

AMAZING INSECTS AND ANIMALS

Monarch butterflies headed for extinction due to habitat loss

By Nicole Estrella
MORADA MIDDLE SCHOOL

Isn't it weird how only a tiny percentage of humans actually acknowledge the fact that some everyday animals will be going extinct? One animal that could be the species of the monarch butterfly. The scientific name for monarch butterflies is *Danaus plexippus*, which means sleep transformation.

Monarch butterflies have breeding grounds, which are in the United States, and their hibernation ground, which is in central Mexico in the forest. The butterflies are going extinct because some people believe it is a good idea to disturb them when they are hibernating or just sitting somewhere.

It takes the monarchs 2,500 miles to get to either their breeding grounds or hibernation grounds. The reason that they go that far is because they need to be somewhere where the weather won't be extreme.

You may be thinking that the butterflies are the same no matter the gender, but that is not the case for these butterflies. The female butterflies have a design of two brilliant orange-reddish wings with black veins and white dots on the edges, whereas the male butterflies have black dots on their veins and are bigger than the females. The reason they have this pattern is because the colors look foul tasting and poisonous to predators. The butterflies usually

only live up to 4 or 5 weeks, which is because of the weather always changing and them not being able to make it to their hibernation grounds.

The monarch butterflies species have the biggest involvement in their migration pattern which happens because of the fact that they have over 1,000 butterflies in each of their groups. Because they have over 1,000 in just one group, more have been dying, which is why the World Wildlife Fund is trying to preserve vital butterflies.

The World Wildlife Fund is starting to preserve the butterflies in Mexico where they hibernate. That way if they do go extinct fast they will have some to reproduce some more and continue with the cycle. Every single year more than 5,000 monarch butterflies die at their breeding or hibernating grounds.

Another reason is that people put too much pressure on them to the point where they need to fly to another location to hibernate.

In 2013 the lowest number of butterflies migrated in the last 20 years, which is rare. In 2018 and 2019 there were 30,000 butterflies in California but now there are only 2,000 butterflies left.

The butterflies used to survive on milkweed that house owners used to plant, but now that there are more houses and buildings there isn't a lot of milkweed.

PLANTS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

rhizosphere and taking the mushrooms' supply of sugar, the snowplant turns the already advantageous trade into a niche in which it can thrive.

Finally, the monument plant starts off as a small, almost bush like perennial, woody herb. "Fraseria speciosa," its scientific name, grows up to six feet and is monocarpic, meaning that it only blooms upwards to a few years to just before it dies.

The fine text inscribed into the nature of this sin-

gle-stalked plant is that it lives up to 80 years, meaning that you would be quite old to see it bloom if you're unlucky enough to have a monument plant that decides to bloom after that long. On its flowering, sequenced with others of its kind, its white, green, or yellow flowers bloom in a blatant pattern — known as a panicle — on the small stems separating from the main stalk.

The plants south of Mokelumne Peak prove themselves with beauty and creativity in varying amounts, marking themselves as subjects of interest.

How much do you know about Jerusalem crickets?

By Aaryon Dunigen
MORADA MIDDLE SCHOOL

The Jerusalem cricket was not a pest because they were very harmless. They only occasionally damage turf and vegetables. Their food includes insects, non-woody roots, and tubers.

Aside from their alarming appearance, they generally are not pests. But they are native to the Mokelumne River.

Where are they found?

They are most likely to be found in the western parts of the United States and part of Mexico. They are native to the desert southwest, the

western states, the and along the Pacific Coast.

Do they hurt or affect people?

Jerusalem crickets generally feed on other insects and sometimes potatoes. Their other name would be potato eaters.

They have powerful jaws but they are not poisonous. The bite can be painful. So you have to be careful if you get bitten by one.

Why are they called potato bugs?

If you are a potato farmer, you might be slightly more familiar with them because they are also known as potato bugs. They love to dig be-

neath the dirt and feed on the roots and tubers of potato plants.

