

1st Comment:

Making the Monarch Butterfly Endangered just does not make sense. It would make it illegal for anyone to handle any life cycle of the butterfly. There are a great many people who work very hard to find and raise to adult all the Monarch eggs they can. It's the disappearance of milkweed from the American landscape that is the cause of the monarch's diminished numbers. Planting milkweed, and NOT protecting the monarch under the Endangered Species Act, is what will increase the monarch population. If the numbers are correct there were 30 million Monarchs last year at the over winter site. If 1/4 of these were female and gravid that would make 7.5 million Monarchs heading north with a few hundred eggs each. Even if only 6 million females laid only 200 eggs each there would be, 1 billion 200 million eggs laid. We need milkweed in the migration routes in order for those 1 billion plus eggs to survive. Each Monarch egg needs one full grown milkweed plant to eat in order to get to adulthood. That means we need 1 billion plus milkweed plants in route North. Texas is key to start but all 50 states have to do their part.

It is the environment that needs our help. We need to do all we can to support pollinators of all types not just the Monarch. All the butterflies are in trouble. Herbicides and Pesticides are creating sterile environments not healthy environments. The Monarch is the Canary in the mine. If we don't stand up and take notice of the environment that will support our native flora and fauna than we may soon find that we will be looking at our own endangerment.

How can an insect that has to potential to produce hundreds of offspring's and several generations per year be at risk of extinction? It can't that's the truth. Not if the it's environment is healthy. Please let's work on the environment. Don't tell me my child she can't enjoy nurturing a butterfly and watch it grow. Don't take that miracle away from my grand children and their children.

2nd Comment:

I oppose listing the Monarch as Endangered if doing so makes it a crime to handle any segment of the life cycle, or illegal to raise Monarchs for release. It is my understanding that it is the habitat for pollinators in general that is causing the decrease of not only the Monarch but all pollinators. I feel that is the issue that needs to be addressed. I am a land owner who has spent the last 11 years cleaning the 42 acres that was purchased and covered with invasive species. I have focused on Native Plants and I am in the process of opening my property to the public so others can see what can be done on their own property. I raise Monarchs for release on my own property and I have also been the source for Monarchs for educational displays and also Cancer Awareness Fundraisers. My Monarch was featured in a television segment being held by the youngest girl ever to be inflicted with ovarian cancer and the joy on her face holding that butterfly was priceless.

This year I intend on selling host plants as well as butterfly vivariums in order to increase public awareness and support for pollinators. I am also working with a professional bee keeper who is in process of breeding for mite resistant breeds of honey bees. Being able to sell the Monarchs that I raise offsets the cost of my habitat restoration. I have invested in a large greenhouse in which I raise my milkweed secure from wild butterflies. My eggs are bleached to sanitize them from disease and the caterpillars are raised in a laboratory setting with a standard SOP. My butterflies are tested for disease any infected livestock is destroyed so not to release any weak or diseased Monarchs into the environment. Please do not take this away from me. Please don't take it away from our children. If you list them as endangered and hands off they will be just that "hands off" and forgotten. No longer will I be able to send home a caterpillar with a plant so that a child can see up close and personal the wonder of transformation. This would be a crime. Instead find a way to increase the habitat in the Migratory Pathway and concentrate efforts to solve the loss of ALL our pollinators.

My property is listed with the National Wildlife Federation. #168890

I am on the board of Association for Butterflies and a long standing Master Gardener.