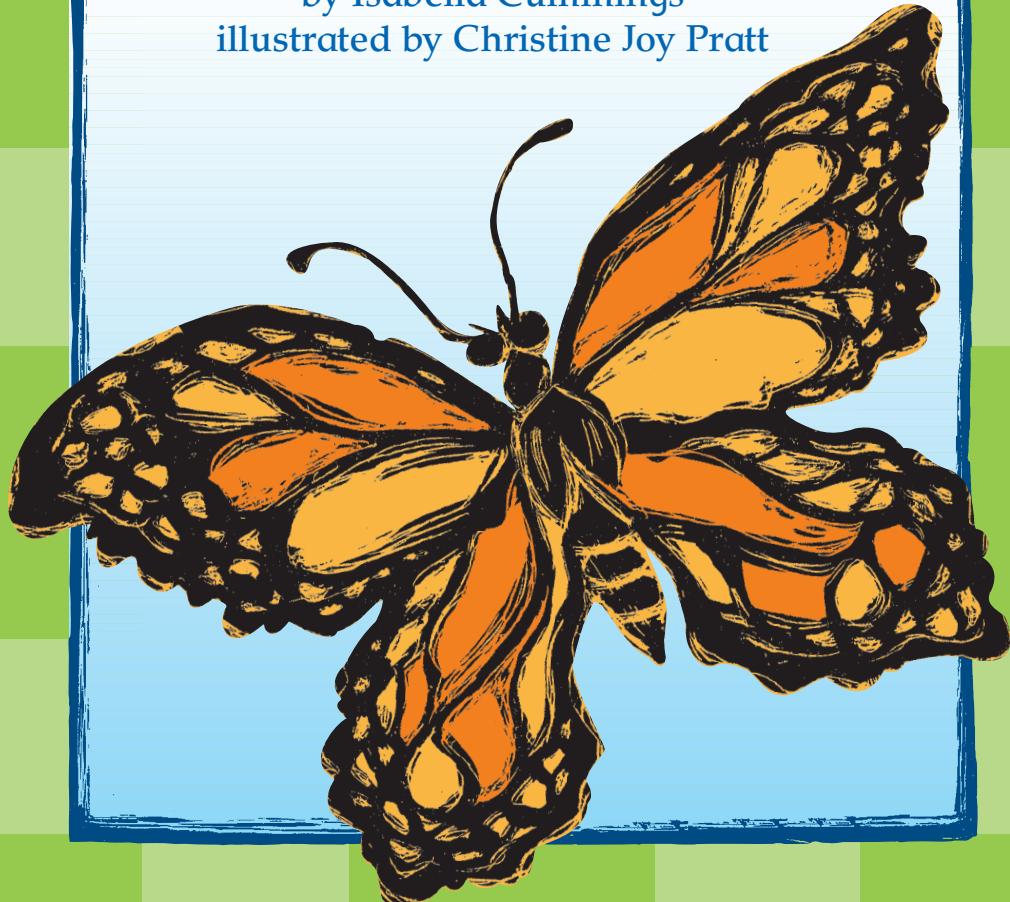


The Journey of the *Monarch*

by Isabella Cummings
illustrated by Christine Joy Pratt



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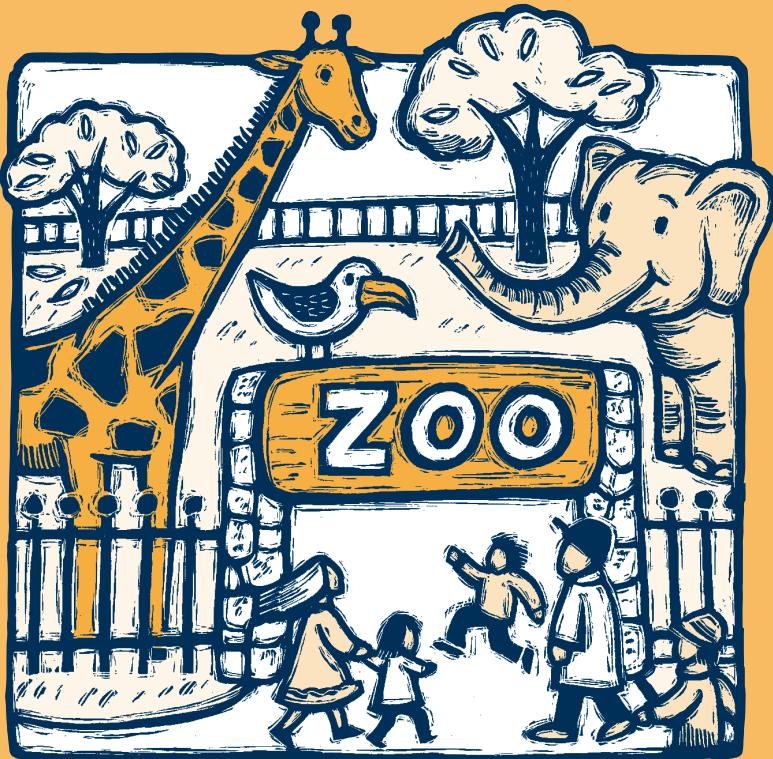


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¶ In the early fall, the leaves had begun to change color. Spectators came to the zoo to see both the animals and the changing leaves.



As the days grew colder, the giraffes and elephants spent more time indoors. The polar bears, however, were overjoyed to have cold weather. They stood their ground and refused to go indoors.



¶ People stood outside, too. They bundled up in warm overcoats and watched the animals.

¶ Any time of year is a good time to go to the zoo. In the winter, the animals do different things.

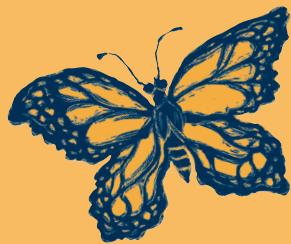




High in the bright sky, a huge group of monarch butterflies flew over the zoo. The United States winter would be too cold for them. They flew off to find hospitality in a warmer place.



Some of the monarchs were only two or three weeks old. They would go on the long journey, too. The monarchs were flying to Mexico. There the warmer air would welcome them for the winter.

