

# STUDY QUESTIONS

## TO “WINGING IT”

Study and learn facts and ideas based on this Young Naturalists nonfiction story in *Minnesota Conservation Volunteer*, May-June 2025, [www.mndnr.gov/mcvmagazine](http://www.mndnr.gov/mcvmagazine).

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*Minnesota Conservation Volunteer* magazine is your guide to wild things. Every other month, six times a year, the magazine arrives in your school library. Each one has a story for Young Naturalists like you. **Are you curious about wild things?** Young Naturalists tells true stories that can answer all kinds of questions such as these—

**Have you ever heard of a purple wartyback?** How about a pink heelsplitter, pimple-back, or monkeyface? All are Minnesota freshwater mussels. Read Young Naturalists stories to learn which species (kinds) of critters live in Minnesota—frogs, salamanders, snakes, wild cats, wild dogs, weasels, mice, and rabbits.

Want to **peek inside the den of a red fox** and see how the kits grow up? Are you a rock hound searching for agates? Have you ever wondered what's alive under snow? How animals see? Why is a bluebird blue? How birds fly?

Would you like to hear the true story of **giants of the ice age**? Young Naturalists also tells you about the underground universe. You can read the story of a tiny owl that went to a hospital with an injured wing. Find out about a boy who worked in a logging camp. Read the story of Ojibwe children today hunting and gathering like their ancestors did.

Learn how to get started **camping, snowshoeing, ice fishing, or canoeing**.

**Find these stories and more online** at [www.mndnr.gov/young\\_naturalists](http://www.mndnr.gov/young_naturalists).

*Your knowledge of wild things helps you explore and enjoy the outdoors. Have fun!*

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**1. THE FEMALE MONARCH CAN RECOGNIZE MILKWEED BY “TASTE BUDS” AT THE END OF HER:**

- a) feet
- b) proboscis
- c) antennae
- d) tongue

**2. WILDFLOWERS ARE ONE FOOD SOURCE FOR THE ADULT BUTTERFLY. HOW DO BUTTERFLIES HELP WILDFLOWERS IN RETURN?**

**3. TRUE OR FALSE: MONARCHS ARE PROTECTED IN THE U.S. AS AN ENDANGERED SPECIES.**

**4. WHEN THE MONARCH BUTTERFLY FIRST EMERGES FROM ITS CHRYSALIS, WHAT CAUSES THE WINGS TO CHANGE FROM MOIST AND CRUMPLED TO STURDY AND WING-SHAPED?**

- a) The exoskeleton is shed one last time.
- b) Fluid from the butterfly’s abdomen flows into the thin, hollow tubes that give the wings their shape.
- c) The butterfly’s head, which was at the bottom of the chrysalis, breaks free and helps push the crumpled wings into their sturdy shape.
- d) The butterfly uses its six legs to kick the wings into shape.

**5. THE MONARCH LARVA MOLTS SEVERAL TIMES DURING THE CATERPILLAR STAGE. DURING THE FINAL MOLT, WHAT COLOR IS THE EXOSKELETON?**

- a) Pale and almost invisible
- b) Bright orange and black
- c) Yellow, green, and black stripes
- d) Lime green with a scattering of gold spots.

**6. WHAT THREE REASONS DOES THE STORY GIVE FOR THE DECLINE OF MONARCH POPULATIONS?**

**MINNESOTA COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENTS PRACTICE ITEMS**

**1. USING CLUES FROM THE STORY, WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS BEST DESCRIBES THE AUTHOR'S MAIN PURPOSE FOR WRITING "WINGING IT?"**

- a. To help readers learn the four stages of the Monarch's life cycle tubes in the trunk to the tallest branches.
- b. To encourage readers to recognize what makes Monarchs special and do things to help them.
- c. To help readers realize what an amazing migration journey the Monarchs go through.
- d. To make readers aware of reasons for the Monarch's decline in population.

**2. WHAT DOES THE AUTHOR USE TO HELP READERS LEARN ABOUT THE FRAGILE FUTURE OF THE BUTTERFLY?**

- a. Photographs
- b. Vocabulary words
- c. Supporting details
- d. Population graphs

**3. COMPARE AND CONTRAST THE FOUR GENERATIONS OF MONARCHS MENTIONED IN THE STORY.**

**VOCABULARY**

Metamorphose – to change or transform

Spectacular – beautiful in a dramatic or "eye-catching" way

Proboscis – a long, flexible, tube-shaped sucking mouthpart

Pollinate - to take pollen from one plant or part of a plant to another so that new plant seeds can be produced

Larva – an immature form of an insect that differs from the adult; the stage between egg and pupa

Pupa – developmental stage between the larva and adult in insects undergoing complete metamorphosis

Chrysalis – another name for the pupa of a butterfly

Exoskeleton – a flexible, strong outer skin of an insect that protects the soft body within

Molt – shedding of a butterfly's old exoskeleton to reveal a fresh one beneath

Rickety – likely to fall or collapse; shaky or not in good shape

Instinct – the way people or animals naturally react or behave, without having to think or learn about it

Decline – to become fewer or less; to decrease

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