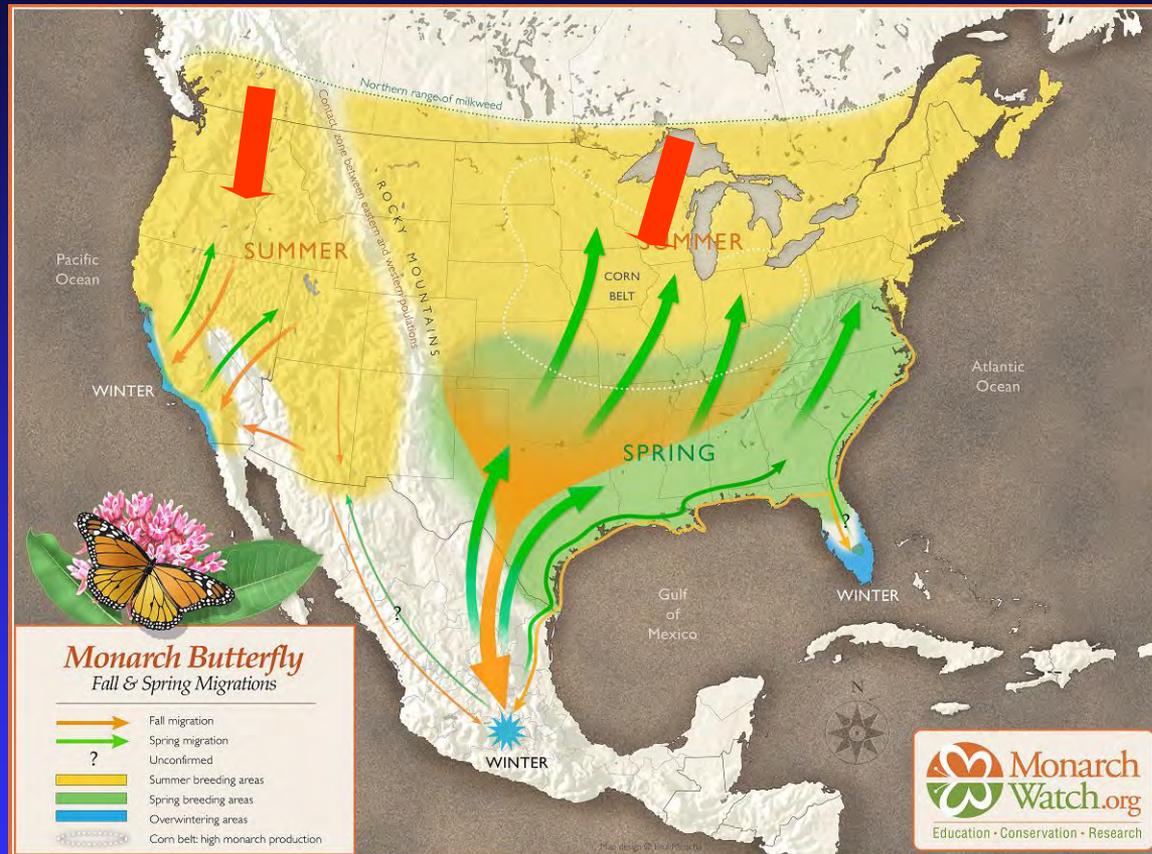


Habitat: the natural environment of an organism

Eastern & Western Populations

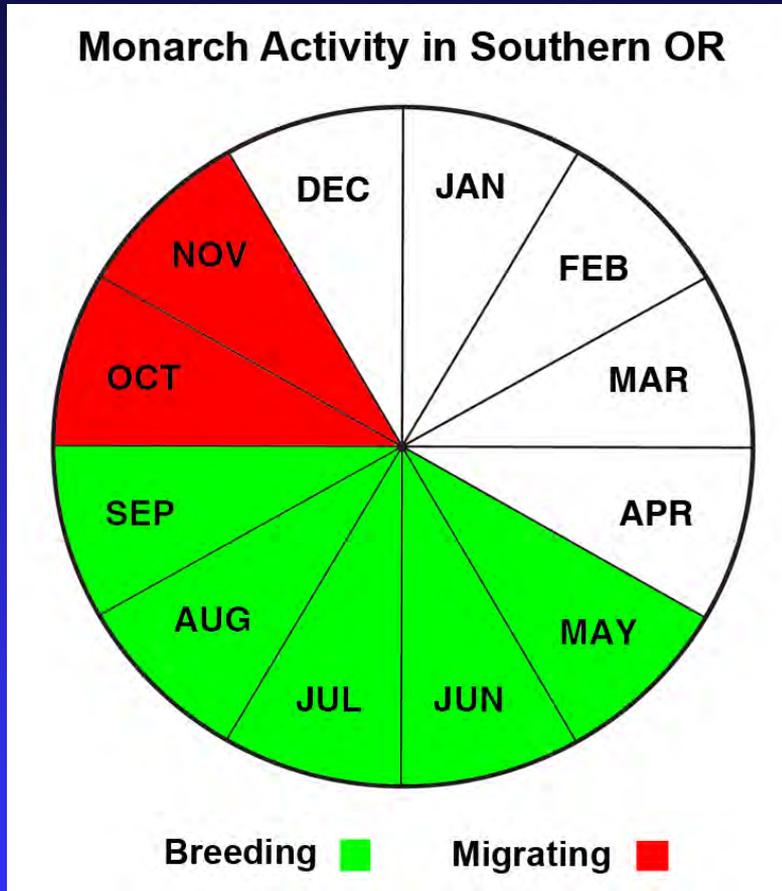


Amazing Monarch Migrations

