*[Start in “Iowa]* In Iowa, an adult monarch lays eggs *[egg group]* on a milkweed plant sometime in June. Once these eggs hatch, they will become caterpillars, or larvae *[caterpillar group]*, feeding on milkweed and rapidly growing in size. Once they are big enough, the caterpillars will enter the pupal stage and form a chrysalis *[chrysalis group]*. Then, an adult butterfly will emerge *[adult group]*, beginning the cycle once again: from egg *[egg group]* to caterpillar *[caterpillar group]* to chrysalis *[chrysalis group]* to an adult monarch.

Although we’ve only gone through the cycle twice, monarchs can go through up to 4 generations each summer; their lifespan is roughly 2-5 weeks. The last generation born in the summer is referred to as Generation 1; this is the generation that, around October, will either migrate west to Southern California or south to Mexico for the winter *[Adults move to either Southern California or Mexico]*. Considering these butterflies have never flown here before, it’s impressive that they all know where to go- right down to the specific trees they rest on.

When the weather starts warming up again in late March, the Generation 1 butterflies will mate in their overwintering grounds, then begin to fly northward *[Adults fly back to Iowa]*. As they fly, they lay eggs on milkweed plants *[egg group]*. These eggs will hatch, become caterpillars *[caterpillar group]*, form chrysalises *[chrysalis group]*, emerge as adults *[adult group]*, and join their parent’s migration northward. It will take 3-4 generations to make it back north, where the yearly cycle will begin again.