



# MONARCH WATCH TAGGING SYSTEM

## IMPORTANT NOTES FOR 2024

- (1) Please review the instructional videos and complete tagging instructions on the Tagging Program page at [monarchwatch.org/tagging](http://monarchwatch.org/tagging) – links to view/download datasheets and other tagging kit materials are also available there.
- (2) Make note of the number of tags you receive and the tag code series (for example, AABC 500–999, XYZ 300–349) – we would like you to include this information when you submit your data.
- (3) Be sure to provide complete contact information (on every sheet if using paper datasheets) – we need to know how to contact you if there are questions about your data.
- (4) It is **VERY IMPORTANT** that you record the complete tag code (for example, XYZ123) for each monarch you tag & release – partial codes can make identifying butterflies virtually impossible.
- (5) Record tags in sequential order on the paper sheet to make data entry easier.
- (6) Double check everything to make sure your data are **ACCURATE** and **COMPLETE**.
- (7) Submit your tagging data to us at the end of your tagging season, by December 1st if possible. Submission online or via the Monarch Watch mobile app (see above) is preferred.

## INSTRUCTIONS

**Tag Code.** Record the complete tag code for each monarch, as it appears on the tag. Note: codes have 4 letters & 3 numbers.

**Release Date.** Record the release date – month, day & year.

**M/F.** (Male/Female) Record the sex of the tagged butterfly; leave blank if unknown. See images below for guidance.

**R/W.** (Reared/Wild) Record whether the tagged adult monarch was **reared** (from the egg, larva, or pupa stage) or captured as a **wild** adult butterfly.

**Release Location.** Record the location as city, state (province), zip (postal) code and country (US/CAN).

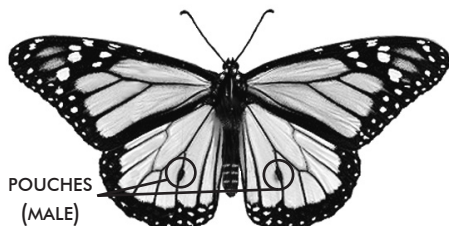
**You might find it easier to work with a partner, taking turns tagging and recording data.**

1. Carefully hold a monarch between your thumb and index finger along the leading edge of the butterfly's forewings (close to the body, not the tip) and locate the discal cell (large mitten-shaped cell on hindwings). See figure below for guidance.

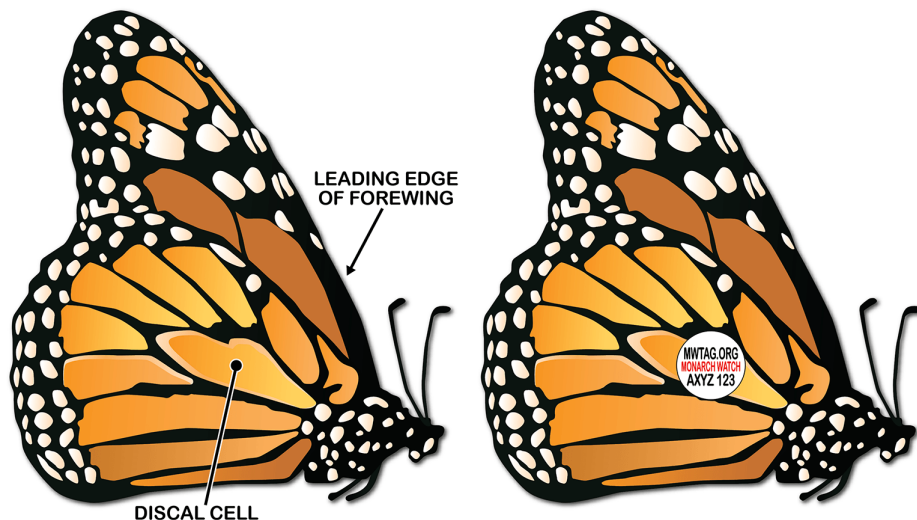
2. Record all data before removing a tag from the sheet.

3. Remove a tag from the sheet by its edge (a toothpick might be helpful), place it over the discal cell of either hindwing and carefully apply pressure to the tag from both sides of the butterfly (see figure below for placement) using your fingers. Press firmly for several seconds and release the butterfly – again, making sure all of the information is recorded first!

Try not to allow the tag to stick to any other surface, such as your finger, before applying it to the butterfly – to be most effective, the adhesive on the tag must be clean when applied to the wing.



It's pretty easy to tell a male monarch (above) from a female monarch (below) when you know what to look for.



**PROPER PLACEMENT OF MONARCH WATCH TAGS**