Monarch Butterflies and You
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Why are monarch butterflies important?
Monarch butterflies are pollinators! As monarchs forage for nectar, they can unintentionally move pollen within and between flowers. This movement of pollen helps flowering plants make seeds, which can eventually disperse and grow into more plants. Seeds and fruit produced as a result of successful pollination can also feed other organisms. Monarch butterflies and the pollination services they provide contribute to the sustainability of entire ecosystems!

Why are monarchs in decline?
Western monarch populations have declined over 99% since the 1980s, and eastern populations are estimated to have declined more than 80%.

01 Habitat Loss
- Human development has decreased the availability of milkweed and plants utilized for nectar
- Development has reduced breeding ground space and forest cover in overwintering areas

02 Pesticide Use
- Pesticides can harm monarchs and other beneficial insects directly by toxicity
- Pesticides can cause indirect harm by reduction of host and nectar plant availability

03 Climate Change
- Increasing seasonal temperatures have the potential to move areas where breeding and overwintering occur
- Populations may be reduced in the long term

How can I help?

Reduce or eliminate pesticide use
Help your local monarch population by limiting insecticide and herbicide use on your lawn.

Plant milkweed and nectar-resource plants
Milkweeds are essential to feed monarch caterpillars, and other nectar plants can serve as food and shelter resources for adults, especially during migratory flights.

Reduce your carbon footprint
Even with small changes, such as using less electricity, you can do your part in reducing carbon emissions and mitigating the effects of climate change.

Get involved in citizen science projects
Organizations such as Monarch Watch and The Xerces Society have projects that you and your family can contribute to. Visit our sources below to learn more!

Learn more and share your knowledge and enthusiasm for monarchs with others! You can learn more by checking out publications from our references:
Pennsylvania Pollinator Protection Plan (P4), monarchjointventure.org, monarchwatch.org, xerces.org/monarchs/.

Photo credit: https://www.pennlive.com/wildaboutpa/2018/06/where_are_the_monarch_butterfl.html