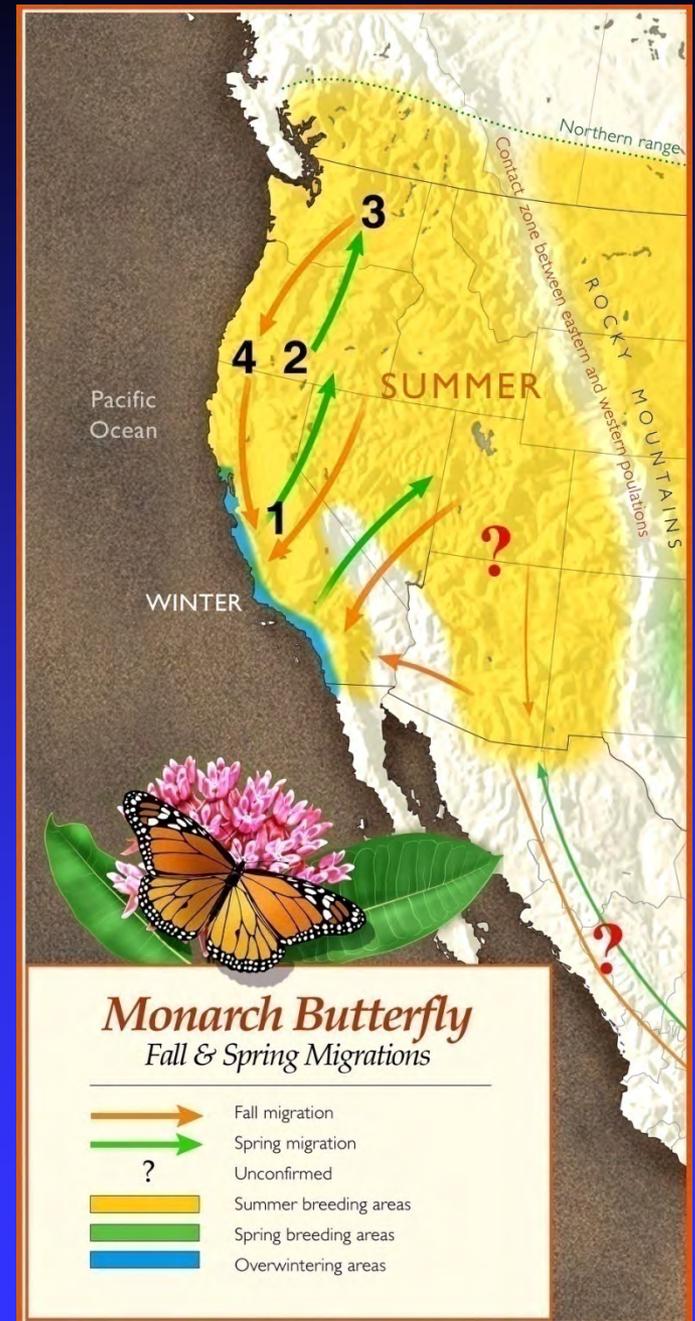


Super Generation of Monarchs Travels Thousands of Miles to Overwinter in Mexico or Southern CA – Places They Have Never Been Before