Fun fact about Jerusalem crickets:

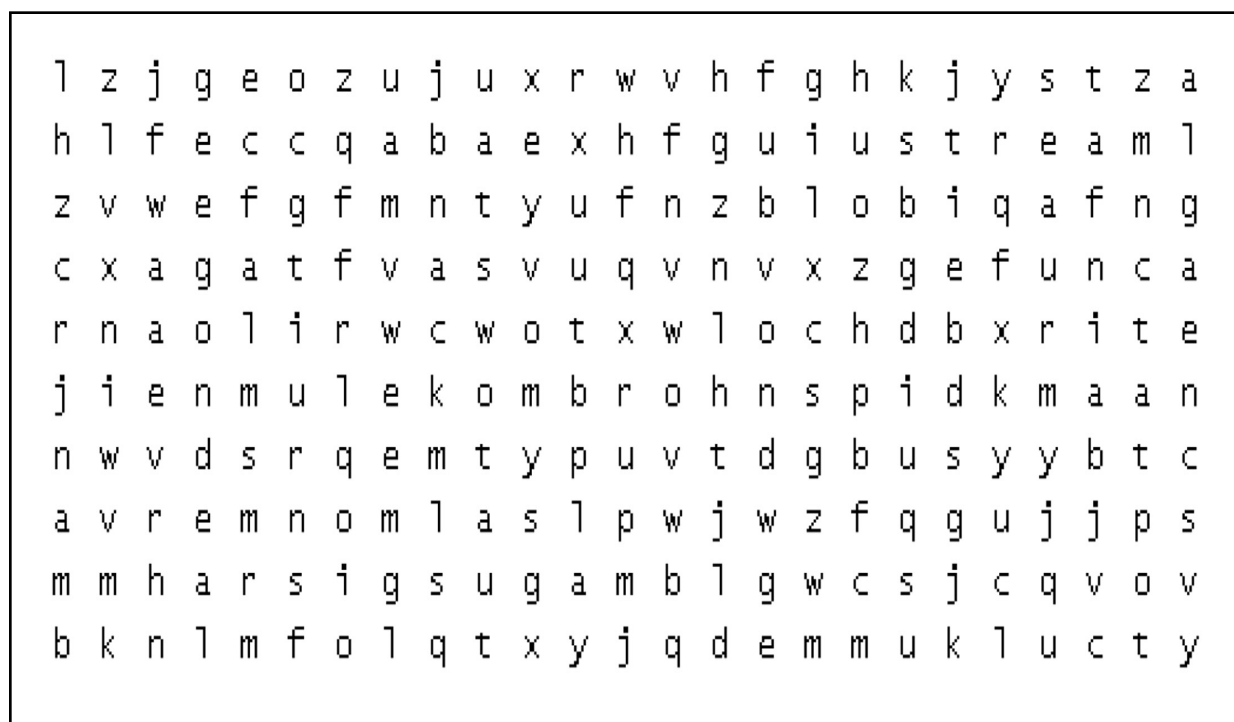
When it has a mating urge, it makes a drumming sound that sends vibrations to attract partners. The crickets scare away predators by producing an hissing sound through rubbing the hind legs against the abdomen.

How do they look?

They are large insects and can be up to 50 mm long. Jerusalem crickets are yellow to brown in color. They have large heads and beady black eyes.

