



HAYES FARM  
TRAVELLING GARDEN TOOL KIT

MONARCH BUTTERFLIES AND MILKWEED

KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE 2



# Today we will learn about

What the Monarch butterfly looks like

How they grow from babies to adults

Where they go in the winter

What they eat

# Handling Butterflies

They are totally harmless; they don't sting or bite.

It is important to never grab a butterfly by the wings or put them into jars.

You can look at butterflies up close if you are patient, because they will sometimes land on your body or they will stay on a flower for a good amount of time.



Photo: Butterflies at Home website

# What do Monarchs look like?

Orange with black markings

Two sets of wings

Six legs

Head has many tiny eyes that work together.

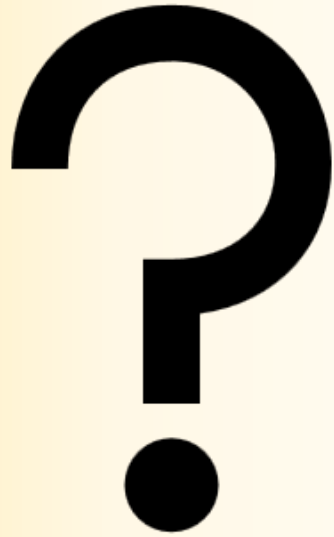
They have antennae (little wires at the top of their heads) to help them smell and know which direction they are moving in.

A proboscis (which is like a drinking straw)

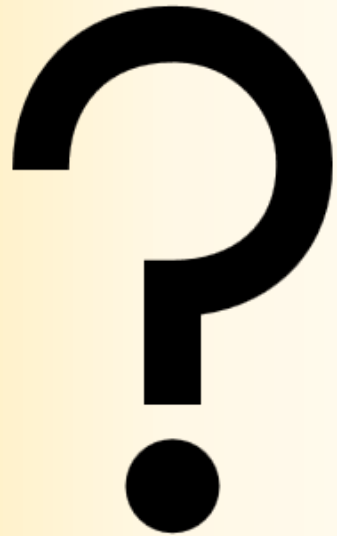
A middle part of their body (where the wings and legs attach)

Their belly (where their stomach is and where they store their eggs)





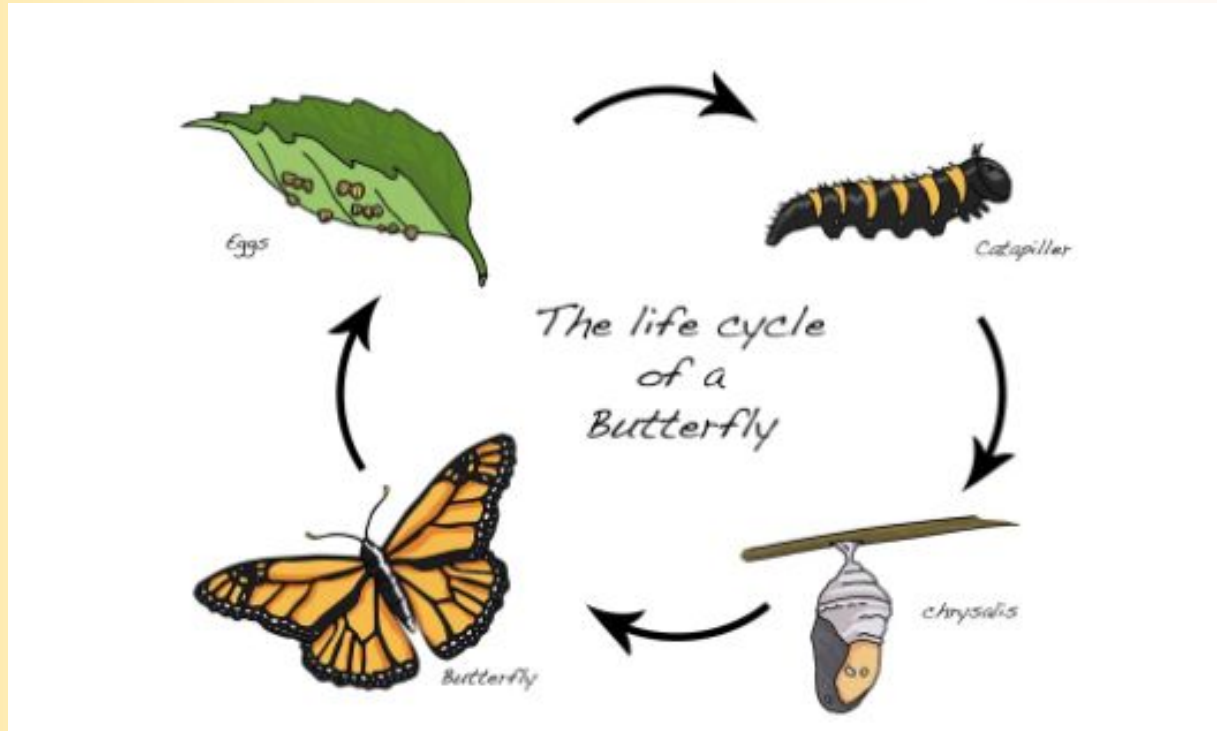
*Do insects have babies that look just like them, (the way that dogs and cats do)?*



