Monarch

Danaus plexippus



Inside



Outside



Chrysalid

REIMAN GARDENS
IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

Monarch

Danaus plexippus

Order: Lepidoptera
Family: Nymphalidae

Etymology: In Greek mythology Danaus had fifty daughters known as the Danaides. Plexippus was a hero in Greek mythology that participated in the hunt for the Calydonian Boar.

Wing span: 3.25 – 4.75 inches (81 – 118 mm)

Habitat: Monarchs are found throughout a variety of open habitats such as meadows, fields marshes, and roadsides.

Host Plant: Larvae feed on a variety of milkweeds (*Asclepias*) such as common milkweed and swamp milkweed.

Adult Food Source: Adults will nectar from a wide variety of flowering plants including milkweed.

Life History: Once a female has successfully mated she begins laying her eggs individually on the underside of the host plant leaves. After the eggs hatch the larvae feed on the host plant until they are ready to pupate. Typically the larvae leave the host plant to form their pupae on a nearby plant or structure.

Flights: There are multiple generations each year making it possible to find adults almost all year round. The fall emerging generations are the only one with an extremely long lifespan, as they are the individuals that make the long migration to the spots where they will overwinter.

Fun Facts: The Monarch is the official state insect or butterfly of seven different states; Alabama, Idaho, Illinois, Minnesota, Texas, Vermont, and West Virginia.

Range:

