

The Nectar News

Official Newsletter of the
Southeast Michigan Butterfly Association



Mission Statement:

It is our mission to share our knowledge to educate people about Lepidoptera and their habitats, to instill and foster a passion for nature in others, and to establish and preserve the environment for butterflies, skippers, and moths.

Board Members for 2024:

President:

Brenda Sattler

Vice President:

Mark Bourn

Treasurer:

Mark Bourn

Secretary:

Diana McCormick

Communications

Director:

Lisa Northey

Membership Committee

Chair:

Cheryl Furlong

SEMBA Email:

sembabutterfly@yahoo.com

SEMBA Website:

<https://www.sembabutterfly.org>

Announcements:

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

The Newsletter is Back!

Our SEMBA newsletter will be sent out on a quarterly basis beginning January 2024 to keep everyone informed on upcoming events and important information.

Teacup Raffle Update:

We raised \$521.00 that will go toward grants to help establish or expand a community butterfly garden! If you would be interested in obtaining grant money, please follow the link below for more information about the grant requirements and the SEMBA grant application <https://www.sembabutterfly.org/grant> The deadline for submitting your grant application is March 31, 2024. Grant award recipients will be announced at the April meeting.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who donated

items for the raffle, bought tickets or donated money, and, to those who brought a food item! It was a wonderful event, and a great time was had by all! Congratulations to the winners! Don't forget to start collecting butterfly related items for next year!

Membership: Time to renew your membership. Dues are \$15 per person. If a family member wants to join, their membership is \$7.50. This family discount can be used for up to four additional family members. Dues can be paid at the monthly meeting or mailed to:
SEMBA
P.O. Box 851301
Westland, MI 48185

Donations – Cash or School Supplies: As most of you know each year Brenda makes the trip to Macheros, Mexico to observe the Monarch migration and to help the local villagers. This year the cash donations will go to buy horse feed (a \$30 donation will buy a 40kg



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bag of feed) and to the organization “Butterflies & Their People” which is a non-profit organization located in the village of Macheros. Macheros has one of the entries to the Cerro Pelón Monarch Butterfly Sanctuary. But once the butterflies leave in the spring, so do the jobs, and villagers turn to illegal logging to get by. Butterflies & Their People gives them an economic alternative: full-time, decently paid work in forest conservation. They employ six forest arborists to patrol Cerro Pelón. The arborists pick up garbage, maintain trails and monitor wildlife. Most importantly, since they started work, clandestine logging of the sanctuary’s core protected area has dropped by 87%. Additionally, the financial fortunes of six local families have improved.

Examples of school supplies needed: colored pencils, crayons, paints and paintbrushes, erasers, pencil

sharpeners, paper, rulers, glue sticks, acrylics, etc.

How to donate. Please bring school supplies and cash donations to the January or February meeting. Thank you in advance for your kind donations, any amount is greatly appreciated.

If you would like to donate directly to Butterflies and Their People, please visit <https://butterfliesandtheirpeople.org>

Did you Know! That SEMBA will certify your garden as a native butterfly garden? You can choose from a paper certificate with your name on it or a yard sign, or both!



Please use the link below <https://www.sembabutterfly.org/calendars> to access the requirements and certification application.

At-a-Glance

Frist Quarter 2024 Meetings

(Full year calendar on the last page of this newsletter)

January 18, 2024

At Crosswalk Community Church, 7:00pm

“Macheros Mexico and Overwintering Monarchs” by Brenda Sattler

February 15, 2024

At Crosswalk Community Church, 7:00pm

“Butterflies, Ants, and Aphids” by Brenda Sattler

March 21, 2024

At Crosswalk Community Church, 7:00pm

Grant Application Deadline, March 31



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Monarch Watch:

Monarch butterflies are not endangered, conservation authority decides. The eye-catching long-haul migrators are now listed as “vulnerable,” following a challenge to conservation status data.



In an unusual reversal, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has decided North America’s monarch butterfly is not “endangered.” Instead, the insect is only “vulnerable” to extinction, the group said last week—adding that it could lower the alarm still further, changing the listing to “near threatened” if an upcoming census suggests the population is stable or growing.

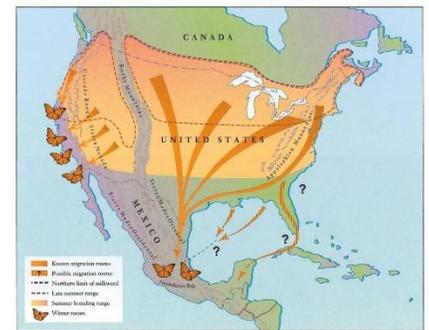
The 27 September decision followed a researcher’s challenge to population models an IUCN team used to justify the endangered designation, [conferred just 14 months ago.](#)

IUCN’s shift marks the latest twist in a [scientific debate over the health of the showy black and orange insect.](#) Monarchs are found worldwide, but the North American subspecies, called the migratory monarch (*Danaus plexippus plexippus*), has become “a poster child of species conservation because of its awesome ecology and migration,” says ecologist Anurag Agrawal of Cornell University, who was not involved in IUCN’s assessment or the challenge.

