



From: Lovett, Jim <jlovett@ku.edu>

Date: Fri, Aug 7, 2015 at 8:24 AM

Subject: Monarch Watch - Summer 2015

To: monarch-watch-update - An announcement-only list for Monarch Watch <monarch-watch-update@ku.edu>

Greetings Monarch Watchers! As we head into our busy season we wanted to give you a quick update regarding the monarch population (good news!) and some details about upcoming and ongoing projects/events. As you can imagine, the number of communications we receive this time of year can be overwhelming at times so we ask for your patience - we are not always able to respond in a timely manner but we do try to address every email, voicemail and letter we receive. We love to hear from you but please be sure to check out all of the information we have online via our website, blog, Facebook page, etc. before contacting us with questions. THANK YOU! :-)

Monarch Population Status - by Chip Taylor

The number of reports of sightings has increased over the last few weeks and there have been reports of eggs – lots of eggs – mostly in the regions previously identified as likely to have a good migration (Dakotas to Michigan). The number of eggs found and the distribution of these finds now leads me to suspect that the migration through the upper Midwest will be better than any migration seen since 2011. This is good news since the tagging, isotope and observational data suggest that more than 90% of the monarchs reaching Mexico originate in this region. You may recall that temperatures during the breeding seasons of 2012 and 2013 were less than ideal, resulting in population declines each year. Last year the conditions were more favorable and I predicted in May that the population would increase. It did, though not by the amount I expected.

I'm encouraged by the egg data. As I've mentioned in previous "Monarch Population Status" updates (see our blog for these), the size of the migration is strongly influenced by the number of eggs laid between 20 July and 7 August. Most of the butterflies that result from these eggs become non-reproductive and join the migration from late August through early October as it moves progressively southward starting about the 10th of August at 50N (Winnipeg). The 45-day forecast is also encouraging since it suggests that temperatures will be favorable for the development of the migratory generation. If this forecast is more accurate than the one I used to make my predictions in early May – and conditions during the migration are storm-free – the number of monarchs at the overwintering sites could occupy an area of 1.8 – 2.3 hectares. This would be a substantial improvement given that the total last year was 1.13 hectares and that of the previous year was 0.67 hectares. More would be

better of course, since the predicted El Niño could take a toll on the population during the latter part of the coming winter.

It will be a battle but we need to get the overwintering numbers up to at least 4 hectares in the coming years to be assured that sufficient numbers survive in the event of catastrophic winter storms such as those occurring in January 2002 and January/February 2004. To reach the 4-hectare goal (or the 6-hectare objective of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service) will

require a massive effort to restore milkweeds in the milkweed/monarch corridor that extends from Texas through Minnesota. The weather during the breeding seasons will need to be favorable as well.

PLANT MILKWEED!

For a more detailed discussion of the current monarch population status please visit <http://monarchwatch.org/blog/>

Chip in for Monarch Watch

Six years ago we launched the now annual "Chip in for Monarch Watch" fundraising campaign in honor of Chip Taylor, our program's founder and Director. This campaign provides Monarch Watchers, colleagues, friends, and family across the planet an opportunity to show their support for Chip and the Monarch Watch program he brought to life more than two decades ago.

The 2015 "Chip in for Monarch Watch" Fundraising Campaign is now underway - please help us spread the word about this campaign which brings in the funds necessary to keep Monarch Watch's education, conservation and research programs going...and growing!

If you are in a position to offer financial support to Monarch Watch (or know someone who might be), please consider making a fully tax-deductible donation of any amount during our 2015 "Chip in for Monarch Watch" fundraising campaign.

Visit <http://monarchwatch.org/chip> for more information or to submit your pledge and tax-deductible donation. Be sure to check out the comments and photos submitted by other donors - we are continually amazed by the connections that are made through monarchs and Monarch Watch.

Thank you for your continued support!

Chip in for Monarch Watch: <http://monarchwatch.org/chip>

Upcoming Monarch Watch Events

Festival of Butterflies at Powell Gardens
Friday, August 7 - Sunday, August 9, 2015
Kingsville, MO, U.S.A.

Join Monarch Watch at the 19th annual Festival of Butterflies at Powell Gardens!