WATERSHED WORD SEARCHES

By Cesar Cruz-Antonio/Heritage Elementary School

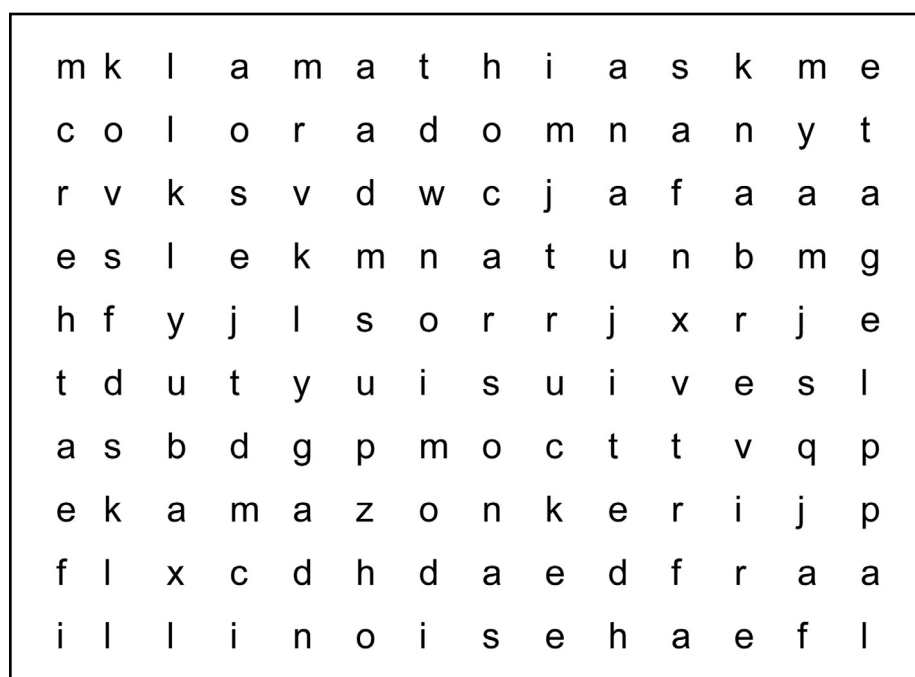


Salmon
Water
Starfish

Algae
Stream
Ocean

Squid
River
Mokelumne

By Lizette Miranda-Heras & Mariano Mejia/Heritage Elementary School



Mokelumne
Amazon
River Bank
Yuba
Colorado
Feather
Klamath
Carson
Applegate
Illinois
Tijuana
Truckee

Opinion: Why it's important to keep trash from going down Lodi's storm drains

By Karina Diaz

JOE SERNA JR. CHARTER SCHOOL

Do you really know what happens to all that trash, plastic, and waste products that go down our local storm drains?

Well, we've all seen trash and plastic water bottles on our street curbs that end up going down our storm drains, but did you realize that they go down when it rains and the running water carries the trash down our storm drains? That water ends up in our Mokelumne River!

All that trash is polluting our local water! Polluting our water causes damage to our wildlife and our ecosystems!

As I was thinking of all the side effects of trash going down our storm drains, I learned that not many people realize the damage that the trash does by going into our

storm drains.

I decided to get some people's point of view. I got my mask, my journal, and with the people's permission included their opinions here.

I wanted to see how much people actually knew about storm drains. If they did not know that the trash damages our Mokelumne River watershed, then I would explain to them the damages.

By doing this, I hope I change some people's perspectives and help change our local habits towards our local watershed!

The first person I talked to was called Esmeralda. I asked her, "Do you know what happens to all that trash piled up on the curbsides and that eventually goes into our storm drains?"

She answered, "I actually have no idea what happens to

that trash," so I decided to tell her the consequences of that trash. She was shocked and I told her to spread the word about some ways she could help our watershed.

"Thanks, I'll spread the word!" she said.

This means that if she did not know, part of her family might also not know. This is why we need to keep spreading the word! If we can save our watershed, we can save the world!

The next person I talked to was called Ricardo. I asked him the same question as Esmeralda.

His answer was different. He said, "The trash goes to our rivers and then to our oceans."

I asked him, "Do you know what the trash does in the river?"

He stood silent for a few mo-

ments then remembered that the trash polluted the river water and affected the wildlife there.

I told him some ways he could help our local watershed and we said our goodbyes.

When he had to wait a moment to think about what the trash did in our watershed, that made me feel sad because he had to think really hard to find an answer for me. This means he forgets every day about this and this is not good.

I really hope he spreads the word and helps our Mokelumne River Watershed become healthier.

The last person I talked to was called Maria. I asked her the same question that I asked to everyone: "Do you know what happens to all that trash piled up on the curbsides and that eventually goes into our storm drains?"

She answered simply with a "no." That told me that she was clueless about the topic.

I then explained to her that the trash goes to our watershed. I explained what a watershed was and told her the grave effects of the trash in our watershed.

I also explained some ways to help our watershed and to spread the word.

She was shocked and as she walked away, she told me, "I'll tell more people about this!"

With these three results that I obtained, I realized that very few people actually know what happens with the trash that goes down our storm drains, and some people, even though they know, they don't do anything about it.

There has to be a change, so whoever is reading this, help our local watershed! You can make a difference!

The students of Live Oak Elementary School, Heritage Elementary School, Morada Middle School, Elkhorn School, Vinewood Elementary School, Joe Serna Jr. Charter School, Valley Robotics Academy and Reese Elementary School would like to thank the following sponsors for their support:

