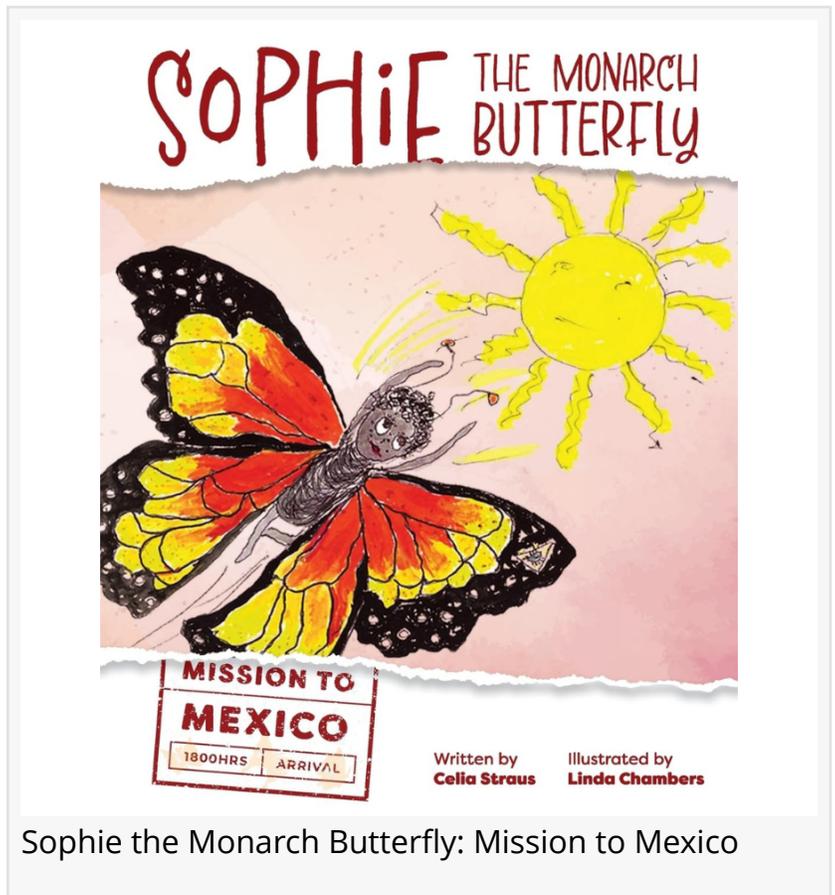


Milkweed, Migration, and Magic: “Sophie” Spreads Wings Against Monarch Butterfly Extinction

In “Sophie the Monarch Butterfly,” a tiny hero’s migration adventure teaches kids about self-empowerment and saving a species.

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, August 1, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The recent release of data showing a 33% reduction in Monarch Butterfly populations due to the use of Roundup on milkweed, their only food source, underscores the urgent need for awareness and action. This alarming decline highlights the fragility of ecosystems and the unintended consequences of human activities on wildlife. Milkweed, essential for Monarch caterpillars, is often treated as a weed in agricultural settings, leading to its widespread elimination.



Sophie the Monarch Butterfly: Mission to Mexico

In response to this crisis, author Celia Straus presents “Sophie the Monarch Butterfly: Mission to Mexico,” a children’s book that not only entertains but educates and inspires young readers about this critical environmental issue. Straus’s work serves as a bridge between scientific facts and young imaginations, using storytelling to cultivate empathy and understanding for these endangered insects.

In “Sophie the Monarch Butterfly: Mission to Mexico,” Straus takes readers on an adventure with Sophie, a small Monarch Butterfly born with a magical eye in her wing that acts as a compass. This unique feature symbolizes the real-life navigational abilities of Monarchs, which scientists are still working to fully understand. When the Monarch Butterflies become lost during their annual migration from North America to the mountains of Mexico, Sophie steps up to lead them. This migration, spanning up to 3,000 miles, is one of the most remarkable phenomena in the

insect world.

Sophie's journey mirrors the real-life challenges faced by Monarch Butterflies. Despite facing predators like birds and insects, habitat destruction due to urbanization and climate change, and herbicide poisoning that affects their food sources, Sophie's perseverance, courage, and self-belief guide the group to safety. Through Sophie's adventures, young readers learn about the life cycle of Monarchs, their crucial role in pollination, and the interconnectedness of ecosystems.

Complementing the narrative are Linda Chambers' charming illustrations. Her unique style blends realism with whimsy, bringing Sophie's adventure to life with vibrant colors and distinct

character depictions. Chambers' artwork shines in scenes like the monarchs' stay in Mexico's Oyamel trees and enhances the educational aspect by incorporating visual cues of changing seasons. The illustrations strike a perfect balance, presenting predators in a slightly mischievous yet non-menacing manner, creating an immersive experience that captivates young readers while reinforcing the book's important environmental message.

“

An enchanting story for young readers. Its unique illustrations and touching message make it a perfect blend of education and inspiration.”

Reader Views

Reflecting on the inspiration behind the book, Straus noted, “This story explores what it takes to believe in yourself and take the lead when the welfare of others is at stake. It's also a tale of one of our most endangered species, Monarch Butterflies, and their inspiring and courageous annual migration.” Straus's words underscore

the dual purpose of the book: to empower young readers while simultaneously educating them about a pressing environmental issue.

By weaving scientific facts into an engaging narrative, Straus creates a powerful tool for environmental education. The book not only raises awareness about the plight of Monarch Butterflies but also encourages children to take an active interest in conservation efforts. It serves as a starting point for discussions about biodiversity, the impact of human activities on nature, and the importance of preserving habitats for all species.



