

## The Monarch Butterfly Story of a Retired House Painter

Hello fellow Monarch butterfly enthusiasts! Welcome and thank you for reading my humble and simple story. I live with my wife, Teresa at 1158 Erie St. E. Windsor, ON. Canada. After meeting Teresa in this backyard in 1972, we got married the following year. We lived here with my in-laws for 4 years before moving away for 26 years. We returned in 1999 due to family reasons.



The the house marked with X, is our home with a cemented driveway, backyard and 3 car garage located 5 minutes from the downtown center. ([Picture from Google Earth.](#))



This is the front section from 2017 showing one rose bush on the left and one swamp milkweed on the right side. ([Picture from Google Maps Street View.](#))

Like most of our neighbors, every spring and summer we made many trips to local nurseries and big box stores, to purchase flowers. We would spend hundreds of dollars to embellish our property. Despite these efforts, no butterflies or pollinators visited our gardens other than the few black swallowtails we raised and released. During the summer of 2017, after learning about the Monarch butterfly population declining, we added a few potted milkweed plants. Our efforts paid off; we started noticing an increasing number of butterflies the following year, especially Monarchs. Additionally, many bees and a few hummingbirds were also observed as exhibited in the following photographs: [Summer of 2018](#) – [Summer of 2019](#) – [Summer of 2020](#) – [Summer of 2021](#) – [Summer of 2022](#) – You can also find these pictures on our newest [YouTube Channel](#)

As illustrated, planting nectar rich flowers (a mixture of native and non-native) is effective. However, providing host plants for various butterfly species is also beneficial. Milkweed is the host plant for Monarch butterflies. It is the only plant upon which she will deposit her eggs. Dill, fennel, carrot leaves, rue are the host plants for Eastern Swallowtails. We have a cement garden of a wartime home. Flowers in pots and containers can be as effective as others who have large gardens.

I have spent many hours in our garden, taken many pictures and movies of various butterfly species and pollinators. However, we have taken it one step further. We began protecting Monarch butterfly eggs by collecting them and keeping them safe from predators. Monarch butterflies have a 3 to 10% chance of survival from egg to adult butterfly in the wild. Some say it is as low as 1% to 3%. By protecting them, we have substantially increased the number of Monarchs in our area. Most of our neighbors have definitely noticed a higher number of Monarch butterflies in our area over the past six years.

After consulting with a few experts and closely monitoring their activities, we concluded our efforts are paying off. Providing nectar sources as well as host plants on our property has had an impact on the number of Monarchs we see during the summer breeding season. We also believe that our non native tropical, balloon, and the many small potted milkweed plants has made a huge difference in the amount of eggs we collect daily. These are some of the eggs pictures we took during the Summer of 2023 : [Click Here](#)

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If you're aware of any information, pictures, etc.. of any other garden location across North America that is having the same amount of Monarch traffic during the summer breeding season, we would love to hear from you.

If you have experienced something similar or have your own story to share, please let everyone know. Doing so may inspire your neighbors to create more habitats and maybe even raise a few of their own.

We believe some of the Monarchs who visit our gardens and lay eggs are the offspring of those we raised and released the previous year.

In the meantime, many of us with compassionate hearts, will continue to do our part to make a difference and help the Monarchs.

**What are your thoughts? Do you also have your own story to tell us?**

Thank you for reading my story and I look forward to reading yours someday soon.

Feel free to contact me below:

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[www.savethemonarchbutterfly.ca](http://www.savethemonarchbutterfly.ca)

<https://www.youtube.com/@leosilvestri5440/videos>



Understandably, some of our theories do not come from a lab backed by any studies or data coming from any experts, ( it's only based on seven years of Monarchs observations and behaviors during the Summers in our garden) therefore we understand they may not be acceptable by science.

We did send out a request to the scientific community about an explanation of what has been happening in our garden in the last seven years and hopefully someone will give us some answers.

Then again if they couldn't provide us with an explanation or an existing data, we would keep on believing in own human hearth theory mentioned above. :-)

Dr. David James from W.S.U. is a well known scientist acclaimed and recognized by The Lepidoptera Society, not too long ago he posted something very interesting on his Facebook page that explain the human spiritual connection with the monarch butterflies. You can read the post [HERE](#)