



# Monarch Health News

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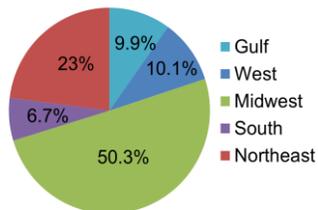
## 2012 Participants

56 observers

17 states

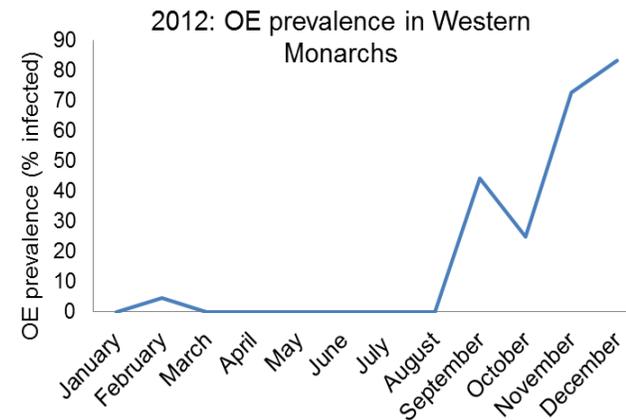
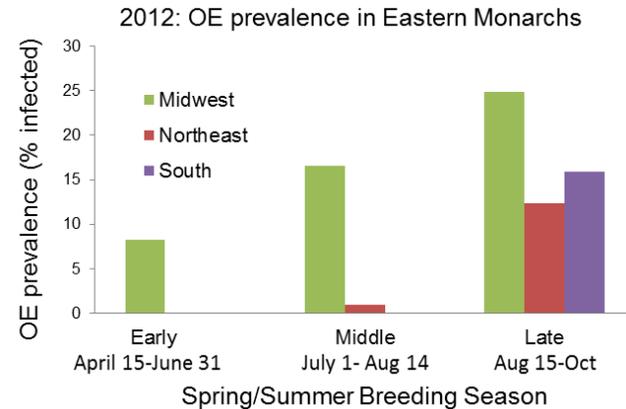
2 Canadian regions

1936 total samples



## Citizen scientists: 16% of eastern monarchs have *OE*

In the past seven years, *Monarch Health* citizen scientists have collected thousands of samples to test monarchs for the parasite *Ophryocystis elektroscirrha* (*OE*). **In spring and summer 2012, 16.6% of all monarchs sampled in eastern North America were infected with *OE*.** This is slightly higher than in 2011, when 11.2% of eastern monarchs sampled were infected with this debilitating parasite. *Monarch Health* data show consistent annual trends in *OE* prevalence, which tends to increase from early to late in the summer-breeding season and to decrease in the spring after migration (see top graph). **In the western U.S., 15.3% of monarchs were infected with *OE* in 2012.** The western samples also show a trend of increasing *OE* prevalence later in the year (see bottom graph). Monarchs found in the Gulf region (not shown) consistently show a very high *OE* prevalence throughout the entire breeding season. For 2012, 62.8% of all Gulf monarchs sampled were heavily infected with *OE*.



Thank you to all our citizen scientists who participated in *Monarch Health* 2012! Your contributions help us understand how this disease affects monarchs over geography and time. We look forward to working with you this coming season! Kits are still available.

## Recent awards and research in the Altizer lab



Our research assistants, Hannah Blakeslee (L), Jennifer Kukharchuk (M), and Han Nguyen (R) presented a summary of *Monarch Health* data from 2006-2012 at the Odum School of Ecology Graduate Student Symposium and won second place for their research poster!



In February, the Altizer lab collaborated with scientists at WWF-Mexico and the University of Minnesota to sample 1450 overwintering monarchs in Mexico for *OE*. We found that 7.8% were infected with *OE*, in contrast to the 16.6% (above) found to be infected before migration.