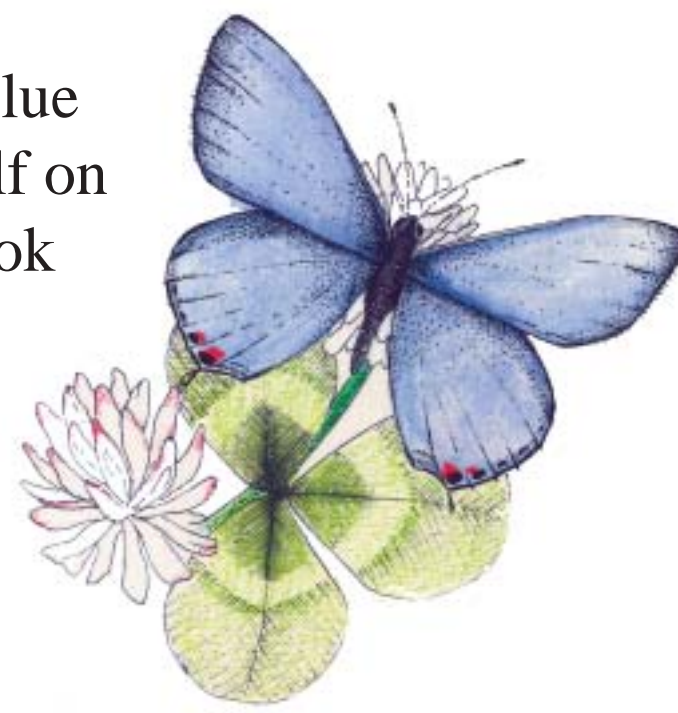


Butterflies--The Flying Flowers of Our Gardens



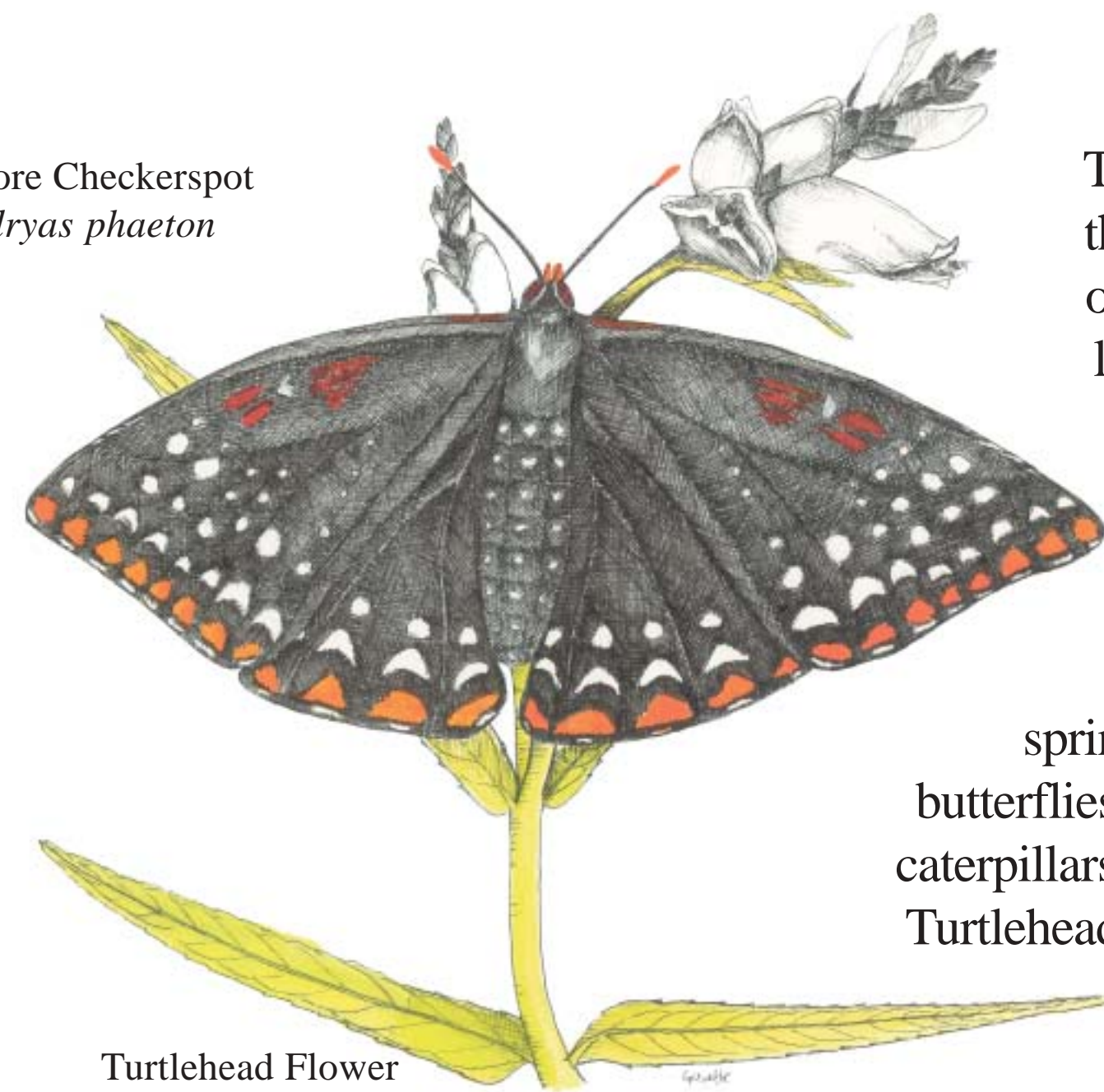
Butterflies are important and often forgotten pollinators. They bring beauty and fruitfulness to our gardens.