Details at <http://www.powellgardens.org/butterfly>

Monarch Watch Open House Event
Saturday, 12 September 2015 - 8a to 2p
Lawrence, KS, U.S.A.

Join us at our Fall Open House at Foley Hall (KU's West Campus) to celebrate the arrival of migrating monarchs coming from the north. This free event is designed to please children and adults alike. As usual, we will provide refreshments, lots of show & tell (including a honey bee observation hive, our tarantulas, and white monarchs), tours of our gardens and lab space, hands-on activities, games, videos, monarch tagging demonstrations, and, of course, lots of monarch caterpillars, chrysalises, and butterflies! We will also try to have a number of milkweed plants (common, swamp, and butterfly milkweed) available for use in fall plantings.

Details at <http://monarchwatch.org/openhouse/>

Monarch Butterfly Tagging Event
Saturday, September 19, 2015 7:30-11:30am
Lawrence, KS, U.S.A.

Once again, Monarch Watch and Jayhawk Audubon Society are sponsoring Monarch butterfly tagging for the public at the Baker University Wetlands. There is no charge to participants and no experience is necessary - we'll provide tags, nets, and instructions.

For those of you that have joined us in years past, please note that this year's tagging event will be at a new location at the wetlands (to be determined). Complete information regarding this location will be available via:

<http://monarchwatch.org/wetlands>

Monarch Watch Tagging Kits

We need to keep tagging monarchs as a way of monitoring their numbers and tracking any shifts in the origins of monarchs that reach Mexico. If you are a long-term tagger, you know it has been increasingly difficult to find enough monarchs to tag, especially during the last two years. The totals tagged each year roughly parallel the numbers recorded in Mexico each winter, giving us an independent assessment of the numbers in the migration. Regional tagging success also helps in that it demonstrates how monarchs respond to the physical conditions and quality of the habitats in these areas. Thus, tagging is an important tool to help us understand the overall dynamics of the monarch population.

Tags for the 2015 fall tagging season are now available - if you would to tag monarchs this year, please order your tags as soon as possible.

Monarch Watch Tagging Kits are only shipped to areas east of the Rocky Mountains. As usual, each tagging kit includes a set of specially manufactured monarch butterfly tags (you specify quantity), a datasheet, tagging instructions, and additional monarch / migration information. Tagging Kits for the 2015 season start at only \$15 and include your choice of 25, 50, 100, 200, 300, or 500 tags.

Monarch Watch Tagging Kits and other materials are available via the Monarch Watch Shop online at <http://shop.monarchwatch.org> - where each purchase helps support Monarch Watch.

2015 datasheets and instructions are also available online at <http://monarchwatch.org/tagging>

Free Milkweed Programs

We now have two programs designed to distribute free milkweeds to eligible organizations and individuals: (1) Free Milkweeds for Schools and Nonprofits and (2) Free Milkweeds for Large-Scale Restoration. Both of these programs will continue through the 2015/2016 season. If you know of an organization or individual that might be able to take advantage of either of these programs to create monarch/pollinator habitat by planting milkweeds please encourage them to read through the information and application forms available online.

For complete details, please visit <http://monarchwatch.org> and click on the "Free Milkweeds" button or visit <http://monarchwatch.org/bring-back-the-monarchs/milkweed/free-milkweeds>

About This Monarch Watch List

Monarch Watch (<http://monarchwatch.org>) is a nonprofit education, conservation, and research program based at the University of Kansas that focuses on the monarch butterfly, its habitat, and its spectacular fall migration.

We rely on private contributions to support the program and we need your help! Please consider making a tax-deductible donation. Complete details are available at <http://monarchwatch.org/donate> or you can simply call [800-444-4201](tel:800-444-4201) (KU Endowment Association) for more information about giving to Monarch Watch.

If you have any questions about this email or any of our programs please feel free to contact us anytime.

Thank you for your continued interest and support!

Monarch Watch
<http://monarchwatch.org>
monarch@ku.edu

You are receiving this mail because you subscribed to the Monarch Watch list via monarchwatch.org or shop.monarchwatch.org - if you would rather not receive these periodic email updates from Monarch Watch please let us know.

This e-mail may be reproduced, printed, or otherwise redistributed as long as it is provided in full and without any modification. Requests to do otherwise must be approved in writing by Monarch Watch.