

stops in the mountains along the way. We then go to the Pyramids at San Juan Teotihuacan for a fabulous buffet lunch and a wonderful afternoon at this world-famous archeological site. We then return to the Hotel Maria Christina. In the evening the group will meet in the hotel lobby and have our farewell dinner in an excellent restaurant.

**Day 5: Mexico City/U.S.A.:** After breakfast, we will transfer to the Mexico City airport for our return flights to the U.S.

**Activity Level:** This is an active adventure in high-altitude conditions (over 10,000 feet). Participants should be in good health and able to hike for a distance of 2-3 miles to the colony site and then back the same way (could be around 5 miles of hiking in one day). Typically, the hike takes between one and two hours, but colony sites move throughout the season, so hiking times and distances may vary. Please contact Expedition Travel with ANY questions about physical activity on the trip.

**TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

**COST INCLUDES** all hotel accommodations in double rooms with private bath, all meals in Mexico, land transportation and airport transfers, hotel taxes and tips except those to drivers or local guides.

**COST DOES NOT INCLUDE** international air fare from the U.S. to Mexico City, or items not specifically covered in the itinerary, single room supplements, passport or tourist card fees, airport departure tax, travel insurance, alcoholic beverages, soft drinks, bottled water, laundry, telephone calls, cables, or any other expenses of a personal nature.

**RESERVATIONS AND FINAL PAYMENT:** A deposit of \$350 per person is necessary as soon as possible in order to confirm booking. Final payment is due not later than 60 days prior to departure, as will be indicated on your receipt for deposit.

**CANCELLATIONS AND REFUNDS:** Full refunds will be made up to 60 days prior to departure, upon receipt of written cancellation. After that date, refunds will be based on moneys recovered by the tour operator subject to the rules and regulations of the hotels and local purveyors of services involved. No refunds can be made for any services not used for less than two days or for occasional sightseeing or meals not taken. Refunds will be made solely on residual values received from purveyors of services.

Trip cancellation insurance will be made available to you for purchase which will cover you should you have to cancel due to medical or family emergency within the 60 days cancellation period. It is recommended that you consider this insurance. Information on purchasing travel insurance will be provided to you upon receipt of deposit, or by request.

**STATEMENT OF DISCLOSURE:** Expedition Travel, Inc., and/or its agents assume no responsibility or liability for the participants' travel on this trip, including the use of the aircraft, watercraft, and motor vehicles employed, or any difficulty or injury sustained with hotels and food, guides, animals, illness, accident, theft, war, revolution, or other act of God and Man. Expedition Travel also assumes no responsibility or liability for the conduct of others whether criminal or negligent. Additional expenses arising from medical conditions, physical handicaps, accidents, or other unforeseen events that make it necessary to alter the itinerary or arrangements for a passenger or the group shall be borne by the passengers. If the tour is withdrawn prior to planned departure, a full or partial refund will be made at the discretion of Expedition Travel. However, no refund can be made for any portion of the program not used by the passenger during operation of the trip. In signing below, the passenger deems himself or herself physically capable of completing the expedition.

The passenger and Expedition Travel, Inc. enter into and accept this agreement as to the above terms and conditions by the signature of the passenger below and by the acceptance of the passenger's reservation and deposit by Expedition Travel, and all parties to this contract submit to the exclusive jurisdiction of the courts of the State of Florida.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature) (Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature) (Date)

**MBG MEXICO MONARCH EXPEDITION**

**FEBRUARY 19<sup>TH</sup> – 23<sup>RD</sup>, 2010**

**TOTAL LAND COST PER PERSON:**  
**\$1,300.00/each adult (double occupancy)**  
**\$800.00/each child (In triple w/ parents)**

In order to immediately reserve a place on the trip, please fill out the following form (or a Xerox copy) and return to Expedition Travel with a check for \$350.00 deposit (per person).

**EXPEDITION TRAVEL, INC.**  
 1717 N.W. 45th Avenue  
 Gainesville, Florida 32605

Full name of each passenger (as on passport):  
 (1) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (2) \_\_\_\_\_

Passport Number and Expiration Date:  
 (1) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (2) \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address:  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Roommate Preference: \_\_\_\_\_

Medical Conditions or Allergies:  
*(certain foods, insect bites, high blood pressure, etc.)*  
 \_\_\_\_\_



This trip is specially designed for the **Missouri Botanical Garden**, in cooperation with the travel program and staff of the **Florida Museum of Natural History**.



**MEXICO**  
**The Overwintering Monarch Butterflies**

**FEBRUARY 19<sup>TH</sup> – 23<sup>RD</sup>, 2010**



*Led by*

**DR. THOMAS C. EMMEL**

Director of the McGuire Center for Lepidoptera and Biodiversity at the Florida Museum of Natural History

*Presented by*



Sophia M. Sachs

**Butterfly House**

a division of the  MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN

*In cooperation with*



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## INTRODUCTION

One of the most amazing phenomena in nature is the annual migration of millions of Monarch butterflies (*Danaus plexippus*) southward from their breeding grounds in the United States and Canada east of the Rocky Mountains to overwintering sites in the mountains of central Mexico. Hundreds of millions of Monarchs fly along the Gulf Coast, or across the Gulf of Mexico, to eventually reach the belt of high volcanic mountains which stretches across the southern end of the central Mexican plateau. At about a dozen isolated places within the high-altitude fir forests of this zone, Monarchs pass the winter in aggregations of hundreds of millions of individuals. From November to March, these spectacular aggregations are accessible to visitors to photograph and marvel at during a truly unique experience.

