



Notes from a Naturalist: Monarch Reflections

Our friend in town has a mesh enclosure in her kitchen with several monarch caterpillars and fresh milkweed. She had collected tiny eggs from her garden and was raising them inside, where she can watch their incredible transformation while keeping them safe from hungry predators. I was lucky enough to watch her video of one caterpillar in that mind-boggling moment when it hangs upside down by its back end, splits out of its striped skin, and transforms into a gorgeous jade-green chrysalis. It looks so simple and quick for something that packs in such huge biological drama in just a few minutes.

Thus inspired, I went looking for monarchs in the wild on our Land Trust properties. Seeing monarch eggs and caterpillars on our Land Trust trails reminds me that we play a small but critical role in this big migration story! The generations that end up in those distant Mexican wintering sites start as eggs on milkweed leaves in places like the Simpson Preserve and other Bethany spots that host milkweeds. By protecting these properties and by planting and preserving native milkweeds and nectar plants in our own yards, we give each little caterpillar a chance not just to become a butterfly, but to join one of the most extraordinary migrations on Earth.

- Ali Beres-Nork

(For the full version of “Monarch Reflections”, visit our website at bethanylandtrust.org)

Scavenger Hunt Hike Sunday, September 13th, 1-3pm

September’s hike is designed with the whole family in mind (though it’s not just for kids!!). Join us for this interactive adventure as we scout through the Van Epps Preserve searching for nature’s treasures. Everyone will receive a scavenger hunt handout and adults may wish to have the **Seek by iNaturalist** app downloaded on their phone.

We will meet in the Van Epps Preserve on 390 Beacon Rd/Rt 42 in Bethany. All are welcome but please leave your pets at home. Inclement weather will cancel.

Parking: Off-road parking, look for the green Land Trust banner.

To register: Contact Bob Harrison by Saturday, September 12th via cell at 203-506-5888 or bjh51box@gmail.com

Looking ahead....

September 13th: 1-3pm - Family Scavenger Hunt in the Van Epps Preserve

October 4th: Visit our booth at the Bethany Harvest Festival

October 11th: 1-3pm - Native American Ceremonial Stone Structures Hike in Whispering Pines

November 5th: 7pm - Fall Program, Lakeview Lodge, 265 Beacon Road Bethany Topic TBA

November 22nd: 6-8pm - Super Moon Evening Hike in the Van Epps Preserve

Bob Harrison – Bethany Land Trust Trails Chair