



The World of the Monarch Butterfly

Eric S. Grace

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Human beings have long been captivated by the striking orange and black dress and the epic migrations of monarch butterflies. *The World of the Monarch Butterfly* combines a graceful text and stunning full-color photographs to capture the essence of this fragile yet hardy species.

Monarchs have the longest migration in the insect world. The monarch takes about three months to migrate approximately 2500 miles and may cover over 80 miles each day. Tens of millions of monarchs in North America migrate to a single small area of rare oyamel forests high in the mountains west of Mexico City. How does each generation find its way to the same place every year? How do monarchs know when to begin their journey? And what causes monarchs born at the end of the summer to migrate while those born in midsummer don't?

Well-known science writer Eric S. Grace explores these and other questions, describing the dangers of migration, the monarch's use of the milkweed plant as a defense against predators, the intricate courtship rituals of the monarch, and the dramatic metamorphosis that transforms a voracious stay-at-home caterpillar into an elegant and gregarious beauty. He also discusses the tragic loss of monarch roosting sites to logging, the destruction of monarch habitat by agriculture and urbanization, and the need for international cooperation to protect the monarch.

Exquisite photographs portray monarch butterflies filling an intense blue sky, alighting singly on a wildflower, and emerging from a cocoon. Other photographs show the environment where they live. Together, text and photographs elucidate the mystery of the marvelous monarch.

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