



MLMP Updates

An e-Newsletter of the Monarch Larva Monitoring Project

mlmp.org

Summer 2021

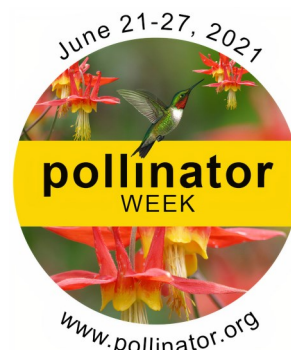
Summer 2021 MLMP Monitoring in Full Swing!

It's wonderful to see MLMP reports flowing in from monarchs' northern summer breeding range. So far, the most advanced northern sighting, of a 4th instar, has been at the UW Arboretum, MLMP's Madison home, but other sites are reporting younger larvae and lots of eggs. Thanks for your reports, and if you haven't started monitoring yet this year, now is the time! Be sure to report even if you don't see eggs or larvae yet.

Celebrating Pollinator Week & the 25th Anniversary of Data Collection in Wisconsin!

Pollinator Week will take place on June 21st – 27th. This international celebration will overlap with the 25th anniversary of the first MLMP data collection. We'll be sharing posts on our social media about what you can do to protect pollinators in your environment, and look back to the 90s with some of the first MLMP data. If you don't already follow us on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter, look us up at Monarch Larva Monitoring Project & @mlmpcitsci!

If you'd like to take part in Pollinator Week by planting for pollinators, hosting garden tours, participating in online bee and butterfly ID workshops, and more, you can register your event on [Pollinator Partnership's](#) map or share your story by tagging them on social media with the hashtag **#PollinatorWeek**.



Participation in the MLMP in California

Because of their precipitous decline in the west, monarchs are included on the CA Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) Terrestrial and Vernal Pool Invertebrates of Conservation Priority list, and are a Species of Greatest Conservation Need in CA's [State Wildlife Action Plan](#). California law prohibits the take or possession of wildlife for scientific research, education, or propagation purposes without a valid Scientific Collection Permit (SCP). This applies to all vertebrates, and to any invertebrates that are included on the Conservation Priority List. Thus, handling monarchs, removing them from the wild, or otherwise taking them for scientific or propagation purposes is **not permitted in California without a permit**. To learn more about obtaining a permit, see [the CDFW SCP page](#).

MLMP volunteers in CA may still observe monarchs on milkweed and carry out all procedures except Activity 3 (estimating monarch survival), since Activity 3 requires taking monarchs from the wild and rearing them in captivity. To increase our understanding of the status of the western population, we encourage CA volunteers to participate in any monarch citizen science project that does not include handling monarchs. The Monarch Joint Venture, MLMP, MonarchHealth, Southwest Monarch Study and other organizations are working on permits for tagging and checking monarchs for Oe, but rearing monarchs is unlikely to be permitted, and we are not pursuing an SCP for MLMP Activity 3.

For more information on the status of Western monarchs, see the [CDFW website](#), the [2019 Western Monarch Conservation Plan](#) that establishes population size and habitat conservation goals and strategies, and [recent information from the Xerces Society](#).



Western Monarch Butterfly Conservation Plan



Sponsored by the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

2019-2069

Illinois is State with Most MLMP Sites Monitored in 2020

For the first time in MLMP history, Illinois passed both Wisconsin and Minnesota for the most sites monitored in 2020, at a whopping 164. This is in large part thanks to the work of our friends at the Field Museum in Chicago, who trained over 400 people in 7 online workshops through their Monarch Community Science initiative.

In 2020, Field Museum community scientists contributed over 1000 observations at 158 sites in predominantly urban areas. These data are especially important to the Field Museum team, who are studying characteristics that make a successful urban monarch garden, and how urban areas can contribute to the massive milkweed deficit. Answering these significant urban ecology questions requires help from as many people as possible, which is why the Field Museum offers their trainings for free in two languages, English and Spanish. When asked why it's important to offer trainings in Spanish, GIS Specialist and Monarch Community Science lead Karen Klinger spoke of accessibility and inclusion, responding, "We wanted to enhance the project and extend the training to people who might not otherwise become involved. To broaden the opportunity to Spanish-speaking communities to help them learn about what's happening in their garden." This year, they have 3 upcoming trainings in Spanish, and just hired a Spanish-speaking Coordinator to run their training sessions and develop materials. At this pace, it seems as though they'll have no problem meeting their goal for the year, which is to train 150 new community scientists. As for returning community scientists, their passion and excitement about the project has surprised Karen. "We just offered a training for returning participants and had 35 of them attend. Many of these people didn't even see anything in their garden last season but remain so eager to help monitor!"



Field Museum citizen scientist Courtney Nash's urban garden in Chicago

On behalf of MLMP, we offer our sincere thanks to the [Field Museum's Monarch Community Science](#) team and volunteers for their valuable contribution to our understanding of urban habitat use by monarchs. We wish you all a happy season of monitoring, and are eager to see which state reigns supreme for the most sites monitored in 2021!

Monarchs & Pyrrolizidine Alkaloids, a New Citizen Science Opportunity

Pyrrolizidine Alkaloids, or "PAs", are toxic chemicals produced by plants to deter parasites. Adult monarchs have been observed gathering PAs from dry plants, though scientists aren't sure why. If you'd like to help scientists understand this relationship, consider collecting field observations of monarchs gathering PAs for the [Monarch Rx](#) project. For more information, see a paper by [Lawson, Vane-Wright and Boppre 2021](#) (or request a copy at info@mlmp.org).

RED MONARCA Literature Resource

For those of you interested in reading monarch research literature, [RED MONARCA](#) is a great resource that organizes monarch literature into a user-friendly dashboard. Listing literature in both English and Spanish, the dashboard offers simple visuals and search bars to help you navigate the system, including breakdowns by programmatic area (monitoring and research vs. conservation economy vs. restoration and conservation, etc.), year of publication, type of publication (scientific paper vs. thesis vs. report, etc.), and more.

You can support MLMP in many ways!

Please consider supporting our collective conservation efforts with a donation that supports training, materials, and maintenance of the data you collect. You can make a financial contribution today [here](#).

Have a story from your site or art to share? We'd love to hear from you!

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