The tiny Eastern Tailed Blue Butterfly likes to sun itself on clover and shortgrass. Look for it in open areas.



Eastern Tailed Blue
Everes comyntas

Baltimore Checkerspot
Euphydryas phaeton



Turtlehead Flower
Chelone glabra

The Baltimore Checkerspot Butterfly is a threatened species in Iowa. Heritage Farm is one of the few places in the state where they live. The adults hatch in June, then mate. Females lay their eggs on Turtlehead plants. Caterpillars emerge from the eggs and feed on their host plant. When nearly half-grown, they hibernate for the winter. They resume feeding the next spring, pupate and metamorphose into adult butterflies later that summer. Baltimore Checkerspot caterpillars are specialist feeders and depend on Turtlehead plants to survive.

Some butterflies can become pests. The European Cabbage Butterfly was introduced into North America in 1860. Its green caterpillar eats cabbage and other crucifer leaves.

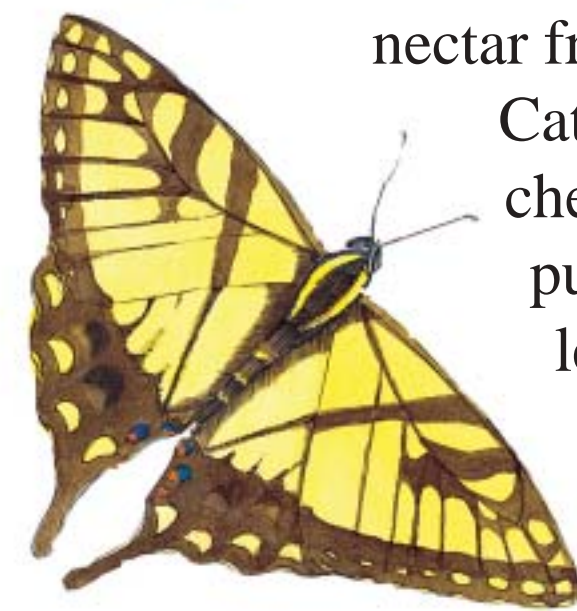


European Cabbage Butterfly
Pieris rapae

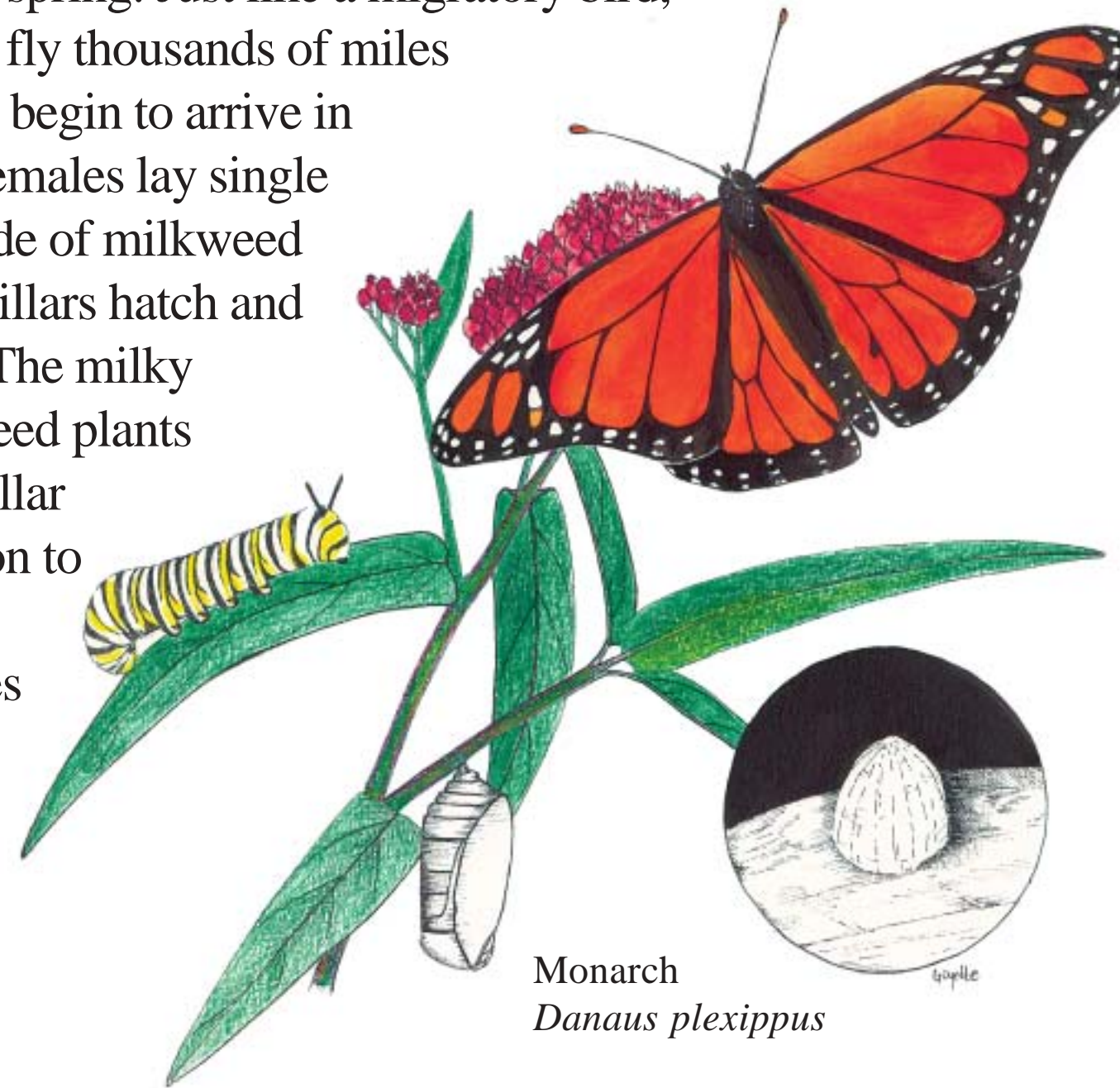


Tiger Swallowtail
Papilio glaucus

Like many butterflies, Tiger Swallowtails depend on different species of plants at different stages of their lives. The Tiger Swallowtails sip nectar from Canadian thistles. Caterpillars feed on wild cherry tree leaves. A Tiger pupa coils cherry tree leaves around its silken mat, giving the pupa more protection from predators.

