



# MONARCH JOINT VENTURE

*Partnering across the U.S. to conserve the monarch migration*

[www.monarchjointventure.org](http://www.monarchjointventure.org)

*The Monarch Joint Venture is a partnership of federal and state agencies, non-governmental organizations, and academic programs that are working together to protect the monarch migration across the lower 48 United States.*

## PARTNERS

U.S. Forest Service  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Iowa Department of  
Natural Resources  
Natural Resources  
Conservation Service  
Cibola Nature Center  
Journey North  
Monarch Alert  
Monarch Butterfly Fund  
Monarch Health  
Monarchs in the Classroom  
Monarch Watch  
North American  
Butterfly Association  
Pheasants Forever and  
Quail Forever  
Pollinator Partnership  
Tallgrass Prairie Center  
Wild Ones: Native Plants,  
Natural Landscapes  
The Xerces Society for  
Invertebrate Conservation

University of Minnesota  
Monarch Joint Venture  
2003 Upper Buford Circle  
135 Skok Hall  
Saint Paul, MN 55108  
Ph. 612.624.8706

[monarchs@monarchjointventure.org](mailto:monarchs@monarchjointventure.org)

## Monarch Butterfly Conservation Talking Points:

Monarchs as a flagship species for conservation

### Need for monarch conservation

The monarch migration is one of the most magnificent and intriguing of all natural phenomena. Monarchs migrate to Mexico each fall from the central and eastern United States and southern Canada to overwinter in forested areas in mountains west of Mexico City. Monarchs from west of the Rocky Mountains undergo a similar, but shorter annual migration to several sites along the Pacific coast of California.

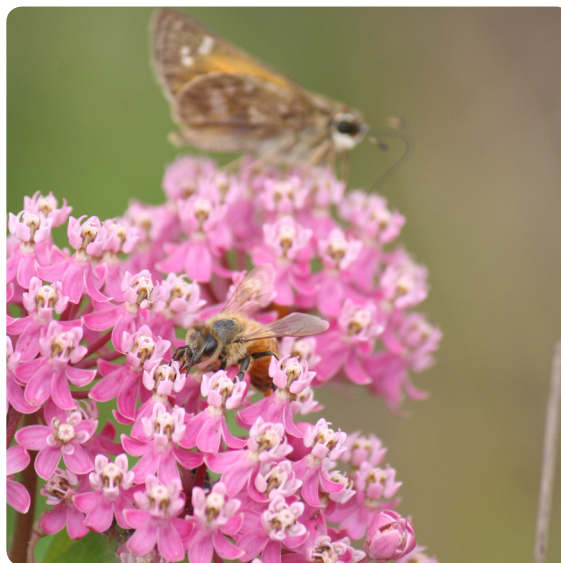
The very existence of the eastern North American monarch migration is under threat due to illegal logging at the overwintering sites in Mexico and the loss of habitat due to development, land management practices, and chemically-aided agriculture in the United States and Canada. The western population faces similar pressures from urban development, changing land management practices, and climate change. These talking points further describe the value of the monarch migration, the benefits of conserving monarchs and the steps needed to conserve the monarch migration.

### Scientific and cultural value

Known to be one of the world's longest and most

spectacular insect migrations, the monarch migration has scientific and cultural value that warrants its preservation. With their large geographic range, monarchs draw attention across North America. Their beauty and familiarity help connect both

children and adults with the natural world and further engage them in activities to conserve monarchs and the environment. Citizen scientists from across the continent have been involved in studying monarchs for decades. Side by side with researchers, these volunteers help to document fluctuating monarch populations and potential causes for these fluctuations.



### Benefits to other organisms

Monarchs serve as international and iconic representatives of all pollinators, and their conservation will benefit pollinators and many other plants and animals. They use resources common to a large number of pollinators, and the size of their population therefore reflects the overall health of the environment for pollinators in general. The security and stability of our food sources and ecosystems are dependent on healthy pollinator populations.

