



# Monarch Butterfly Habitats

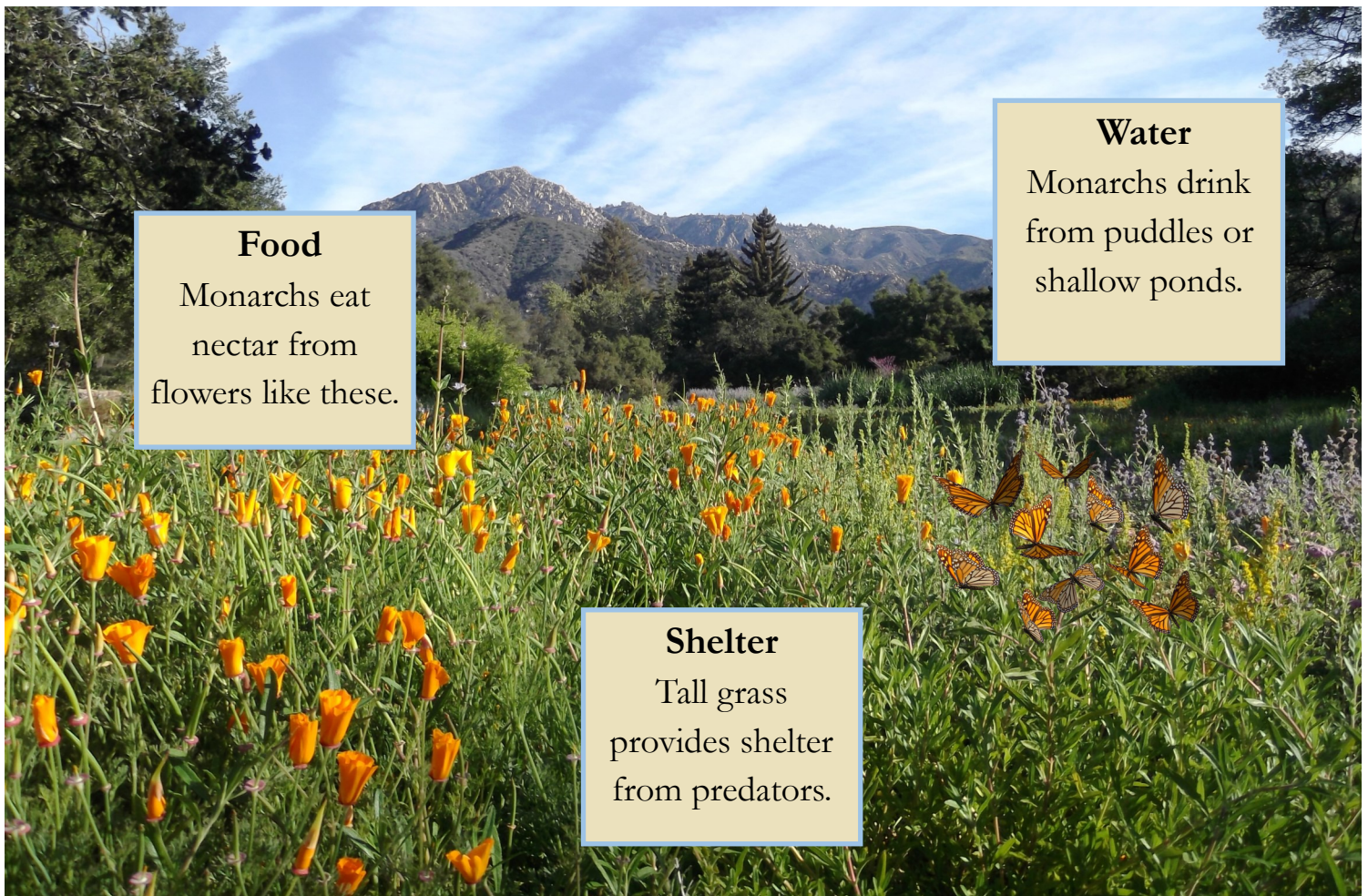


## What is a habitat?

A habitat is a place where an animal naturally lives. Habitats provide animals with food, water, and shelter.

## What is a monarch butterfly's habitat?

Monarch butterflies can live in many different environments, but the best habitat for a monarch is an open field or a meadow with flowers, especially milkweed. Monarchs only lay their eggs on milkweed plants because the milkweed leaves are the only food their caterpillars will eat.



### Food

Monarchs eat nectar from flowers like these.

### Water

Monarchs drink from puddles or shallow ponds.

### Shelter

Tall grass provides shelter from predators.





# Monarch Meadow Mix-up



Can you find the things in the meadow habitat that don't belong?







# Monarch Habitat Loss

## What is habitat loss?

Habitat loss is when a habitat disappears or is no longer able to support the plants and animals that live in it. When this happens, the animals could die or have to move to other places. This could have a negative effect on the ecosystem.

## Why does it happen?

Habitat loss can happen naturally, like when wildfires destroy forests that animals need. Habitat loss can also happen because of people. People cut down trees or clear meadows to make way for buildings or roads, which leads to habitat loss for many plants and animals.



## Planting Milkweed

The loss of milkweed is a major issue for monarch butterflies. People build over meadows where milkweed grows and they pull milkweed plants out of their gardens because it sometimes looks like ugly weeds!

But people can also help monarchs by planting more milkweed and creating **waystations**, patches of milkweed and other pollinator plants, along the monarch migration path.



## Monarch Habitat Reflection



What does the monarch butterfly need to survive?

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You have a habitat too! Can you think of what makes up your habitat? \_\_\_\_\_

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What are some things you can do to help protect monarch habitats? \_\_\_\_\_

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