

Carlos The 3rd

The Wandering Monarch

Kingsbrae Garden

If there was a heaven for Monarchs, this is it!



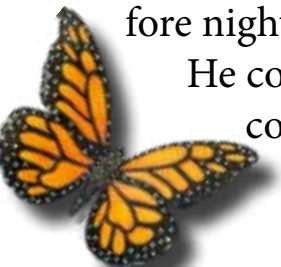
Darkwood Woodcarving
By: Gary A Crosby M.M.M., C.D.



Carlos was pushing his wings extremely hard; with every flap, he could feel himself gaining altitude. He needed to reach 400m to start cruising towards Southern New Brunswick. At this point in his life, he had never been to this part of New Brunswick before, but he knew he had to make this journey. He was now running on instincts and a slight tailwind; he was riding the wind, and at this speed, he would be in Kingsbrae Gardens by the end of the day.

The trip down along the shore would be an opportunity to check out the sights, and if he should come across any pollinator gardens, he would be inclined to stop in for a little nectar. He found a nice group of wild flowers and bright roses at New River Beach, just up along the shoreline, and at Lighthouse Point for some wild flowers. He would stop only for a quick snack before pushing onward to Kingsbrae Gardens.

Carlos would reach Kingsbrae Garden just before nightfall as a cold spring airmass moved in. He could feel himself slowing down as the cold air washed over him. He needed to



find somewhere in the garden that was sheltered, where he could keep warm. Luckily he found a thick hedge of cedars that would help protect him from the night's cold. He would have to wait out the weather, knowing this time of year there were hot and cold times coming. But for now, it was time to chill out in the cedar hedge.

Carlos would find himself slipping into Torpor. Monarchs do not sleep like other creatures; they simply rest and, depending on the temperature, can enter a state of reduced physiological activity, a survival mechanism. This is not really sleeping, but just nothingness. As the night passed, the cold Canadian spring weather would give way to warmer weather as the morning sun rose.

Hours later, Carlos could feel the morning sun warming his body. Soon, he would be warm enough to fly again and explore the garden. But for now, he could see the sun's rays pushing the fog away, creating a very cool effect; the sun's rays were beaming through the cedar hedge, lighting up parts of the garden in front of him. These beams of light seemed to dance as they made their way through the garden.



He was now looking directly ahead at the Knot & Rose Garden in Kingsbrae, a breathtaking view as if the ground was dancing with colour. Now he understood why his instincts pushed him to this garden, particularly at this time of year. It was incredible, especially in full bloom. He was very excited about the wonders he would see today. He felt that there was so much more for him to see than what he

was currently witnessing.

The weather was clear skies now that the fog had moved off, and Carlos could feel his wings coming back to life. He would sit in the cedars a little longer now that he was basking in the full morning sun. Just then, a Black-Capped Chickadee landed on a cedar branch next to him. He could feel the bird looking directly at him, turning his head from left to right as if sizing up his next meal. Carlos mustered up all of his strength and waved his wings up and down slowly, warning the Chickadee of the danger should he decide that Carlos looked like his next meal. The Chickadee jumped backward, recognizing the Monarch's potential danger. Then he just quickly jumped backwards again, and in an instant was airborne, flying off in search of his next meal.

Carlos considered what had just happened. The Chickadee recognized the potential danger that he displayed when he waved his bright orange and black wings. He considered this and thought to himself, "I still got it!"

Carlos' wings were now warm and ready for flight, but before he started his trip around the garden, he needed a little pick-me-up. Looking around the Knot and Rose garden, he selected the flowers most likely to have nectar. It is a known fact that most Roses have very little nectar but lots of pollen, which is excellent for bees but not good for Monarchs. The Monarch prefers milkweed, goldenrod, zinnias and other native plants.

Carlos dove off the cedar hedge and frantically flapped his wings to gain altitude, since the rose garden was an incredible sight, but unfortunately, not much nectar. There was a lot of pollen for the bees, but no nectar for the butterflies. Once he reached a height of 10m above the rose garden, he could see the next garden area just over the next hedge. It was called the Perennial Garden, which looks like it could have just what Carlos needed right now, sweet nectar.

Carlos dove down over the cedar hedge and into the Perennial Garden, where he started his search. The garden was very quiet at this time of day. The humans had not yet arrived, and most of the bees were over in the rose garden collecting

pollen and doing their bee thing. Once Carlos was amongst the flowers, he could start his search for nectar, and it was not long before he found just what he was looking for: sweet nectar. He would spend several minutes taking his fill of the nectar because you never know when your next meal will be found, and Monarchs need to feed once a day. If he was going to search for milkweed, he needed to build up his strength.

Once Carlos was finished in the Perennial garden, he started making his way around the garden, visiting the orchard and the Bird and Butterfly garden before moving on to the Rhododendrons. He was not sure if it was the flowers that drew him in or the lovely windmill. To Carlos, the windmill compared to his size would be seen as a massive structure, standing hundreds of monarchs tall. He decided to rest and landed on the wooden railing surrounding the windmill; from there, he could view a good part of the garden. As he looked out, he could not believe his eyes. The colours cascaded across the land, with flower gardens after flower gardens as far as his eyes could see; it was mesmerizing.

