

A Bug's Life Monarch butterfly

Family: Nymphalidae; *Danaus plexippus*

Fun facts

- There are eastern and western monarchs in N. America
- Multiple generations migrate north along flyways to feed and reproduce
- One generation migrates south long distances to overwintering sites
- Butterflies roost in canopy of trees (cedar, fir, pine) in the evenings for protection
- Distasteful to vertebrate predators due to toxins in host plant

Identification

Egg: Cream-colored, teardrop shaped with ridges, laid singly on milkweed plant

Caterpillar: White, black and yellow transverse bands, 5 larval stages, a pair of long, black tentacles at each end

Pupa: Light green pot with gold speckles hanging in protected location, becomes translucent before adult emergence

Butterfly: Bright orange with black wing veins, margins black with white spots, males have a dark spot on hind wings

Host plants

- Caterpillars require milkweed for development (genus *Asclepias*)
- Butterflies feed on a variety of nectar sources

Management

- Plant milkweed that grows best in the environment/setting
- Provide blooms for migrating butterflies for late summer and fall

