

Virtual Monarch and Meadow Month Lesson: Monarch Tagging Program

In this lesson, participants will learn about citizen science opportunities through the Monarch Watch.

The Monarch Watch Tagging Program

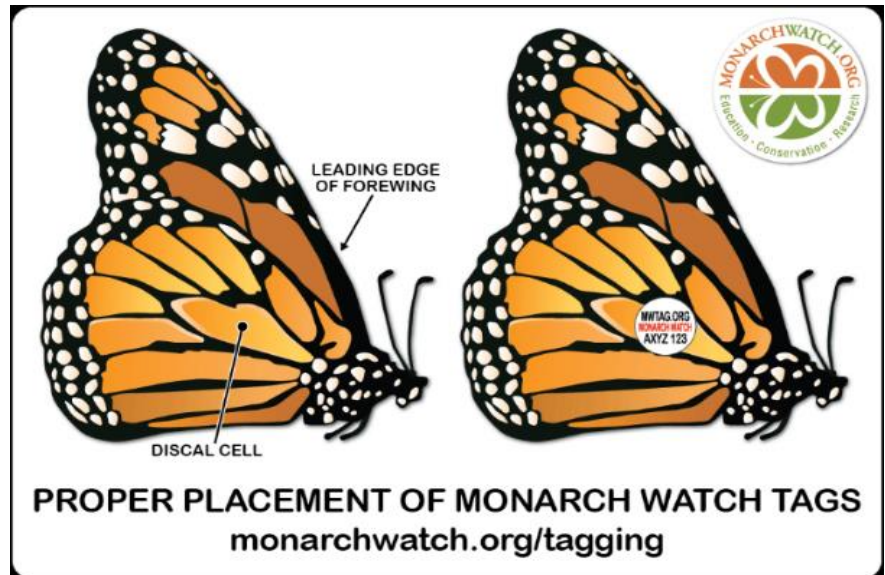
The tagging and releasing of monarch butterflies is a project that started in 1992 to help understand the monarch's migration patterns. It is a citizen science program lead by the [Monarch Watch](https://monarchwatch.org). A *citizen science* program includes the collection and analysis of data relating to environmental topics (in this case, it is the monarch population and migration) in which members of the public can take part to help and collaborate with professional scientists.

The Tagging Process

All materials needed for tagging can be ordered from Monarch Watch, [here](#).

Materials include the tags themselves, which are essentially little stickers that are carefully placed on the strongest part of the butterfly's wing, called the discal cell (shown right). Each sticker has a specific 4-letter code that is representative of location and a 3-digit number that is specific to the butterfly itself. Also included are [these data sheets](#) which are to be filled out each time a butterfly is tagged and released. These are a very important part of the tagging process because this information will be entered into an online database, which then can be used

to track tagged butterflies that have made it to Canada or Mexico (depending on your location and whether it is spring or fall migration). Scientists in Mexico and Canada will collect tagged butterflies and note which ones they have found, which then can be cross referenced with the tagger information. Learn more about [submitting and reporting tag codes](#).



Releasing a tagged butterfly into the Farm Barn Meadow at Duke Farms, 2019.

In 2019, "AACAD" was the code that represented Duke Farms' location.

The tags start with number "000", making this our 26th tagged and released butterfly in 2019.