

Life Cycle of the Monarch Butterfly

Carol Lim

- The adult lays eggs on a milkweed plant (host plant).
- The egg hatches and becomes a tiny caterpillar. Caterpillars eat only plants in the milkweed family.
- When the caterpillars become large, they find a spot on a shrub or tree nearby and begin making the chrysalis which is jade green with gold beading. The chrysalis remains in tact for 10 days to 2 weeks, then turns dark the night before the monarch ecloses (emerges).
- The butterfly is moist and folded when it comes out of the chrysalis. It must dry for 3-4 hours before being able to fly. The monarchs that come out of a chrysalis are going to winter over in Mexico and begin the next generation of monarchs in spring. They migrate on a long journey.



<http://www.monarchwatch.org/tagmig/index.htm>

I have saved seed of Tropical Milkweed, *Asclepias curassavica*. If anyone in English Hills would like some, I have it available. In late spring, after frost, sow the seeds in a garden bed with sun. Plants have orange flowers and are tall. You can reach me at clim48@yahoo.com.

