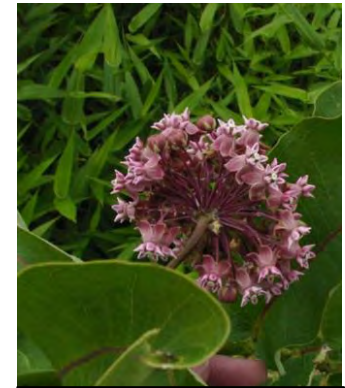
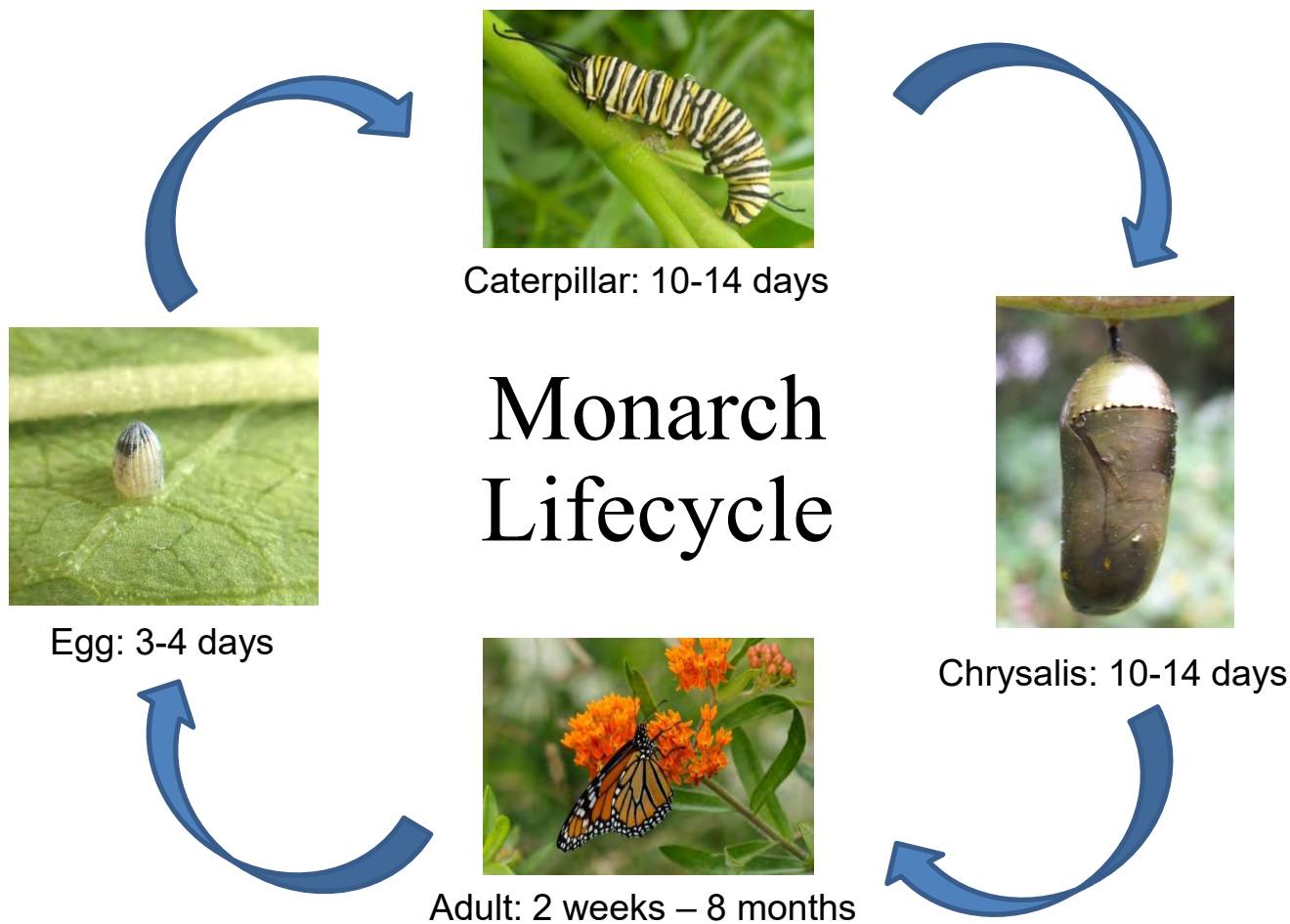


Monarchs & Milkweed





Common Milkweed
Asclepius syriaca



Butterfly Weed
Asclepius tuberosa



Swamp Milkweed
Asclepius incarnata

Monarch caterpillars eat milkweed to make themselves toxic to predators.

Milkweed itself is toxic to many insects due to its milky white sap.
There are multiple types of milkweed in the meadow.

Monarch mothers lay their eggs on the bottom side of milkweed leaves.



After 3-4 days, monarch caterpillars emerge and eat their first meal—their egg!



Monarch caterpillars have one job—to eat milkweed for 10-14 days, which makes them toxic to their predators.



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There are multiple types of milkweed in the meadow.