Western Monarchs



❖ Match Activity to Blooming Period for Nectar Plants

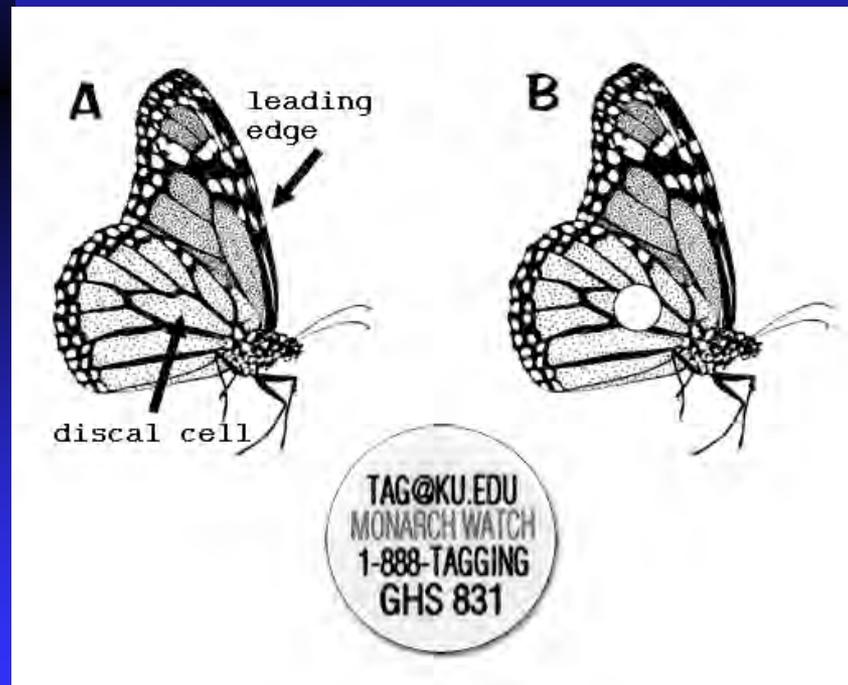


Loss of Milkweed Breeding Habitat in Southern Oregon



Mowing, Spraying,
and Weed
Competition Are the
Major Culprits

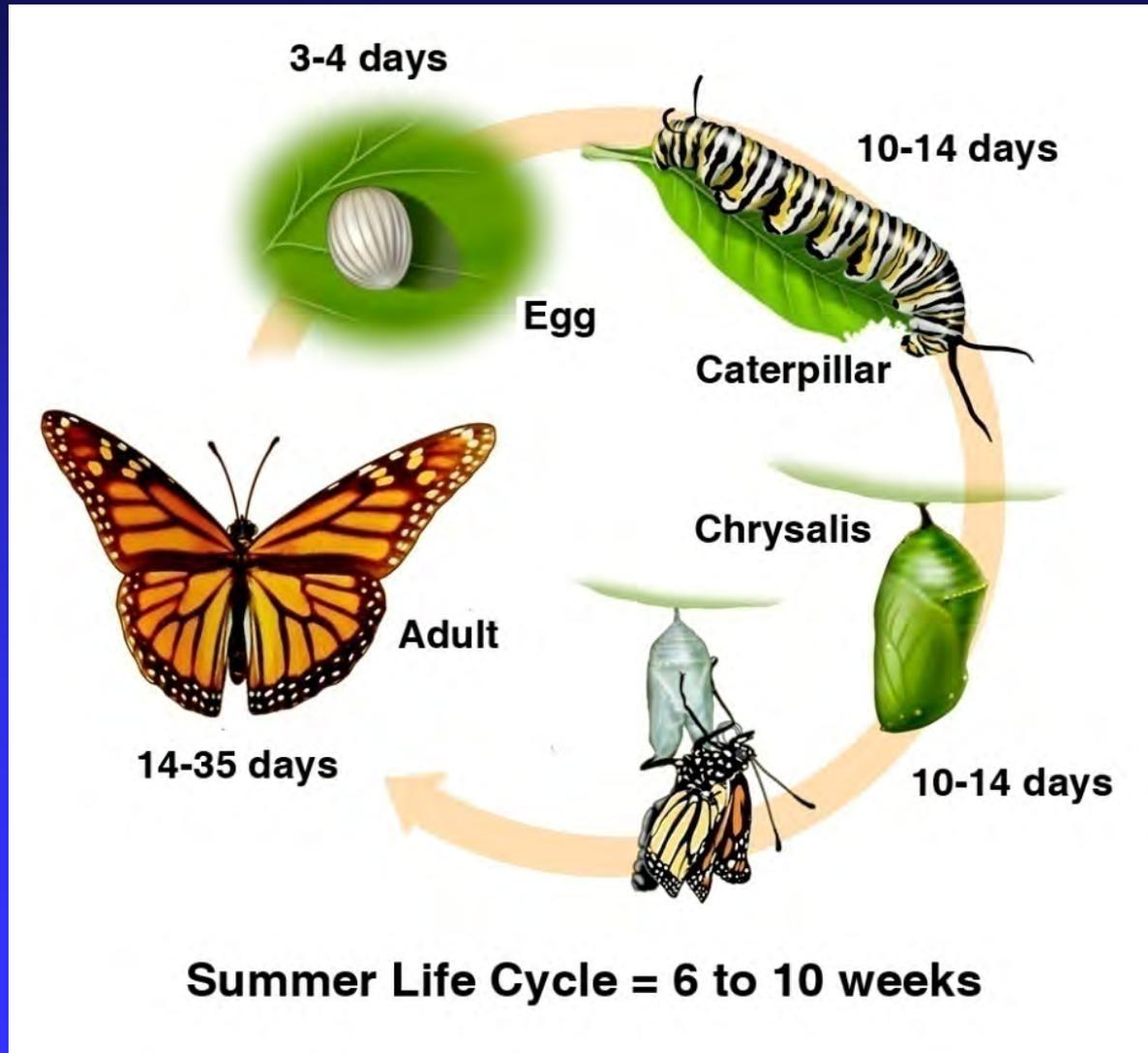
Tracking Monarch Migrations



Sticky Tags Affixed to Wing

Reports will help us understand monarch migration patterns

Monarch Life Cycle



Multiple Monarch Generations per Year



1. March/April: Eggs laid by females after overwintering. Adults live 6 to 10 weeks



2. May/June: Adults live 6 to 10 weeks



3. July/August: Adults live 6 to 10 weeks



4. Sept/March (Super Generation):
Adults live 6 to 7 months

Monarchs: Males vs Females



Males have
spots on lower
wings

