



By participating in a community science project, students see that they can contribute to the authentic work of real-live monitoring and conservation science.

Monarch butterflies are an endangered species. There are many Monarch conservation efforts in Canada and the United States through community science projects. In this classroom activity, you will find ideas on how to undertake a community science project with your class.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- Record observations to share with a community science project
- Identify ways they can personally participate in conservation science

IN THIS ACTIVITY, STUDENTS WILL:

- Collect data about butterflies
- Contribute to a community science project
- Recognize their ability to participating in conservation efforts



GRADE LEVEL: 4-6

Set it Up

1: PICK A COMMUNITY SCIENCE PROJECT

Here are some suggested community science projects:

Canada & US

- Wild Monarch Butterfly sightings: [Journey North](#)
- Monarch collecting and tagging: [Monarch Watch](#)

Canada

- Wild Monarch Butterfly sightings: [Mission Monarch](#)
- Milkweed sightings: [Milkweed Watch](#)
- Planting butterfly-friendly patches: [David Suzuki Foundation Butterflyway Project](#)

Other community science projects can be found on the [Citizen Science Portal](#) (Government of Canada) and [U.S. Forest Service](#).

2: TIME FRAME AND FREQUENCY OF OBSERVATIONS

Depending on the community science effort, decide when and how often your observations will take place, i.e.,

- Once a week for six weeks in the spring
- Every day for two weeks

3: DATA COLLECTION

Decide on means of observation such as:

- Data-collection sheets
- Checklists
- Photographs and visual observation

Start it Up

4: PICK A LOCATION TO ATTRACT BUTTERFLIES

- A pollinator garden on school grounds
- Milkweed growing within walking distance to the school
- Home gardens
- [The Best Butterfly Snack Bar in Town](#)

5: PICK A BUTTERFLY STAGE

Depending on the community science effort, select a stage:

- Milkweed Sighting (important for monarch eggs or chrysalises)
- Egg(s) Sighting (wild)
- Larvae Sighting (wild)
- Adult Sighting (wild)

Information and images about each stage can be found [here](#).

6: SHARING RESULTS

In addition to sharing the results with the community science project, students can share with those around them through:

- Sharing circles in small groups
- Science Posters
- Sharing with another class/buddies in the school

Keep it Up

7: ADD COMMUNITY

- Visit a local museum (e.g. live butterfly exhibits and pavilions) to observe butterfly biodiversity
- Invite a local scientist or garden centre to give advice on how to enhance school grounds to attract pollinators
- Participate in [Symbolic Migration with the USA and Mexico](#)
- Invite Indigenous artists to talk about symbolism of the native butterfly

8: ADD EXCITEMENT

- Monarch Butterfly Trivia Challenge
- Fluttering Butterfly Craft
- Butterfly snack shop

9: ADD AN EARTH RANGERS MISSION FOR HOME

- Pollinator Power Mission

Resources

About Milkweeds and Monarchs (naturewatch)

<https://www.naturewatch.ca/milkweedwatch/about-milkweed-and-monarchs/>

Monarch Butterfly (Canadian Wildlife Federation)

<https://www.hww.ca/en/wildlife/invertebrates/monarch-butterfly.html>

The Monarch Butterfly in North America (U.S. Forest Service)

https://www.fs.usda.gov/wildflowers/pollinators/Monarch_Butterfly/index.shtml

The Life Cycle of The Monarch Butterfly (Monarch Butterflies)

<https://monarchbutterflies.ca/butterflies-for-release/the-life-cycle-of-the-monarch-butterfly/>

Citizen Science Portal (Government of Canada)

<https://science.gc.ca/site/science/en/citizen-science-portal>

Monarch Butterfly: What is Citizen Science? (U.S. Forest Service)

https://www.fs.usda.gov/wildflowers/pollinators/Monarch_Butterfly/citizenscience/index.shtml