

Take the monarch quiz!

1) Monarchs are found throughout the US and southern Canada in the summer, but in the winter, they are found in:

- a) Michoacán, Mexico
- b) The coast of California
- c) Florida
- d) All of the above

It's actually d), all of the above. Monarchs east of the Rocky Mountains mostly go to south central Mexico. Monarchs west of the Rockies, go to various places along the California coast.

There are also some monarchs in Florida in the winter, but it's not certain whether they migrate to Florida for the winter or if they are just there all year long and don't need to migrate.

While you're discussing this, get a globe or map to show the kids the Rockies, California, Florida, and Michoacán, Mexico, and have them trace the monarchs' routes with their fingers.

2) Milkweed plants are the only plants where monarch butterflies will:

- a) make a milkshake
- b) sleep
- c) lay eggs
- d) collect nectar

Monarch butterflies will slurp nectar from many kinds of flowers, but they will only lay their eggs on milkweed plants. This is because monarch caterpillars will only eat milkweeds. If you want to have monarchs, you must have milkweeds!



A monarch egg on a milkweed leaf

This is called being a “host plant,” and many kinds of butterflies and moths depend on a certain kind of plant like this.

3) Milkweeds are called milkweeds because:

- a) They tend to grow near milkcows
- b) They taste like milk
- c) They have a sap that looks like milk
- d) They taste good on cereal.

It's c), their milky sap. If you tear off a stem and squeeze it, you can see white "sap" oozing out. Don't eat it, though, it's mildly poisonous and tastes disgusting!



4) Monarchs can store milkweeds' poison in their own bodies to protect themselves from some predators. If most birds eat a monarch, they will:

- a) Vaporize
- b) Get sick
- c) Lose all their feathers
- d) Turn into a toad

Monarchs aren't deadly, but they will make many predators sick if they eat one. After that, many predators will recognize a monarchs' bold markings and avoid them in the future. It's not perfect, however, as some orioles, mice, wasps and other creatures can eat monarchs without being

harmd.

5) Which body parts have been shown to help monarchs navigate to Mexico?

- a) Antennae
- b) Legs
- c) Proboscis
- d) abdomen

Monarchs' antennae seem to have "built-in GPS!" Considering their brains are about the size of a kiwi seed, it's truly amazing they can find their ways 2000 miles to Mexico!