



**OKLAHOMA CLIMATOLOGICAL SURVEY
NEWS RELEASE**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 9, 2006

The Migration of Royalty
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NORMAN - You may have noticed the increasing presence of Monarch butterflies over the past few days. This is no accident, for two reasons:

1. Early October is the peak autumn migration time through this part of the country. Monarchs are programmed to get out of colder climates and into Mexico and California during the weeks surrounding the autumnal equinox.
2. These kings and queens of the butterfly world are also programmed to use wind currents to their advantage. And that's where we get interested!

During southerly wind regimes (like the one that brought us warm weather last week), they abandon long-distance travel and flutter about near the ground, collecting vital fuel from nature's dwindling food supplies. Think about it: on what kind of fall day do you picture butterflies in the garden? Pleasant-to-warm days, right? These are usually associated with southerly winds.

With this week's coming cold air invasion, winds will shift to a northerly flow. The monarchs will soar upon the currents, using very little precious energy while the atmosphere does all the work.

So, after the cold front passes, look upward instead of downward. Chances are that you'll eventually see at least one squadron of the Lepidopteran Royal Air Force at cruising altitude.