Suddenly, he could see a red dot that looked like it was coming right at him. It just kept on getting larger and larger. Just when it was meters away and still coming straight at him, he realized it was a cardinal. For but a split second he froze in place, just before he dived off the railing and headed for the pond directly below him. He felt the air swoosh past him and the distinct snap of the bird's beak slamming closed. As he levelled out above the water, he could see the cardinal moving off and he realized he was just a target of opportunity and nothing more. That cardinal was already chasing another insect.

As Carlos made his way across the garden, he could see what looked like Milkweed, beside the pond located in the middle of the garden. To his excitement, it was Milkweed, which had not yet started to bloom, but the plants were large and strong, perfect for his young to start their wild journey of life. So now he has found half of what he needs: the Milkweed plant; he just needs to find a mate. He would have to travel around the garden a little more, spreading his scent from the black scent pouch on his lower wings. The female monarch butter



flies, does not have the black spot on their wings, only the male. Hopefully a female will find this scent irresistible and track him down. But for now, all he needed to do was make his way around the garden spreading his scents.

As he makes his way around the garden checking out all the flowers and sculptures, he suddenly picked up an unusual scent. He does not know it yet, but it's a female monarch releasing her pheromones in the area, which Carlos will find irresistible.

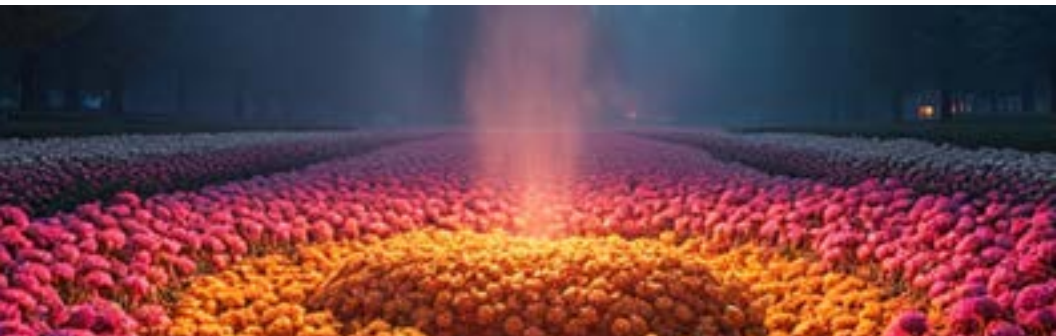
The monarch butterfly will mate several times during their short life in the summer months. Their life expectancy is from around 3 to 5 weeks. Carlos is now on his third week. You could say he is having a midlife crisis right now. He needs to find a mate so the species can survive and thrive in the months and years to come.

Carlos was now wandering around the Heath & Heather garden, taking in the sights and searching for his possible mate. To a monarch, this garden is magnificent, lush and green, the perfect spot for his



future mate to hang out. He would spend the rest of the day exploring this area where he smelled that alluring scent which, for some reason, which he did not understand yet, he is incredibly attractive to it.

Long shadows were starting to fall over the lush garden. Things have started to quiet down, and all the loud and noisy humans have gone for the day. The garden now belonged to the creatures of the forests. The birds started to roost for the night. The crazy yellow jackets are all home for the night, along with the bees. He can feel the cool breeze coming in from the ocean. It was time to find a safe location to spend the night. Soon, he would slip into a dormant state again and rest until the warmth of first light. The sun would bring him back to resume the search for his mate. But for now, it was time for some well-deserved rest.



As the sun once again began to rise, bringing the garden creatures back to life, Carlos emerged from his spot of rest. He could feel the sun warming his wings and now sensed them moving up and down as they prepared for the day ahead. It was like a pre-flight inspection; he would confirm their strength, check his wings for damage, and slowly increase their speed until he was once again flying.

As Carlos took flight, he smelt the same aroma he had sensed yesterday, but stronger this time. He flapped his wings harder and looked around the garden with both his eyes, along with tasting the air for that strange scent that was now even stronger. He looked down and saw a female monarch butterfly on the ground, in the grass next to the milkweed. He dived down, and lifted the female monarch and carried her up to a tree branch, where, for the next 16 hours, they would mate, ensuring the continuation of the species. Once complete, they would both go their separate ways. The female monarch name was Kim, would deposit the fertilized eggs on the underside of the milkweed leaf, where they would remain until hatching into larvae.



The Larvae would live on the milkweed, feeding on its leaves and growing into a chrysalis or pupa. From there, it would develop into a fully grown Monarch butterfly.



For Carlos, it was time to move on and visit more of this incredible diverse province he now calls home. It was time to gain a little altitude and ride the wind to his next destination.



<https://kingsbraegarden.com> if your looking to visit this incredible garden.