Celia Straus, Author

The release of "Sophie the Monarch Butterfly: Mission to Mexico" has sparked enthusiasm among educators, parents, and environmentalists. Here's a glimpse into some early feedback on the book:

"With its heartfelt message emphasizing the significance of monarch butterflies and their conservation, this book will strike a chord with older children aged 8-12, encouraging a deeper understanding and appreciation for ecological issues."
– Reader Views

"'Sophie the Monarch Butterfly: Mission to Mexico' by Celia Straus has broad appeal. I definitely want to recommend this book to children looking to build their confidence (particularly small girls) as well as young readers who are interested in insects (especially butterflies), STEM, and caring for the environment." – Elizabeth Upshur, Poet/Writer

"I think young readers will find inspiration to remain confident in their abilities through Sophie. Far too often children are made to doubt themselves and their abilities, so it is important to have characters that show them the value of believing in themselves and working with their strengths. Everyone can be a valuable leader and part of the community, just like Sophie."
– Leslie Anne Smith, Reviewer

"I adore books that encourage kids to challenge the status quo. Sophie, lower on the totem pole of power, isn't afraid to rock that proverbial boat. When her pleas to help are discounted and rejected, she doesn't surrender;



Linda Chambers, Illustrator



Five Star Accolades

Sophie finds another way to show the butterflies what she is made of. This emphasizes believing in ourselves, even if no one else does. After Sophie's journey reveals her strength and resilience, young readers will feel more empowered and confident about tackling challenges." – Stephanie Elizabeth Long, Writer/Reviewer

[Now available at local bookstores and online retailers](#), SOPHIE THE MONARCH BUTTERFLY: MISSION TO MEXICO (ISBN 978-1923020337, Leschenault Press, 2024) offers a captivating 42-page adventure that combines entertainment with education. This book stands as a testament to the power of self-belief and environmental stewardship, providing young readers with a narrative that is as much about personal growth as it is about ecological awareness.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Celia Straus has written hundreds of shows for television and film, most recently receiving a National Emmy nomination for Kids Speak Out, <https://kidspeakout.me/> a YouTube series featuring conversations with children worldwide about their lives in partnership with the United Nations. She has garnered Cine Golden Eagles and industrial film festival gold and silver awards as script-writer for Discovery, History Channel, and PBS, among many others. From 2012 to 2018, she was the creator/writer of the National Emmy Award Winning Memorial Day Concert, broadcast annually on PBS. She also created and wrote the Anti-Defamation League's Concert Against Hate performed at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts accompanied by the National Symphony Orchestra for a number of years. She co-produced and wrote Our Blue Planet, a concert recognizing rivers of the world with images by NASA and Nat Geo at the Kennedy Center on April 5th, 2023.

Her poetry trilogy for middle school-age girls included the national bestsellers, Prayers On My Pillow, More Prayers On My Pillow and The Mother Daughter Circle, a trilogy devoted to fostering resilience and courage in girls encountering trauma and confusion, Ballantine Books 1998, 2000, 2003. On military topics she has written the books, Hidden Battles on Unseen Fronts, Stories of American Soldiers with PTSD and TBI, Casemate, 2009, When Warriors Come Home and Pathfinder Pioneer, The Memoir of a WWII Bomber Pilot, both published by Casemate, 2017.

Working with various illustrators she writes children's picture books, including three BoBo and Iris books about an orphaned baby elephant in Kenya, Livy Little Honey Bee, Red Pandas Journey to Sikkim and Sophie, the Monarch Butterfly, Mission to Mexico, all published by Leschenault Press. Royalties from these books are donated to not-for-profit organizations supporting endangered species. She holds a BA in English from the University of Virginia and an MA with post graduate work towards her PhD in English from Georgetown University. She lives in Washington, D.C with her husband.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Linda Chambers has been involved in the theatre and film/video business as an actress, a

director, a producer, and a production coordinator, but primarily, as a writer. While living in New York, she began writing short stories and an epic fantasy novel, then put both away to earn a living. She did that by writing everything else: plays, screenplays, how-to videos, industrial, commercial, government and college recruitment films.

Back in her hometown of Baltimore, Maryland, she added teaching to her resume: screenwriting and playwriting on both the high school and college level, and began directing productions in community and academic theatres.

Her passion for the epic fantasy novel she dreamed of completing so long ago returned. Book One of "The Swords of Ialmorgia" is available on Amazon Kindle and work has begun on Book Two. Her passion for short stories also returned, and are included in award winning anthologies published by Cat & Mouse Press: "The Ginger" in Sandy Paws (Second Place Award from the National Federation of Press Women) and "The Ship To Grey Havens" in Beach Mysteries (First Place Award from the NFPW). She has also had her work published in two of Fae Corps Publishing's horror anthologies, "The Dormer" and "The Dark Ride".

Three of her children's plays have been produced: "The Princess Adventures," a new take on princesses and their nemeses; "Little Red," where both Little Red Riding Hood and Little Wolf find a connection, and a philosophical vision of Jack & The Beanstalk. She is currently at work on a reimagining of "The Emperor's New Clothes". She has also written screenplays for the Young Filmmakers Workshop.

Linda is working as writer and director with actress Janel Bosies to bring Mary Harris (union organizer "Mother Jones") to life on both stage and screen in a one-woman production entitled "Let The Fight Go On."

A few years ago Linda became fascinated with butterflies and began visiting habitats and taking photographs of them. The photographs evolved into a series of works of art, "Fancy Butters." This led directly to her collaboration with Celia Straus on "Sophie The Monarch Butterfly: Mission to Mexico!", her first work as illustrator.

LEARN MORE

For additional information about Celia Straus and her work, visit: <https://www.celiastraus.com/>.

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