



Use this space to write down points you would like to remember.

Genesis 1 & 2; Psalms 19:1-4; Romans 1:19-20; Hebrews 11:3



Monarch Butterflies, Science, & God

The late-summer generation of Monarch butterflies migrates up to 3,000 miles each fall and spring as they fly to central Mexico and to the western coast of California...and then back to the north and east again. They are the only species of butterfly known to do a 2-way migration the way birds do. The spring, early-summer and mid-summer generations of Monarchs live about 2-6 weeks, but the fourth generation of Monarchs are born after mid-August, and they live 6-9 months. The fourth generation is the one which migrates south, heading to a place in which they have never been before. They end up in the same specific places, returning to the exact same trees in the warmer climates, that were visited by Monarch Butterflies three generations back.

The last Sunday of March this year is what Christians recognize as Palm Sunday. Luke 19:28-44 describes the time when Jesus entered Jerusalem at the beginning of his last week on earth. As he was headed toward the city, at some point along the way, the people recognize him as their Messiah King. They lay their clothing and palm leaves onto the road in front of him like a red carpet welcoming him to the Oscars. They're singing, "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest" (Luke 19:38)! But not everybody is singing the praises of Jesus. The Pharisees attempt to "cancel" the proclamations of the people, but Jesus says, "If they keep quiet, the stones will cry out" (Luke 19:40).

The STONES will cry out. I love the truth of Scripture which recognizes that all of nature in one way or another proclaims the goodness of our great designer God. And I appreciate that science helps us discover the fine details of how God has put together nature and its natural laws so that life can flourish.

Scientists don't know for sure how Monarch Butterflies are able to migrate like they do, but according to the research group Monarch Joint Adventure (<https://monarchjointventure.org/monarch-biology/monarch-migration>), they ascribe some of this ability to instinct, like how birds and whales are hard-wired to migrate, or like how infants know how to suckle or to pull themselves up to stand. They also ascribe some of the Monarch's ability to know *when* to migrate to decreasing daylight hours, colder temperatures, and aging milkweed and nectar sources. They ascribe the Monarch's *ability* to migrate south and north to their "sun compass" which involves the special make-up of their eyes to orient themselves in relation to the sun, as well as to a "magnetic compass," which is part of the make-up of their antennae allowing them to orient themselves in relation to the earth's magnetic field.

As I think about the uniqueness of how God created the Monarch Butterfly, I am reminded that we are in a unique season leading up to Easter. This is a unique time to draw closer to Jesus as we think about his death and resurrection, and what it means to our life both now and into eternity. You could use this month to intentionally grow spiritually. Perhaps you could join the Sunday (9:30am) or Wednesday (7:00pm) Bible study. Or perhaps you could make it your goal to worship as the church each Sunday (10:30). Or perhaps you could commit to a time of daily Bible reading with Our Daily Bread.