

FIELD NOTES

MONARCHS NUMEROUS IN AN IOWA RAVINE

West of Cedar Falls, Iowa, along the Cedar River following the railroad tracks west about two miles is an excellent territory in which to collect butterflies. I have taken many fine specimens from this vicinity for several years. On Sept. 4, 1955, the weather was ideal for collecting, being clear with a high temperature of about 84° F., wind south-west but not strong. About one mile west there is a small wooded ravine sloping from the south to the north and about a quarter of a mile long. It was 2:45 P. M. when I decided to investigate this ravine. Upon entering at the junction of the tracks I counted 15 Monarchs (*Danaus plexippus* L.) flying about the opening of the high culvert under the tracks. While walking up the ravine I saw many Monarchs flying up and down the valley; all were in lazy flight, some would light on the trees or bushes, or even on the ground. One resting Monarch allowed me to walk up to it and pick it off the twig with my fingers. It was a male, and upon release he flew away in easy flight apparently not frightened by being caught. I easily captured 2 males and 2 females with my net for my collection, made no further attempt to catch any more. At another spot I counted 12 resting on a bush and about as many in the air. It was impossible to make an accurate count of numbers since there were so many flying all about me as I walked up and down the ravine. I probably saw at least 100 or more of these butterflies although not all at one time. I watched these Monarchs playing about until 4:00 o'clock, at which time I left the valley. The noticeable fact was their lazy easy flight and not being frightened by my presence.

There is another ravine similar to this one about a quarter of a mile to the east, so I thought it best to check this one also for Monarchs. I saw only four. This ravine was not quite as deep as the other and was noticeably dryer, and not so cool; possibly this would account for the fact that the Monarchs had a preference for that particular ravine. None of the Monarchs observed had any marks on their wings. Along the tracks away from the two ravines I saw seven Monarchs. Their manners of flying were definitely not lazy. Perhaps they were in a hurry to get to their "Valley of Enchantment".

LEONARD S. PHILLIPS

Armour Research Foundation of The Illinois Institute of Technology, Biochemistry Dept.,
35 W. 33rd St., Chicago 16, Ill., U. S. A.

A SMALL MIGRATION IN VIRGINIA

September 25, 1955, on a party fishing boat off Colonial Beach, Virginia, I observed over a period of about one-half hour (10 to 10:30 A. M.) eleven Monarchs (*Danaus plexippus* Linné), seven dark-colored butterflies of which two appeared to be Buckeyes (*Junonia coenia* Hbn.) and one a Red-spotted Purple (*Limenitis astyanax* Fab.), and one Yellow Sulfur. All were flying a course approximately in line from Rock Point, Maryland, to Colonial Beach, across the Potomac River. All were quartering into the breeze which was blowing mildly but steadily from the northwest directly down the river.

On landing at Colonial Beach I attempted to follow the flight in the area from there to Wakefield by road. I observed only four Monarchs, three of which were feeding on flowers, but too shy to be captured for branding and one which was definitely migrating south at treetop level, slowing up occasionally to soar momentarily on rising air currents, as though "sniffing" the breeze.

There were three Buckeyes in one group resting on the grass, but they left at my approach and did not return. I captured one Red-spotted Purple which was resting on a leaf and appeared sluggish.

C. W. STAFFORD, 1125 Tennessee Ave., Pittsburgh 16, Pa., U. S. A.