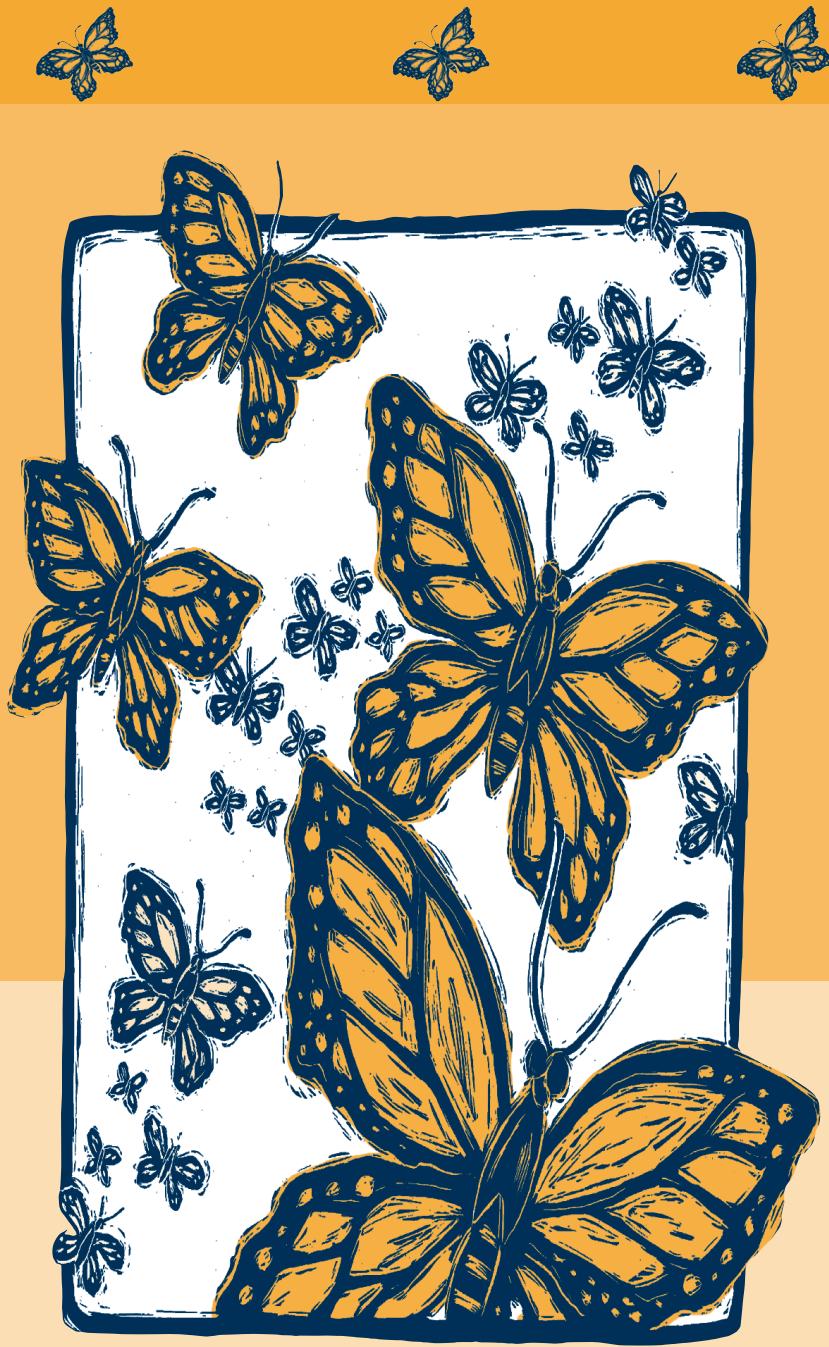


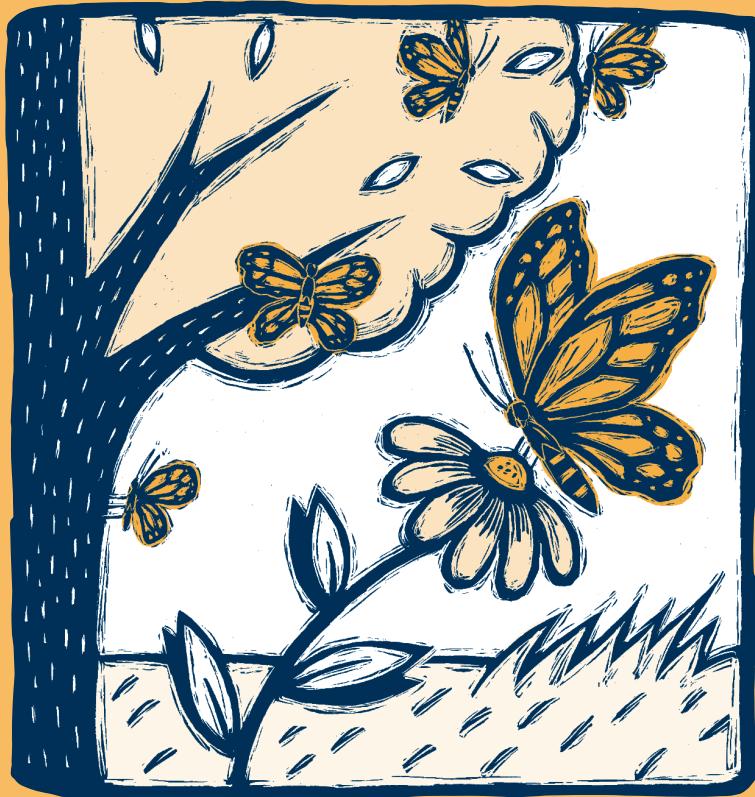
Making this trip is quite a feat. Some monarchs travel more than 1,500 miles!