We are planning this trip in late February to take advantage of the opportunity to see these migrants during a peak time of abundance. In late February, the weather is warmer at these 10,000-foot colony elevations, and the daytime temperatures are usually in the 70's. During periods of sunshine, hundreds of millions of butterflies will take flight from the roosts and sail as much as a mile to nearby streambanks to drink, then soar again into the air and eventually return that afternoon to their original roost. You will have the opportunity to see them packed in the countless millions on the roosts in the early morning, as well as in flight at mid day, feeding on wildflowers (which amazingly bloom throughout the year at these elevations in Mexico), and watering at streams.

The sight of hundreds of millions of butterflies in the air at once, and millions basking on the trees with their wings open, is beyond the power of human description. The beauty of their rustling wings (clearly audible at times of mass flight), the sprinkling of orange Monarch scales drifting down through the green fir tree boughs, and sheer magnitude of the numbers seen, all combine to make this one of the most amazing experiences in your life. Bring your best photographic equipment, to record this miracle for your friends and relatives to see and marvel at when you return home! The Monarchs leave for the north in the first week or two of March, so be prepared to see huge activity!



*Pictured here is a marking tag used to track Monarchs in order to better understand their path of migration. We may see these on Monarch wings, which we will then report to researchers.*



## ABOUT YOUR LEADERS



**Dr. Thomas C. Emmel** is Director of the McGuire Center for Lepidoptera and Biodiversity, and also professor of Entomology and Zoology at the University of Florida. He has specialized in tropical ecology for the past 35 years and has led many scientific expeditions and ecotourism groups to Mexico and more than 40 other countries around the world. He will brief you on the natural history of the Monarch Butterfly and its migration during this expedition.



**Mr. Mark Deering** is the Collections Manager and Curator of Butterflies at the Sophia M. Sachs Butterfly House. He has had a lifelong interest in the ecology and evolution of butterflies and other insects, and has done research in many tropical countries. He is an accomplished photographer and naturalist, and will help interpret the natural features encountered during this expedition.



**Mr. J. Court Whelan**, General Manager for Expedition Travel, Inc. and current Doctoral Fellow in the Department of Entomology and Nematology at the University of Florida, is making all logistical arrangements for the trip and has guided previous groups to Mexico, South America, Central America, Madagascar, Papua New Guinea and the Galapagos Islands.

*Additional staff from the McGuire Center, Florida Museum of Natural History, and Missouri Botanical Garden along with knowledgeable local Mexican guides, will also accompany our group.*

## ITINERARY

**Day 1: U.S./Mexico City:** Depart from a U.S. city of your choice and arrive in Mexico before 1pm. We will then depart for the colonial town of Angangueo, located high in the mountains in the state of Michoacan, about 100 miles west of Mexico City. Here we will check into the Hotel Don Bruno. After settling in, we will have dinner and an evening briefing.

**Day 2: El Rosario Monarch Site:** Located on a high mountain slope near Angangueo lies the Monarch site of El Rosario. Here we will visit our first Monarch site and the one most generally accessible to the public. This large overwintering colony normally contains 200-300 million adult Monarchs and has an excellent trail system winding through the fir-covered slopes on which the colony is located. Additionally, there are nearby streams where the butterflies may fly at midday to drink water. We will have a picnic lunch as we enjoy this spectacular phenomenon and watch the butterflies go through their daily cycle of activities. While being relatively inactive through the winter, as the weather warms, they may take flight for an hour or more and water, nectar, etc., before returning to their roost on the tree limbs or trunks. In the late afternoon, we will return from the mountains to the picturesque colonial town of Angangueo and arrive at the Hotel Don Bruno. You will be free to enjoy the hotel gardens, walk and photograph the interesting scenes and people in this beautiful little town, or to just relax in this peaceful setting. Dr. Emmel will give an evening lecture on the Monarchs, with emphasis on their migration, orientation abilities and conservation.

**Day 3: Sierra Chincua Monarch Site:** After breakfast, we will ascend into the mountains again to approximately 10,000 feet elevation to visit Sierra Chincua, one of several nearby Monarch sites that are more isolated than El Rosario. With a picnic lunch, we will have all day to enjoy and photograph the spectacular Monarchs. Horses will be available as an option to ride instead of walk over part of the trail to today's site. This day is normally the most spectacular and moving experience among the Monarchs that you could possibly imagine. We will return to the Hotel Don Bruno for dinner and overnight again in Angangueo. Dr. Emmel will host another evening lecture and discussion on the Monarchs.

**Day 4: Angangueo/Mexico City:** After breakfast, we will depart for the Mexico City area with sightseeing