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# The Journey of the Monarch Butterfly

Monarch butterflies are amazing little creatures known for their bright orange and black wings. But did you know that these butterflies go on a long trip every year? This trip is called migration, and it helps them stay safe and find food.

## Why Do Monarch Butterflies Migrate?

As summer ends and the weather gets colder, there are fewer flowers for monarch butterflies to eat from. They need warmth and the nectar from flowers to stay strong and healthy. So, when the weather changes, monarch butterflies know it's time to fly south, to places where it's warmer.

## Where Do They Go?

Monarch butterflies fly to places like Mexico and California, where the weather is warm all winter long. They travel thousands of miles, which is a long way for such small creatures! The butterflies rest in trees along the way and sometimes gather in huge groups that cover the trees, looking like bright orange leaves.



## How Do They Find Their Way?

Even though monarch butterflies have never made the journey before, they know exactly where to go. Scientists think they use the sun and the Earth's magnetic field to help guide them. They always find their way to the same forests year after year!

## A Long Journey

The trip is very long and takes weeks or even months. Some butterflies don't make it all the way, but many do. Once they reach their warm winter home, they rest, drink nectar, and wait for spring to come.



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When the weather warms up again, they start their journey back north, where they lay their eggs on plants called milkweed. These eggs will grow into caterpillars and then new monarch butterflies, and the cycle will start all over again.

Monarch butterflies may be small, but their long migration shows just how strong and smart they are!

1. Why do monarch butterflies migrate? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. Where do monarch butterflies spend the winter? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. How long does the journey take? \_\_\_\_\_

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4. How do monarch butterflies know where to go during migration? \_\_\_\_\_

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