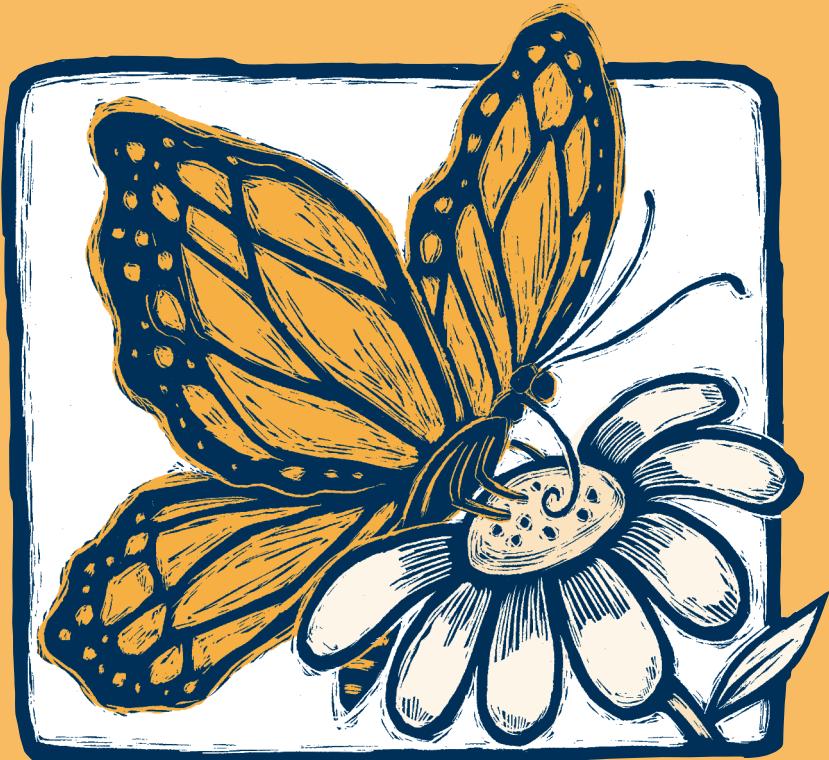


As the monarchs fly south, others join them on their journey to Mexico. Millions of monarchs fill the skies in an unending line.

