



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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2014/15 Monarch season comes to end

(PACIFIC GROVE, Calif.) – The monarch butterfly season in Pacific Grove is officially coming to a close as the last of the monarchs begin their annual northern return. A total of 1,400 monarchs were counted at the Pacific Grove Monarch Sanctuary, down considerably from the 6,700 observed at the Sanctuary only two weeks ago.

The Sanctuary is located at 250 Ridge Road. There is no admission fee to enter the Sanctuary.

In November, a whopping 24,000 were counted at the height of the season, up approximately 10,000 from the 2013/14 season. While these numbers are higher than last year, overall monarch numbers continue to decline throughout the country.

This year, highlights from the season included tagging approximately 3,000 monarch butterflies in November and December at three overwintering site in Monterey County, as well as sampling the butterflies for *Ophryocystis elektroscirrha* (O.e.) parasites. The Museum also unveiled a small gallery space dedicated to monarchs during the popular Science Saturday: Monarch Magic event in November. In February, the Museum hosted Sarina Jepsen, with the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation, for a lecture on efforts to possibly list monarch butterflies as a threatened species following a U.S. Fish and Wildlife decision to monitor the species for a year.

“After monarchs mate at their overwintering sites, the females fly inland to find milkweed on which to lay their eggs. Many males follow the females, in order to increase their reproductive chances,” said Museum Exhibitions Curator Annie Holdren. “Next year’s overwintering monarchs will be several generations removed from this one. With the current attention to the threats monarchs face, we hope that people now recognize the importance of native milkweed plants and nectar plants, which monarchs need to survive throughout their migratory distribution.”

Visit the Museum’s monarch website at pgmuseum.org/monarch-viewing.



The end of the monarch butterfly is quickly approaching in Pacific Grove.

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