

## **A preliminary look at Monarch preferences for milkweed in Nova Scotia**

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This study investigates the preferences of Monarch butterflies (*Danaus plexippus*) in Nova Scotia, focusing on their utilization of different types of milkweed patches. By analyzing Monarch presence at various types of milkweed patches, including cultivated, we aim to identify which patch characteristics might impact Monarch presence. Understanding these preferences is crucial for conservation efforts, as it can inform habitat management strategies that support Monarch populations in this region. Included are the preliminary scores from the “Beneficial Management Practices” or BMP to evaluate the initial stage of the project. Surveys conducted over the last three years (2022-2024) show high variability of Monarch presence in the province. Monarch populations in Nova Scotia were nearly absent in 2023, with natural patches of milkweed being devastated by flooding. Our findings highlight the importance of diverse milkweed habitats in promoting the survival of this iconic species amid ongoing environmental changes.

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