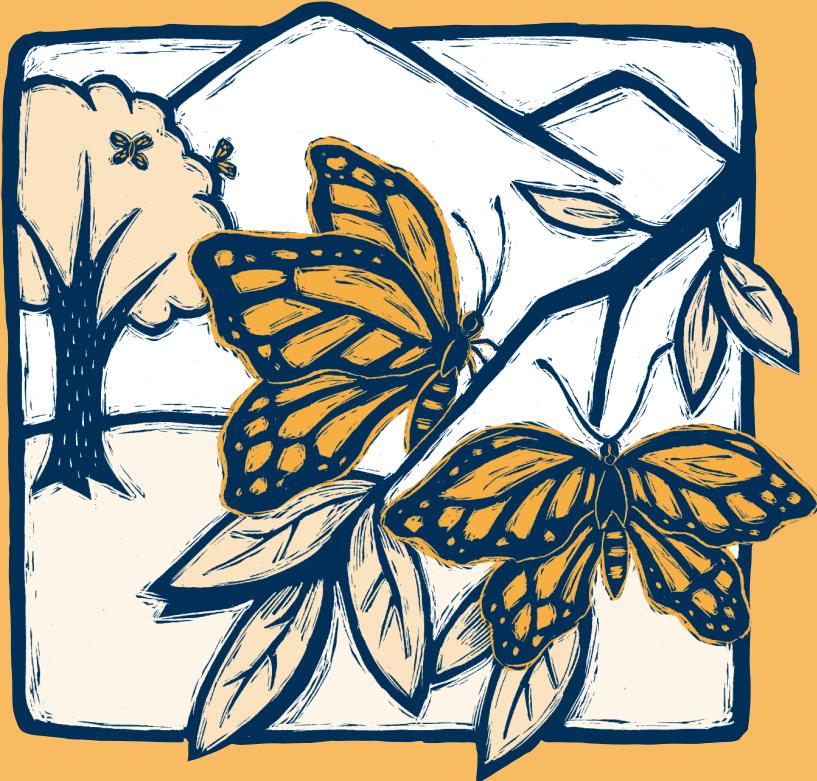




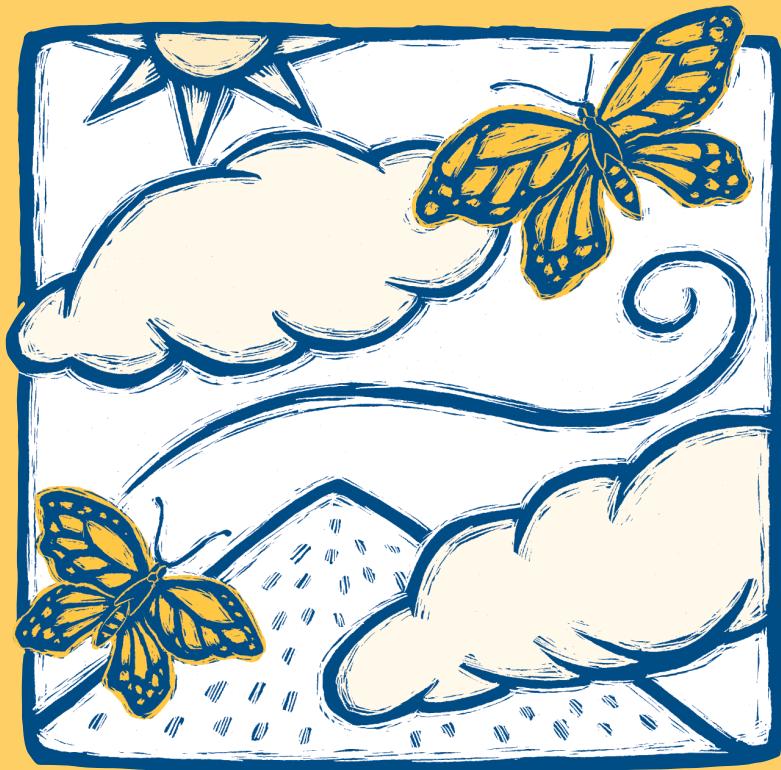
■ The monarchs fly about 50 miles each day. Then they stop to rest on tree branches or flowers. Every day they continue flying. They are unstoppable.



▶ Monarch butterflies sip nectar from flowers. It is hard to believe, but they gain weight during their trip! The fat in their bodies gives them energy to fly. The strong winds help them on their way, too.



After many weeks, more than one hundred million monarch butterflies will arrive in the Mexican mountains. Some will return to the same tree they lived in the year before!



► In the Mexican mountains, it is cool, but not cold. During the day it gets warmer than the United States.



For five or six months, the monarchs stay in Mexico. When spring arrives, each hero and heroine makes the long journey back to his or her northern home.

Think and Respond

- 1 What animal is this story about?
- 2 What do you think the monarchs will do next winter?
- 3 What makes the monarchs special?
- 4 How do you know that the monarchs' journey is important?
How is it the same?
- 5 How is the monarchs' journey different from the journey of another animal?



Butterfly Collage Cut or tear colorful scraps of paper to make a butterfly. Remember that the wings are symmetrical, or a mirror image of each other.



School-Home Connection After you read the story, name three facts you learned about monarch butterflies.