***No! They lay eggs***

***Does anyone know what happens  
to butterfly eggs before they  
become adults?***

# Butterfly Life Cycle



Adult female monarchs lay their eggs on the underside of milkweed leaves.

Caterpillars eat a lot of milkweed when they are growing, they are very hungry!

After eating all they can, caterpillars make a little tent for themselves called a chrysalis.

After about 2 weeks inside of their tent, the caterpillar transforms into a butterfly!

All of this transforming from one form into another is called Metamorphosis



Caterpillar



Pupa in Cocoon (tent)





*It is very hard to be a butterfly in the snow!*

*Does anyone know where Monarchs go in the wintertime?*

Monarchs make a very, very, very long trip to a country called Mexico.

There is a certain kind of forest there that is a bit like our forest here.

The butterflies meet together in this forest and stay for a few months!

There will be several generations of Monarchs on this trip. The Monarchs that come back to New Brunswick are the “Great Grandchildren” of the ones that left at the end of the summer.

# Let's watch on line as Monarchs wake up in the morning in Mexico!

[https://youtu.be/IW0ySU\\_hAz0](https://youtu.be/IW0ySU_hAz0)



Video: PBS - Public Broadcasting Service for educational usage only



*Does anyone know what kind of food Monarch caterpillars eat?*

*Does anyone know what kinds of food adult Monarchs eat?*

# What do Monarch caterpillars eat?



Photo: Leanne Guenther

Milkweed is the only thing the caterpillars can eat!

The adult females lay eggs on the underside of leaves. When the eggs hatch the larvae eat the leaves.

Milkweed has a poison in it, but most animals won't eat it because it tastes very bad.

Because the Monarchs eat Milkweed, they become poisonous to predators.

**We must be very careful never to put milkweed into our mouth because it will make us sick!**

# Milkweed pods and seeds



Milkweed seed pod  
Photo: Leanne Guenther



Photo: Amy Floyd



*Can anyone think of why the seeds would be attached to this fluff?*

***Exactly! So that the seeds can travel further on the wind.***

# What do adult butterflies eat?

Nectar is a sweet liquid made by plants and their flowers.

It can be even sweeter than coca-cola!



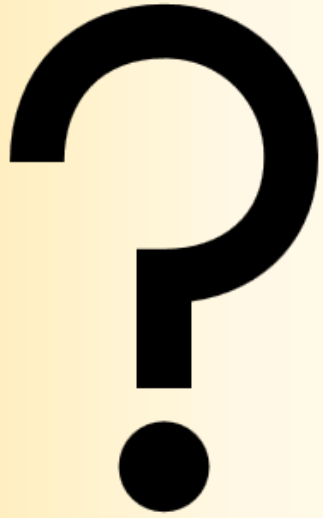
*Photo: Leanne Guenther*



# How we can help Monarchs!

- We can plant milkweed which is the only food the caterpillar eats
- We can plant flowers like Black-eyed Susan and a kind of Daisy called Asters
- We can leave the plant Goldenrods alone (it grows very well in nature, we can just not cut it down)





*Memory check*

*What is the name of the only  
plant that Monarch caterpillars  
can eat?*



***You've got it!  
It's milkweed!***

# Activity - Milkweed seed bombs

- Milkweed seeds need to have a period of 'winter' before they will start to grow
- The first-year plant leaf is very different from the second-year leaf
- The seed bomb must be thrown into the planting area sometime during our winter months
- Plant them in wild areas, or in the back of your yard, they can spread from their roots a bit
- We add other seeds to the bomb so you can tell where the plant is growing

# Directions

1. Take the clay (about 1 tablespoons), kneed it and make a thin flat circle
2. Place a small amount of soil in the center of the circle, add the seeds to the soil
3. Wrap the clay around the soil and make a nice ball
4. Allow the ball to dry. The clay protects the soil and seeds inside, the soil gives the seeds somewhere nice to grow.

Image of making these on farm?

We look forward to seeing you on the farm!



Hayes Farm