Swamp Milkweed
Asclepius incarnata



Butterfly Weed
Asclepius tuberosa



Common Milkweed
Asclepius syriaca

As the caterpillars grow, they molt five times, getting a bigger appetite and bigger frass (caterpillar poop) each time.

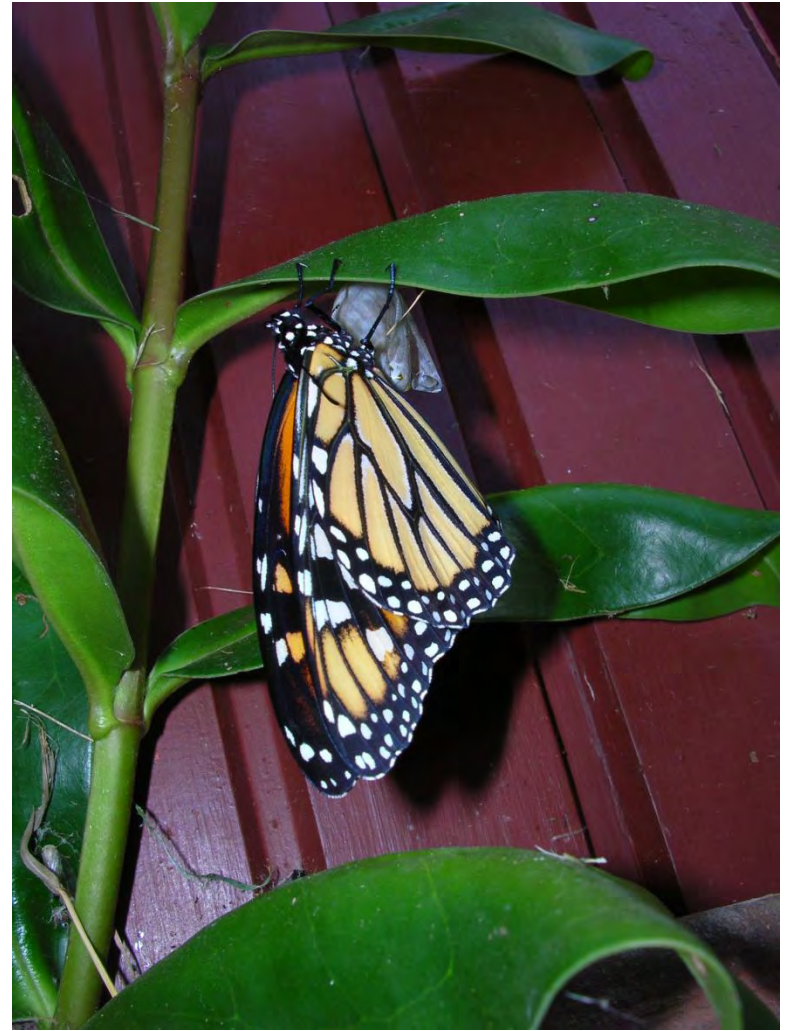


Finally, the monarch climbs up underneath a milkweed leaf, attaches itself, forms a “J,” and molts on last time to become a chrysalis. It turns green that camouflages itself by turning green to match the milkweed.





