

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 southern 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 that exceed two billion individual butterflies. Throughout periods of sunshine, millions of butterflies will take flight from the roosts and sail to nearby stream banks to drink, then soar again into the air and eventually return that afternoon to their original roost on the surrounding trees. 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 midday, feeding on wildflowers (which amazingly bloom throughout the year at these elevations in Mexico), and watering at streams.

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 imaginable. Bring your best photographic equipment to record this miracle for your friends and relatives to marvel at when you return home!

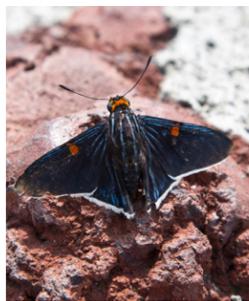
Photo by Ian Segebarth and Dain Van Schoyck

Meet your leader



Originally from Moscow, Andrei Sourakov is part of the graduate faculty at the University of Florida's Entomology &

Nematology Department, and since 2005 he has been the Collections Coordinator for the McGuire Center for Lepidoptera and Biodiversity at the Florida Museum of Natural History. He holds his PhD in Entomology from the University of Florida. Andrei has served as editor and is currently associate editor for the journal *Tropical Lepidoptera Research*, and he has been a board member of the Center for Systematic Entomology for over 10 years. His work has appeared in dozens of research journals and other publications.



ENROLL TODAY!

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MIGRATION OF THE MONARCH BUTTERFLIES IN MEXICO

February 17-22, 2018



LED
BY

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for Lepidoptera & Biodiversity
Florida Museum of Natural History*





2018 Itinerary

Subject to change

MEXICO CITY

FEB.
17

Individual arrivals into Mexico City. Upon arrival, you will be met and transferred to your hotel, situated near the historical district. This evening have a welcome dinner at the hotel and program orientation.

Overnight at Hotel Historico Central. (D)

ANGANGUEO

FEB.
18

This morning after a short exploration of Mexico City, have lunch at a local restaurant. Depart for the colonial town of Angangueo, located high in the mountains in the state of Michoacán, at approximately 8,400 feet in elevation and about 100 miles west of Mexico City. Check in at Hotel Don Bruno.



Overnight at Hotel Don Bruno. (BLD)

ANGANGUEO

FEB.
19

Located on a high mountain slope near Angangueo lies the Monarch site of El Rosario. Here we will visit our first Monarch colony and the one most generally accessible to the public. The journey begins with a taste of colonial Mexico as you walk along a path through a small market area where locals are selling foods and handicrafts. This large overwintering colony normally contains well over 100 million adult Monarchs and has an excellent trail system winding through the fir-covered slopes on which the colony is located. Additionally, there is a nearby stream where the butterflies may fly at midday to drink water. Trail horses are available to rent for the ride up the mountain if needed. Have a simple picnic lunch while enjoying this spectacular phenomenon and watch the butterflies go through their daily cycle of activities. At this time of year, they may take flight for an hour or more to secure water, nectar, etc., before returning to their roost on the tree limbs or trunks. In the late afternoon, return from the mountains by walking trail to the picturesque colonial town of Angangueo. You will have free time to enjoy the hotel gardens, walk and photograph the interesting scenes and people in this beautiful town, or to just relax in this peaceful setting.



Overnight at Hotel Don Bruno. (BLD)

ANGANGUEO

FEB.
20

After breakfast, ascend into the mountains again by walking trail 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 simple picnic lunch on hand, you 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. At the end of the day, visit the market at the site entrance to purchase monarch crafts and food if desired. Return to the Hotel Don Bruno for dinner.



Overnight at Hotel Don Bruno. (BLD)

MEXICO CITY

FEB.
21

After breakfast, depart for the Mexico City area and the pyramids at San Juan Teotihuacán. Have a delicious lunch at the pyramids before having the afternoon to explore this world-famous archaeological site. By late afternoon/early evening, transfer to Hotel Geneve for some time at leisure before a farewell group dinner.

Overnight at Hotel Geneve. (BLD)



MEXICO CITY/DEPARTURE

FEB.
22

This morning you will be transferred to the airport for your flight home. Breakfast will be included depending on your departure time. Please be aware that you need to be at the airport three hours ahead of your scheduled departure flight time. This goes for the flight to Mexico as well as on the way back. Please pay careful attention when you book your return flight, as a 7 am departure from Mexico City means that you will need to wake up at 3:30 am to get to the airport by 4 am. If you choose to make an early morning booking there is no problem in terms of getting you to the airport on time, but we want you to be aware of the three-hour check-in time.

(B)

More information

LAND COST:

\$1,675 per person (double occupancy)

Includes:

Accommodations (double occupancy), in-country transportation, meals and activities as listed in the itinerary.

Not included:

Items of a personal nature, flights, gratuities, alcoholic beverages, or trail horse rental (approximately \$5 each way).

ESTIMATED AIRFARE COST:

\$500-\$700 (round-trip)

Holbrook can assist with your flight arrangements if desired.

THE FINE PRINT:

Price is based on double occupancy; for a single room add \$400 per person. A completed enrollment form and \$200 deposit are required by Oct. 20, 2017 to hold your space on the trip. Non-refundable final payments are due in full by Nov. 14, 2017. Travel/trip cancellation insurance is strongly recommended. For more information, contact Travel Insured at 800-243-3174 or visit travelinsured.com. Holbrook Travel's agency number is 15849.

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 the colony site varies throughout the season, so hiking times and distances may vary.

MEALS:

A picnic lunch typically consists of peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and trail mix. If you have any food allergies, please be sure to note them clearly on your enrollment form.

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

Please note that during site visits, the days comprise walking around the butterfly sites on your own and photographing and watching butterflies. Please be prepared to be independent during butterfly watching. Bathroom access is at the base of the mountain and can be reached by walking or renting a horse. There are also vendors at the base selling food, beverages, and local crafts. Dressing in layers is important due to weather at mountain elevations.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

If you have questions about the physical activity level or any other aspects of the trip, please contact Lisa Palmese-Graubard at Holbrook Travel at 800-451-7111 x339 or lisa@holbrooktravel.com.