

THE SALINAS

# Weekend Californian

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## New suspected hantavirus case identified

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A monarch butterfly fitted with a BlüMorpho tag was photographed as it fed on nectar in 2025. The tiny solar-powered tag has revolutionized tracking of butterflies and other small animals. It was designed and is manufactured by Cellular Tracking Technologies in Rio Grande, New Jersey. SHELDON BLACKSHIRE/CELLULAR TRACKING TECHNOLOGIES

## Transmitters on monarchs are revolutionizing tracking

Paul A. Smith  
Milwaukee Journal Sentinel  
USA TODAY NETWORK - WISCONSIN

A transmitter small and light enough to fit on a butterfly and with a signal that can be picked up by smartphones is breaking barriers in wildlife science.

Several hundred of the BluMorpho tags were placed on monarch butterflies in fall 2025.

The tiny devices allowed scientists for the first time to follow the migration paths of individual monarchs from the United States and Canada to Mexico.

Now they are doing the same as the insects travel north.

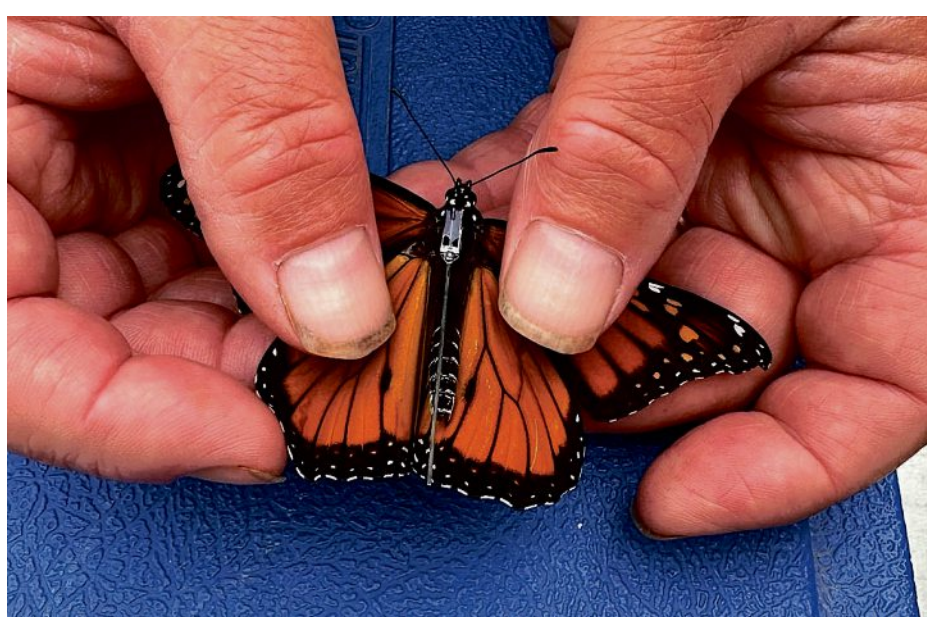
Although it's long been known the butterflies wintered in Mexico, the routes and the hundreds of stopover sites for individual monarchs had never been documented.

"Every detection is a window into something no scientist has ever been able to see before," said Sean Burcher, science director of Cape May Point Arts and Science Center in Cape May, New Jersey, where some of the monarchs were tagged. "These are the winter survivors, the founders of the next generation, and we're watching every step of their journey home."

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A monarch caterpillar feeds on a milkweed plant. PROVIDED BY CAPE MAY POINT ARTS AND SCIENCE CENTER



A monarch butterfly fitted with a BlüMorpho tag is held prior to release in 2025. PROVIDED BY CAPE MAY POINT ARTS AND SCIENCE CENTER

## What to know about the monarch butterfly

Paul A. Smith  
Milwaukee Journal Sentinel  
USA TODAY NETWORK - WISCONSIN

With their relatively large 3- to 4-inch wingspan and bold orange-and-black coloration, monarch butterflies are one of the most identifiable insects in Wisconsin.

Arguably one of the most popular, too.

But like many insects, monarchs have undergone a population decline in recent decades.

In December 2024 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced a proposed rule to list the monarch as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. The status of the proposal, including a special species assessment, is listed as "pending" and a deci-

sion isn't expected soon.

No matter the outcome, many conservation and environmental organizations are working to improve the future for monarchs.

Here's some additional information about monarch butterflies.

### A complex life cycle

Monarchs, like other butterflies and moths, undergo complete metamorphosis, meaning they have an egg, larva (caterpillar), pupa (chrysalis) and adult stage. The egg and caterpillar stages occur only on species of milkweed (genus *Asclepias*), whereas adults feed on the nectar of a variety of flowering plants.

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## Salinas City Councilman takes leave of absence

Roseann Cattani  
Salinas Californian  
USA TODAY NETWORK

The Salinas City Council approved Tuesday, May 5 an extended leave of absence for District 1 Councilman Jose Luis Barajas for medical reasons.

In an April 27 letter from Barajas's legal counsel to city manager, Rene Mendez and city attorney, Christopher Callihan the councilman requested to be excused through June 30. During that period, he would be under medical care and unable to perform public duties, including attending regular city council meetings.

Under section 6.3 of the city code, a council member who is absent from three consecutive regular meetings would be subject to removal from their seat unless it was approved by the city

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## What to know about Dia de la Madres or Mexican Mother's Day

McKenna Mobley  
Victorville Daily Press  
USA TODAY NETWORK

Many Californians celebrate Mother's Day twice, particularly those of Latin descent.

The U.S. tradition, which dates to 1908, honors moms around the nation on the second Sunday in May.

Dia de la Madres, or Mexican Mother's Day, is celebrated on May 10 each year, regardless of the day of the week. This year, the two holidays sync up on Sunday, May 10.

The first Mexican Mother's Day dates back to 1922, when Rafael Alducin, a journalist and founder of the

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