

Monarch Butterflies Return

Roberta Meets Some New Friends



Roberta Perkins, 2½-year-old daughter of Ranger and Mrs. Robert Perkins of Natural Bridges State park, points to a

low-hanging cluster of Monarch butterflies. The beautiful orange and black insects arrive from the north in great numbers each fall to congregate in

eucalyptus trees at the park and in trees behind Seabright branch library where they can be seen now.

By Margaret Koch
The King of the butterflies is back in Santa Cruz.

And, after flights ranging up to 2000 miles to get here, he is happy just to float lazily aloft on the air currents over two local areas. Monarch, or *Danaus plexippus*, as he is scientifically known, makes his winter home here at Tyrrell park behind Seabright branch library, and at Natural Bridges State park on West Cliff drive.

At Tyrrell park the butterflies may be seen now in small numbers, clinging to the ancient pine trees, cypresses and willows behind the library building.

But Natural Bridges seems to be the favorite local winter resort for the great orange and black insects. There they hang by the thousands in great, pale clusters in the Eucalyptus trees on cold days, only the faded-looking undersides of their brilliant wings showing.

When the sun is bright, according to Park Ranger Robert Perkins, the butterflies fill the air as they head for the nearest and sweetest nectar crops. They are particularly fond of the lavender-colored veronica blooms in Perkin's garden and when his wife turns on the lawn sprinkler she says many come there to drink.

The Perkins' and their three children are now at Natural Bridges, having arrived here in June from his former station at Monterey. There he also was able to observe the Monarchs in their annual migration to Pacific Grove pine trees. Perkins is particularly anxious that sightseers visiting Natural Bridges park do not disturb the beautiful winter travelers.

Two thousand miles on wings so frail? The delicately-veined wings look like a strong ocean breeze would crumple them into nothing. But they have carried the exotic insect here from as far north as Canada and parts of Alaska, according to authorities. The butterflies have their own built-in umbrellas too, in the form of the tiny waterproof, overlapping scales that cover their wings and come off as "butterfly dust" on your fingers.

Official records dating the time of arrival of the great Monarchs have been kept only since 1954 at Natural Bridges. But it is interesting to note that unfavorable weather has not kept the butterflies from arriving. On September 30, 1955, the main migration moved in during windy, overcast weather. In 1956 they found their way through heavy fog, and in 1957-58 the fragile creatures again had to buck heavy winds to get here.

No one yet knows how the Monarchs set their compasses for Santa Cruz, for these particular insects have not been here before. They were hatched approximately eight months ago from eggs laid—one pale green egg to one leaf—on milkweed, the female Monarch dies. Three days after being laid, the eggs hatch Monarch caterpillars which grow and shed their skins four times before forming the chrysalis from which new Monarch butterflies emerge to continue the cycle.

To suck up plant nectar the delicate insect uncurls its long tongue or haustellum, which looks like a tiny black watch spring when it is coiled. With this tongue the butterfly probes for nectar in clover, milkweed, flowers and thistle blossoms.

Often called the "milkweed butterfly" the Monarch is a member of the huge Lepidoptera family of moths and butterflies. They were first arranged for scientific classification in 1758 by Linnaeus, great Scandinavian botanist. By 1945 there were 80,000 known species of Lepidoptera, 10,000 of them in North America alone.

Fossil knowledge of the highly perishable flying insects is scanty, with only a few butterfly fossils in existence, dating from the Oligocene and Eocene periods.

For that matter, there are a few things we would still like to know about these modern descendants that visit here each winter.

How do the butterflies know where to come each year?

And when to come? And when to start back north?

If you find out, let us know.

IRISH SEEK TO UP
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One Man Job

Backward Nepal Attempting To Catch Up With The West

By Henry S. Bradsher

Katmandu, Nepal (AP) — One man has been handed the task of transforming Nepal from a feudal monarchy into a modern democracy.

He is B. P. Koirala, 44, the first popularly elected prime minister in a land of gold-roofed Hindu temples and sturdy barefoot peasant farmers.

Sitting crosslegged on his bedroom floor with cabinet papers spread out around him, he is full of energy and enthusiasm. In his Nepali white tunic, the slim Koirala looks like a young hospital intern.

"What foreigners consider romantic and picturesque in our country is fast disappearing because we are creating a new society," Koirala says. As economic progress comes, he adds, "much of what you consider charm will be gone."

"We have not yet developed the institutions of democracy," the youthful-looking Prime Minister admits. He is working to carry out a process begun by King Mahendra, who granted his people a democratic constitution and called the elections over strong opposition from some old-fashioned politicians.

A foreign observer says the

process is going well. The big question is how far and how fast the King will accept the dilution of his power growing out of last spring's election.

Koirala's Nepali Congress party polled 37.3 per cent of the vote, more than twice as much as any of the other seven parties, and won decisive control of Parliament. The only party with a truly national organization, it stands for socialist measures to eliminate economic feudalism and raise low living standards.

Though openly concerned about the presence of Chinese troops on his rugged northern border, Koirala tries to maintain a neutral attitude. Nepal's geography orients her toward India "and we are drawn to her by generally the same development problems," Koirala says.

Koirala was born in Benares, India, in 1915 and educated in Patha and Calcutta, India. His father joined the Indian National Congress party seeking independence from the British.

"Naturally, I was drawn into politics," Koirala says. Beginning in 1929 at the age of 14, he was imprisoned by the British four times for a total of three years.

"I felt the Indian Congress was not sufficiently leftist so I joined a Socialist group within the party," Koirala says.

Koirala returned to Nepal to take a leading part in the 1950-51 revolt against Rana rule by King Tribhuvan, Mahendra's father. At

Khrushchev Tour Film Wows Moscow

Moscow (AP).—A color film of Premier Nikita Khrushchev's U.S. tour is drawing packed houses in a number of Moscow theaters.

In general, the film emphasizes the points Khrushchev stressed in talks with U.S. political, business and labor leaders.

The hour-long chronicle shows the New York skyline, a few modern skyscrapers and broad highways. There are air views of Colorado peaks and parts of the Grand Canyon.

It omits modern apartment houses, private homes, schools and hospitals.

One diplomat commented that the film has been skillfully edited to show San Francisco harbor and Alcatraz prison, but leaving out the Oakland and Golden Gate bridges.

Policemen standing in groups are shown, and the commentator suggests they were assigned to prevent Khrushchev from coming in contact with the American people.

A number of warm comments were heard in one audience seeing the film, including remarks of delight that the Negroes filmed among U.S. spectators are so well-dressed.

Lecture Scheduled On Clairvoyance

"Some Practical Uses of Clairvoyance" will be the topic of a public lecture Thursday, November 5 at 8 p.m. at the Woman's club house, 306 Mission street.