Females have
thicker veins on
all wings



Create Habitat along Migration Routes

- A Milkweed Railroad for Monarchs

Monarch Waystation

These Specialized Pollinator Gardens Provide Habitat (Food, Shelter, and Water) for Monarch Butterflies on their Long Migrations



Food:
Native Milkweeds for
Monarch Caterpillars

Shelter:
Woody Trees and Shrubs
Protect Monarchs at Night
and During Bad Weather



forestfarm
at Pacifica

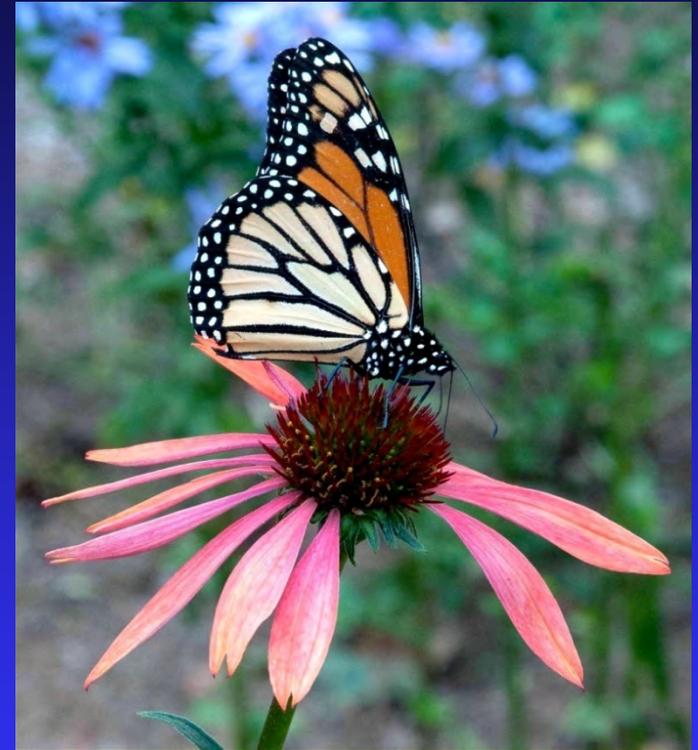


Food:
Nectar Plants for
Monarch Adults and
Other Pollinators

Water:
Mud Puddles Provide
Moisture and Minerals

1a. Food: Nectar Plants

Adult Butterflies Get Sugar
from the Nectar in Flowers



- Sugar Content of Nectar Ranges from 8% to 50%
- Nectar also Contains Vitamins, Oils & Amino acids