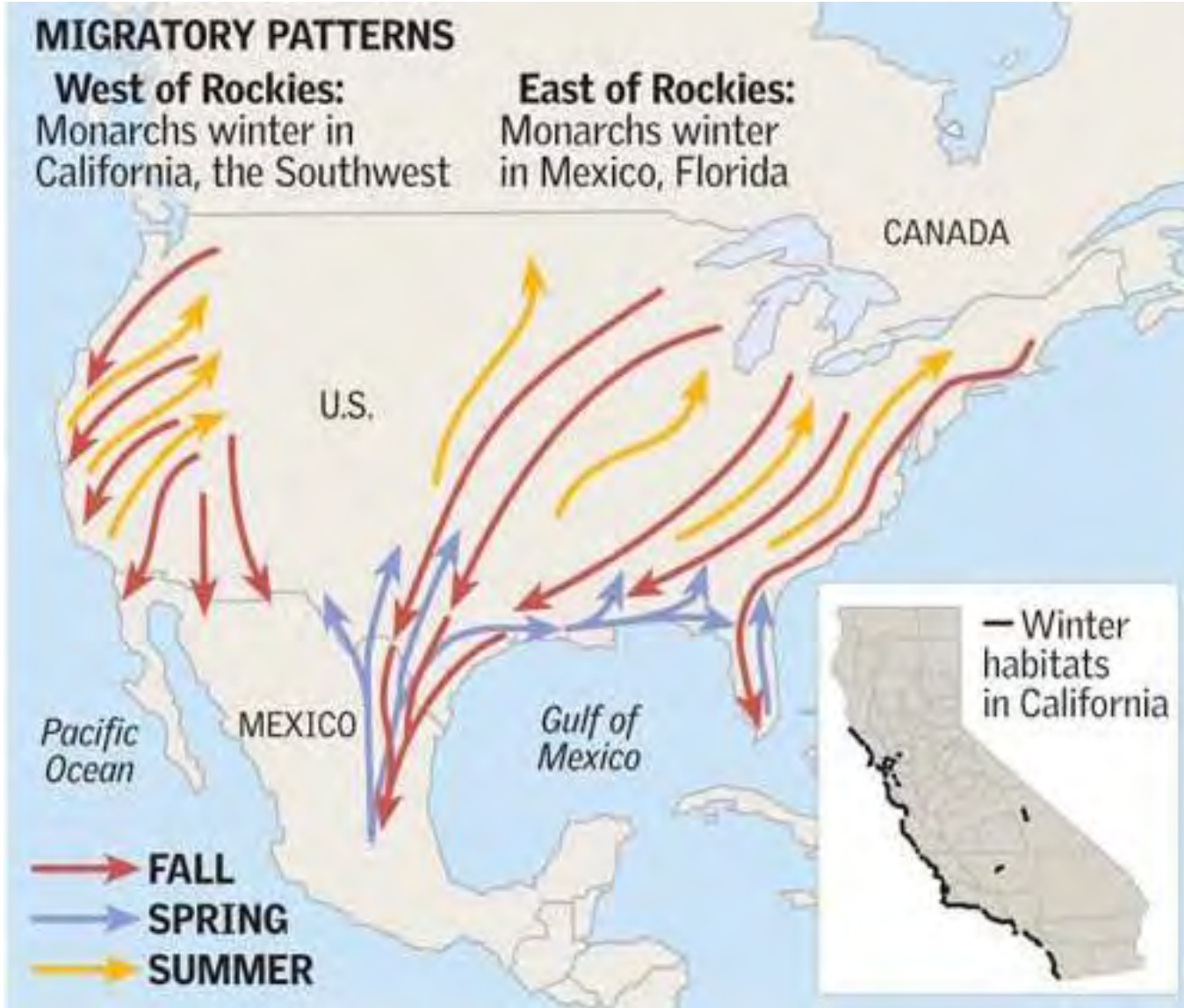
After 10-14 days, the chrysalis becomes dark and clear.



The butterfly emerges from its cocoon and hangs to dry its wings for 3 or 4 hours.

As an adult, a monarch gathers nectar from a variety of native flowers, and butterfly weed (a milkweed) is one of their favorites.





How long the adult will live and where it will fly depends on when during the season it was born. Throughout the spring and summer, monarch adults fly north, living 2-4 weeks. The fall generation lives eight months, however, flying all the way south to Mexico and north again to the Southern United States in the spring.

Monarch populations have been declining throughout North America and may be classified as an endangered species in the US.

Most of this decline has been caused by reduced milkweed abundance due to increased herbicide use, urbanization, and reduced crop field buffers.

Other threats to monarchs include climate change and pesticides



Each generation of adult monarchs requires milkweed for their young and for their own nutrition. It is important to protect and plant this habitat not only here in our meadow but across the monarchs' migration path.



At home, the best ways to help monarchs are to reduce and eliminate pesticide use and to plant milkweed to increase monarch habitat.

Native milkweeds
include:

Swamp Milkweed
Asclepius incarnata



Butterfly Weed
Asclepius tuberosa



Common Milkweed
Asclepius syriaca



Monarch adults can also make use of a variety of native flowering plants, but there are no adult butterflies without caterpillar food!



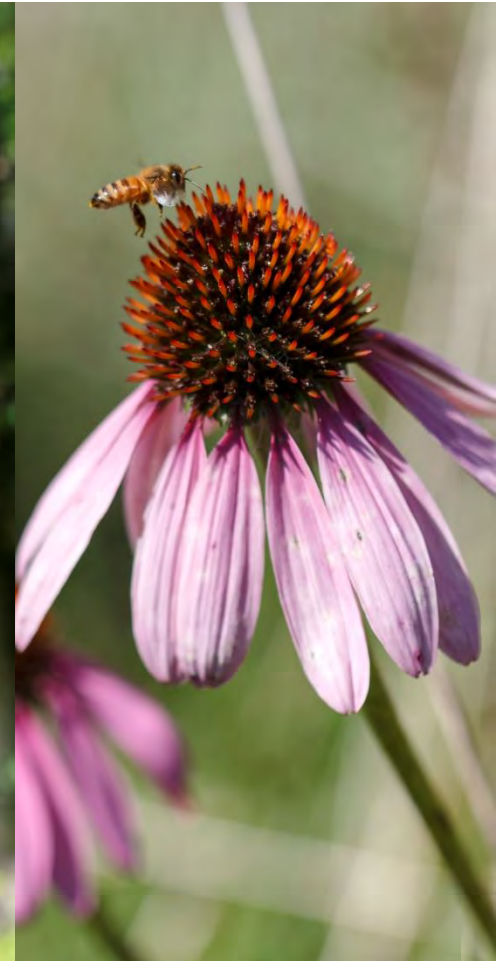
Liatris spicata
Blazingstar



Rudbeckia hirta
Black-eyed Susan



Monarda didyma
Scarlet beebalm



Echinacea purpurea
Purple coneflower