

The Magic of Monarch Butterfly Migration



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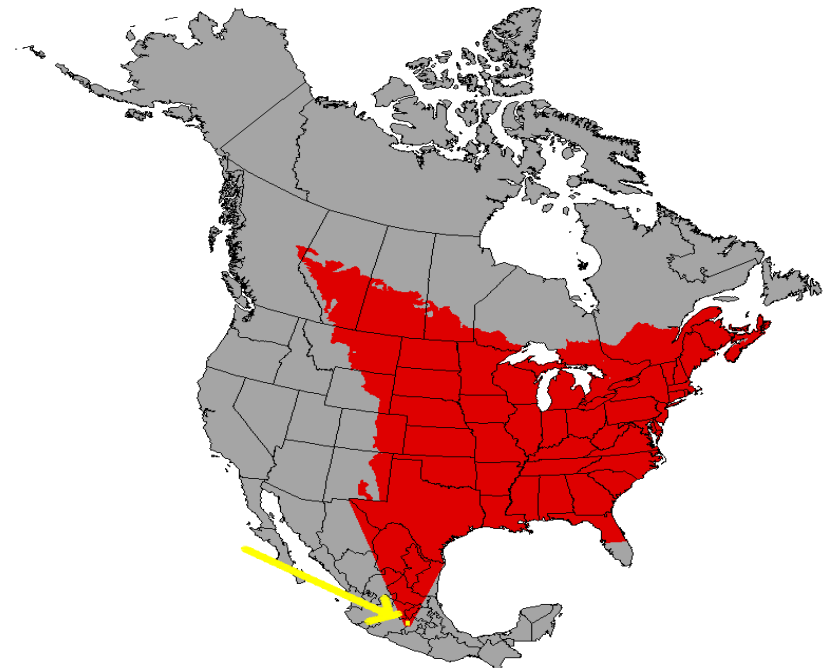
by Elizabeth Howard



Imagine taking a long trip, all by yourself, to a place you have never been before. Imagine traveling for two months, across strange lands for thousands of miles, without a suitcase or even a map! Do you think you could survive?

Monarch butterflies do this every fall when they migrate to Mexico. They begin their migration right after they are born. They travel alone without help from brothers, sisters or even their parents!

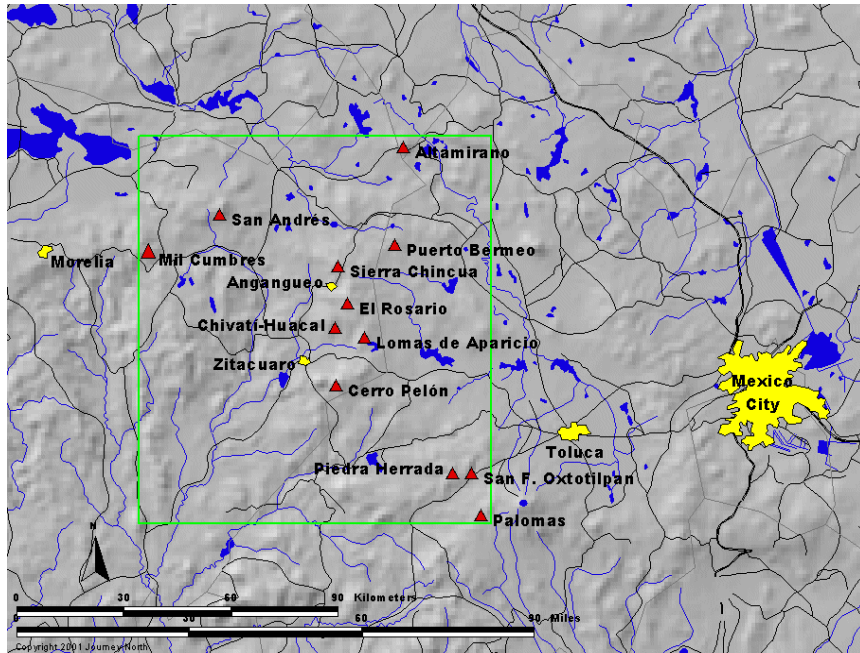
1



Monarchs go to the very same place every year. As if by magic, they find a special region, deep in central Mexico. (Located on map at tip of arrow.)

The butterflies travel south from across eastern Canada and the United States (the area shown in red on the map). They find special mountains in Mexico that have the perfect habitat for them to survive all winter, from November to March.

2



The special mountain range is about 70 miles west of Mexico City. Every year, the monarchs go to the same twelve mountain-tops They're shown as dark red triangles on the map above. Can you count them?

Perhaps most amazing of all, these butterflies have never been to Mexico before. How do they do this? Nobody knows! It is one of the magical events in nature.



You Can Help Track the Monarch's Migration!

Using the Internet, hundreds of children in Canada, the United States and Mexico report migrating monarchs when they see them. Together they track the monarch's trip to and from Mexico each year. Come join the fun!

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