Monarch Breeding Station
Sponsored by the Garden Club of LBI

In the last 20 years, the population of monarch butterflies in the eastern United States has declined by more than 90 percent. Herbicides and loss of habitat are killing milkweed, the only plant on which females lay their eggs. This breeding station contains the two types of milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata* and *Asclepias tuberosa*) preferred by monarchs breeding in New Jersey. Here's what to look for:

**Stage 1: Egg (3-4 days)**
The tiny oval dots you see are actually monarch eggs. In about three days, a baby caterpillar will start to chew through the egg. Once he pokes his head out, he’ll turn around and eat the shell, a vital source of nutrients. When that is gone, milkweed becomes his only food source.

**Stage 2: Larva (10-14 days)**
The larva’s main job is to eat and eat and eat! As he grows, he’ll shed—and eat—his own skin five times!

**Stage 3: Pupa (10-14 days)**
When the larva is finished growing, it forms a chrysalis and begins the transformation from pupa to butterfly.

**Stage 4: Adult (2-5 weeks)**
At this stage, the chrysalis bursts and a beautiful monarch emerges. Adults will mate repeatedly over their life spans. The final generation of Eastern Monarchs that emerges in early fall will migrate to Mexico, where they will winter until it’s time to fly north and restart the cycle.