1b. Food: Host Plants



- ✓ Different butterflies have different host plants
- ✓ Larvae (caterpillars) *only* eat milkweed leaves
- ✓ Non-native plants such as butterfly bush are excellent nectar sources, but are not host plants for any butterfly species

Native Milkweed Species in the Southern Oregon



Showy milkweed
(*Asclepias speciosa*)



Native Milkweed Species in Southern Oregon



Narrowleaf milkweed
(*Asclepias fascicularis*)



Nectar Plants



Species	Color	Plant Type	Flowering Period
Dogbane	pink to white	shrub	Early summer
Blazing Star	purple	up to 18 inches	Mid-summer
Goldenrod	yellow	12 to 48 inches	Late summer 

Making & Planting Seed Balls



Great “Hands-on”
Activity for Kids

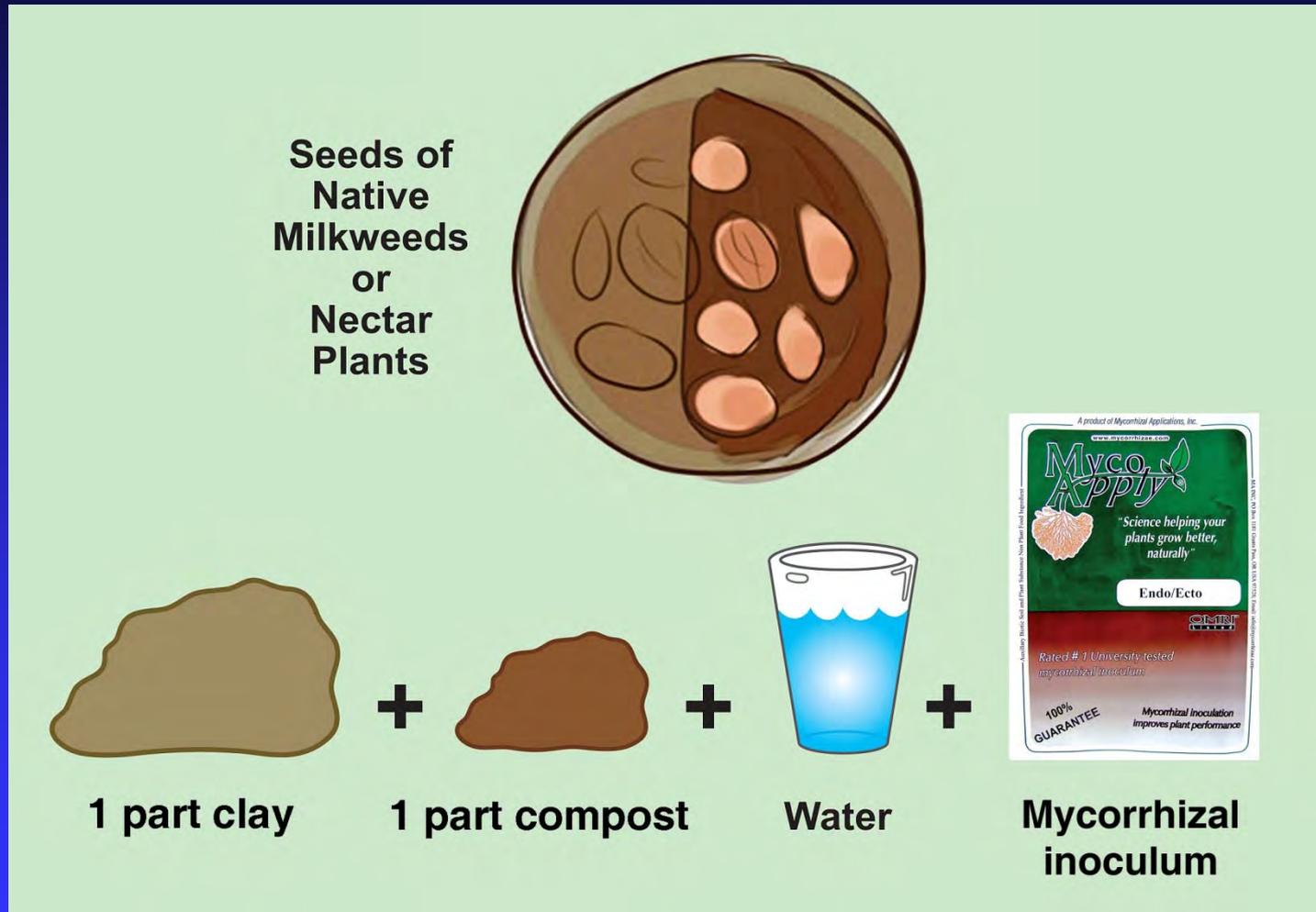


Plant Seed Balls Level with
the Soil Surface



Cover
With
Mulch &
Water
Often

How to Make Seed Balls



<http://seedsinaball.com/> or <http://seed-balls.com/>

