

# Indiana Dunes National Park Volunteer Service Description



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## Integrated Monarch Monitoring Program (IMMP) Citizen Scientist

### Position Overview

The Integrated Monarch Monitoring Program (IMMP) is a national program to collect milkweed, nectar plant, and monarch use data from a variety of land-use types and regions. This information is vital to shaping our understanding of how monarchs interact with their environment, documenting conservation efforts, and tracking the population and its habitat as they change over time. Indiana Dunes National Park has a monarch monitoring site set up at the Paul H. Douglas Center for Education. Citizen scientists monitor this site and submit the data to the national IMMP program.

### Minimum Commitment

Work is typically completed June-September on a weekly/biweekly basis, depending on volunteer availability.

### Goal / Outcome of Job

Shaping our understanding of how monarchs interact with their environment, documenting conservation efforts, and tracking the population and its habitat as they change over time.

### Description of Duties

- Hike to monarch monitoring site and walk throughout site (2-3 miles total per visit) on designated days/times with at least one additional volunteer
- Count adult monarch butterflies and record their activity
  - e.g. resting, flying, ovipositing, nectaring
- Collect data on butterfly larvae and note the larval stage
- Count milkweed plants until you reach 100 plants
  - 100 milkweed plants may not always be visible, but it is the goal / desired sample size
- Occasional data entry based on observations
- Submit data to Integrated Monarch Monitoring Program (IMMP)
- Collect data on monarch butterflies, larvae, and milkweed and submit to IMMP program
- Prior knowledge of monarch butterflies, larvae, and milkweed OR training required
  - Training hub link: [Training | The Monarch Joint Venture](#)

## **Knowledge/ Skills Desired**

- Knowledge of monarch butterflies, larvae, and milkweed/ a willingness to learn
- Ability to read simple hand-held instruments and/or a willingness to learn
- The ability to work with a diverse community of volunteers and park staff
- Knowledge and understanding of the National Park Service mission and goals
- Understand and respect all park regulations and policies
- Ability to walk 2-3 miles and be on one's feet for 2-3 hours, potentially in hot weather
- Desire and ability to work outdoors.
- Ability to work in hot and occasionally inclement weather
- Ability to work in diverse terrain and footing
- Ability to handle some strenuous physical activity

## **Difficulty Level**

Average to Strenuous. Requires a combination of hiking in hot weather carrying some equipment.

## **Working Conditions**

Work is performed outdoors during June-September in a designated monitoring area located at the Paul H. Douglas Center for Education. A one-mile hike on moderately rough terrain is necessary to access the monitoring site. Data collection usually lasts about 2-3 hours. Conditions are occasionally very hot or rainy. There can be exposure to wind, rain, uneven terrain, poison ivy, and ticks.

## **Training / Preparation Required:**

- Prior knowledge of monarch butterflies, larvae, and milkweed OR training required
  - Training hub link: [Training | The Monarch Joint Venture](#)
- Recommended Trainings:
  - Program Overview
  - Monarch Biology & Conservation
  - Monarch Identification
  - Milkweed Identification
  - Site Description
  - All applicable activity videos

## **Safety**

- Mandatory safety guidelines will be provided
- If a volunteer citizen scientist observes a violation which they feel requires a law enforcement response, they should never approach person(s) engaged in the illegal behavior. When a volunteer citizen scientist is at a safe location, call 1-800-PARK-TIP to report the situation.

- Informational contact with visitors may be made at the discretion of the volunteer citizen scientist based on their level of comfort
- Sun protection and tick protection should be used at all times
  - Pre-treating clothing with permethrin is recommended. Follow safety guidelines and directions when handling permethrin.

### **Uniform**

- Lightweight long sleeves and long pants are required to prevent ticks, mosquitos, and other exposure to insects and elements
- Closed toed hiking boots or shoes are required to help maintain footing and prevent falls. Boots are preferred to limit exposed skin.