## The Monarch Joint Venture Mission and Vision

Recognizing that North American monarch (*Danaus plexippus*) conservation is a responsibility of Mexico, Canada and the U.S., as identified in the North American Monarch Conservation Plan, this Joint Venture will work throughout the U.S. to conserve and protect monarch populations and their migratory phenomena by implementing science-based habitat conservation and restoration measures in collaboration with multiple stakeholders. This goal will be achieved through a combination of habitat conservation, enhancement and restoration; education; research and monitoring.

The vision of this Joint Venture is abundant monarch populations that can be sustained into perpetuity, and more broadly the promotion of monarchs as a flagship species whose conservation will sustain habitats for pollinators and other plants and animals.



## Understand and evaluate ecological issues

Understanding the status of the monarch population will help us evaluate many ecological problems, including climate change and habitat loss at local, regional, and international levels. Thus, better understanding of monarch needs and factors that impact their populations can have broad environmental benefits. Because of our understanding of the climatic requirements for monarchs during their annual cycle of breeding, migrating and overwintering, changes in the timing and location of monarch life stages provide indicators of climate change. Recognizing the realities and manifestations of climate change will provide the basis for adaptive strategies designed to help maintain biodiversity and the integrity of ecosystems.

## Existing programs supporting monarchs

Many existing educational and conservation programs focused on monarchs need additional audiences and support. Government agencies and many non-governmental conservation and educational organizations in the United States, Mexico, and Canada are committed to supporting monarchs. Additionally, there are many opportunities for the public to engage in monarch research by participating in citizen science programs that cover all aspects of monarchs' annual cycle of breeding, migrating, and overwintering ([www.monarchnet.org](http://www.monarchnet.org)). All of these efforts need additional support to further engage the public, schools, nature centers, municipalities, and government agencies.



## Cooperative efforts to conserve monarchs

Conservation of the monarch migration will require cooperative efforts to protect, restore, and create monarch habitat. Sustaining the monarch migration requires extensive efforts to educate the citizens and decision makers of Mexico, the United States, and Canada about the value of the monarch migration and the necessity of protecting,

restoring and creating monarch habitats. Citizens, non-profit organizations, municipalities, and government agencies are all enlisted in this effort, and members of the Monarch Joint Venture are involved in a broad suite of activities described on our website. The North American Monarch Conservation Plan, available on the Monarch Joint Venture website, provides a blueprint for and commitment to action.

## Financial and scientific support

Financial and scientific support for monarch conservation is crucial. In order for monarch conservation to succeed, we must increase our knowledge about monarch ecology and develop support for implementing research-based conservation measures. Funding is needed to support habitat restoration in different regions in Canada, the United States, and Mexico. Also in need of funding are the educational, conservation, and research programs focused on monarchs that engage and educate the public and decision makers. For more information about specific conservation actions, see the Monarch Joint Venture website.



[www.monarchjointventure.org](http://www.monarchjointventure.org)

## Monarch Task Force

### North American Pollinator Protection Campaign

The content for this document was originally developed by the 2009 Monarch Task Force of the North American Pollinator Protection Campaign and was adapted by the Monarch Joint Venture in 2014. Special thanks to Task Force Co-Chair Karen Oberhauser, Ph.D. University of Minnesota; Task Force Co-Chair Donita Cotter, US Fish and Wildlife Service; Chip Taylor, Ph.D. MonarchWatch; Kathie Christie, Pollinator Partnership; Robert Lamb, Pollinator Partnership; Brad Stirn, Pollinator Partnership; Larry Stritch, Ph.D., US Forest Service; Wayne Wehling, Ph.D., USDA APHIS; Harriet Crosby, Farview Foundation; Marietta Eaton, Bureau of Land Management, Lincoln Brower, Ph.D., Sweet Briar College, and Elizabeth Howard.

[www.nappc.org](http://www.nappc.org)



Photo credits: Wendy Caldwell, Denny Brooks, and Alicia Salyi