Migratory monarchs are split into two populations separated by the Rocky Mountains. Each fall, butterflies in the larger eastern population make an epic migration of up to 4000 kilometers from Canada and the northern United States

to a forest in central Mexico, where they overwinter.

Then, their descendants make a stepwise return to the north, taking up to four generations to complete the journey. The western population winters in Southern California along the Pacific coast and breeds along the Rockies.



Researchers generally agree that the number of monarchs wintering in Mexico declined beginning in the 1990s or earlier but stabilized around 2014 at about 55 million individuals. Many researchers blame the decline on two factors: logging in Mexico’s forests and farming in the U.S. and Canada that increasingly relied on crops modified to resist herbicides. That increased the use of





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herbicides that kill milkweed, which monarch caterpillars feed on.

In 2022, an IUCN team released an assessment that used annual counts of the wintering population from 1993 to 2020, and two population models, to discern long-term trends in monarch numbers, which can vary year to year. One model rested on a “linear” method that assumed a constant rate of change over time. Modeling found that the population could have shrunk by 22% to 72% over 10 years, meeting IUCN’s criteria for an endangered designation. The assessment also noted that the stability in overwintering monarch numbers seen since 2014 made “current rates of decline less concerning than they were in years past.”

Still, many scientists thought the “endangered” listing was warranted because drought along migration routes or cold winters could tip the population into an

extinction spiral. “Monarch populations [are] at a level that most scientists suggest is not sustainable,” says Karen Oberhauser, a conservation biologist at the University of Wisconsin–Madison who was on the assessment team. But last week an IUCN panel ruled that the linear model “cannot be considered plausible.” Instead, it suggested a more complex model—published in February 2020 in *Frontiers in Ecology and Evolution* by a team led by Wayne Thogmartin of the U.S. Geological Survey—is better. It shows the eastern monarch population reached an inflection point around 2014, with a steep decline giving way to a slower decline or a slight increase. Such results support a vulnerable designation, the panel said. And if the upcoming winter census shows continuing stability, it said “the most plausible category would become near threatened.”

IUCN’s ruling is not binding on its member nations, including the U.S., but it can influence policy. In 2020, U.S. officials concluded that legally designating the

monarch as a threatened or endangered species was “warranted,” but not a priority.

The new designation is drawing mixed reactions. Given the difficulty of forecasting future monarch populations, “the precautionary principle would suggest keeping the listing at endangered, with the potential to uplist” later, says ecologist Leslie Ries of Georgetown University, who was not involved in the assessment or the challenge. Agrawal, who believes “the original listing of monarchs as endangered was in haste,” is less worried. In the meantime, Anna Walker, an entomologist at the New Mexico BioPark Society who led the IUCN panel that recommended the endangered listing, notes that the vulnerable listing “still indicates a high level of extinction risk.”

A final decision will be made in November of 2024.

Article from Science Insider, October 3, 2023, By Denis Normile



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Calendar of Events

January 18, 2024

At Crosswalk Community Church, 7:00pm

“Macheros Mexico and Overwintering Monarchs” by Brenda Sattler

February 15, 2024

At Crosswalk Community Church, 7:00pm

*“Butterflies, Ants, and Aphids”
by Brenda Sattler*

March 21, 2024

At Crosswalk Community Church, 7:00pm

Grant Application Deadline, March 31

April 18, 2024

At Crosswalk Community Church, 7:00pm

*Speaker Cheryl English
Announce Grant Award Recipients*

May 16, 2024

At Crosswalk Community Church, 7:00pm

Moth Mating Cage Workshop

June 20, 2024

At Crosswalk Community Church, 7:00pm

Q and A with Brenda

July 13, 2024 – Saturday

Brenda’s Open Garden Walk – Westland

July 20, 2024 – Saturday

John Blair’s Open Garden Walk – Brooklyn

July 21, 2024 - Sunday

“Buggin Out” or “Bugtoia TBD

July 27, 2024 – Saturday 1-3pm

“3B’s/SEMBA/Detroit Audubon - Westland

August 15, 2024

At Crosswalk Community Church, 7:00pm

September 19, 2024

At Crosswalk Community Church, 7:00pm

October 17, 2024

At Crosswalk Community Church, 7:00pm

Tea Cup Raffle and Pot Luck