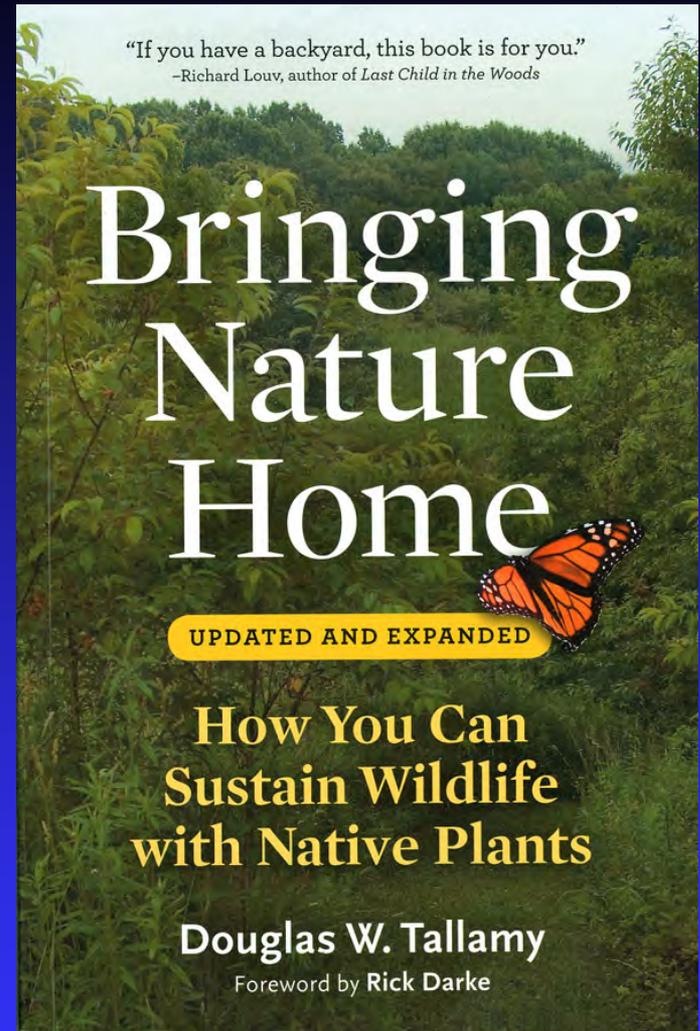
Direct Seeding with Seed Balls



1. Makes small milkweed seeds much easier to handle
2. Controls which plant species & number of seeds to be sown per location
3. Protects seeds from birds & rodents
4. Allows seeds to go through natural cold-moist stratification
5. Permits precise location of seeds

Closing Thoughts: It's About More Than Just Monarchs

- **It's All About Habitat: We Humans Have to Protect Existing Habitats, and Create New Ones to Support All Pollinators**
- **Monarch Waystations are *Something Positive that We Can Do***



A Wealth of Information is Available Online



Photo:
NA
Monarch
Conservation
Plan

North American Monarch Conservation Plan

<http://www.monarchprogram.org/>

www.monarchwatch.org

www.livemonarch.com

www.xerces.org

www.learner.org/jnorth

<https://www.butterflyencounters.com/>