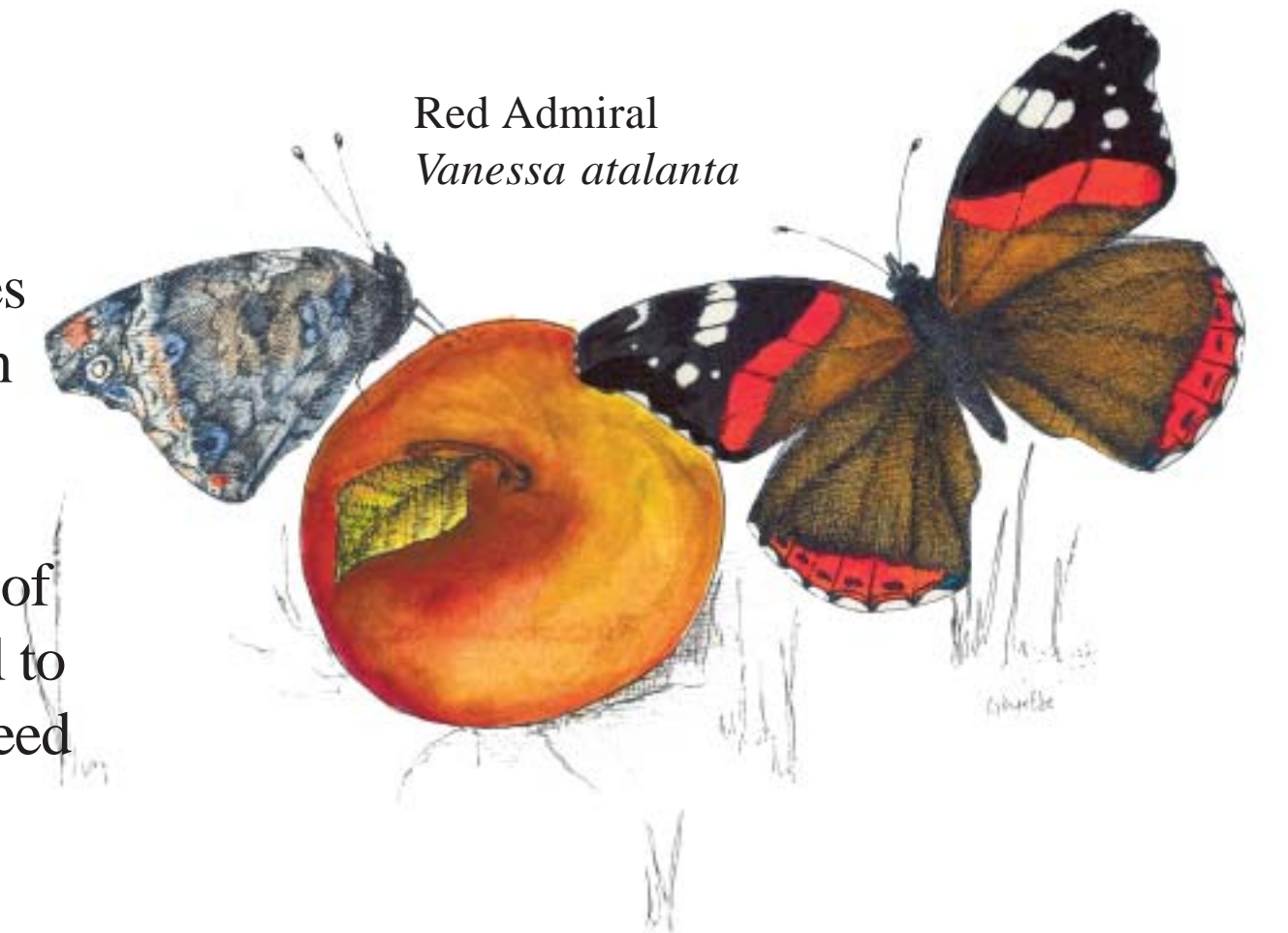


The Monarch Butterfly is our only butterfly that migrates south in the fall and north in the spring. Just like a migratory bird, these fragile insects fly thousands of miles each fall. Monarchs begin to arrive in Iowa in May. The females lay single eggs on the underside of milkweed plant leaves. Caterpillars hatch and feed on the leaves. The milky substance in milkweed plants is toxic. The caterpillar passes the toxicity on to the butterfly. While milkweed toxin does not harm Monarch caterpillars or butterflies, it protects them both from predators.



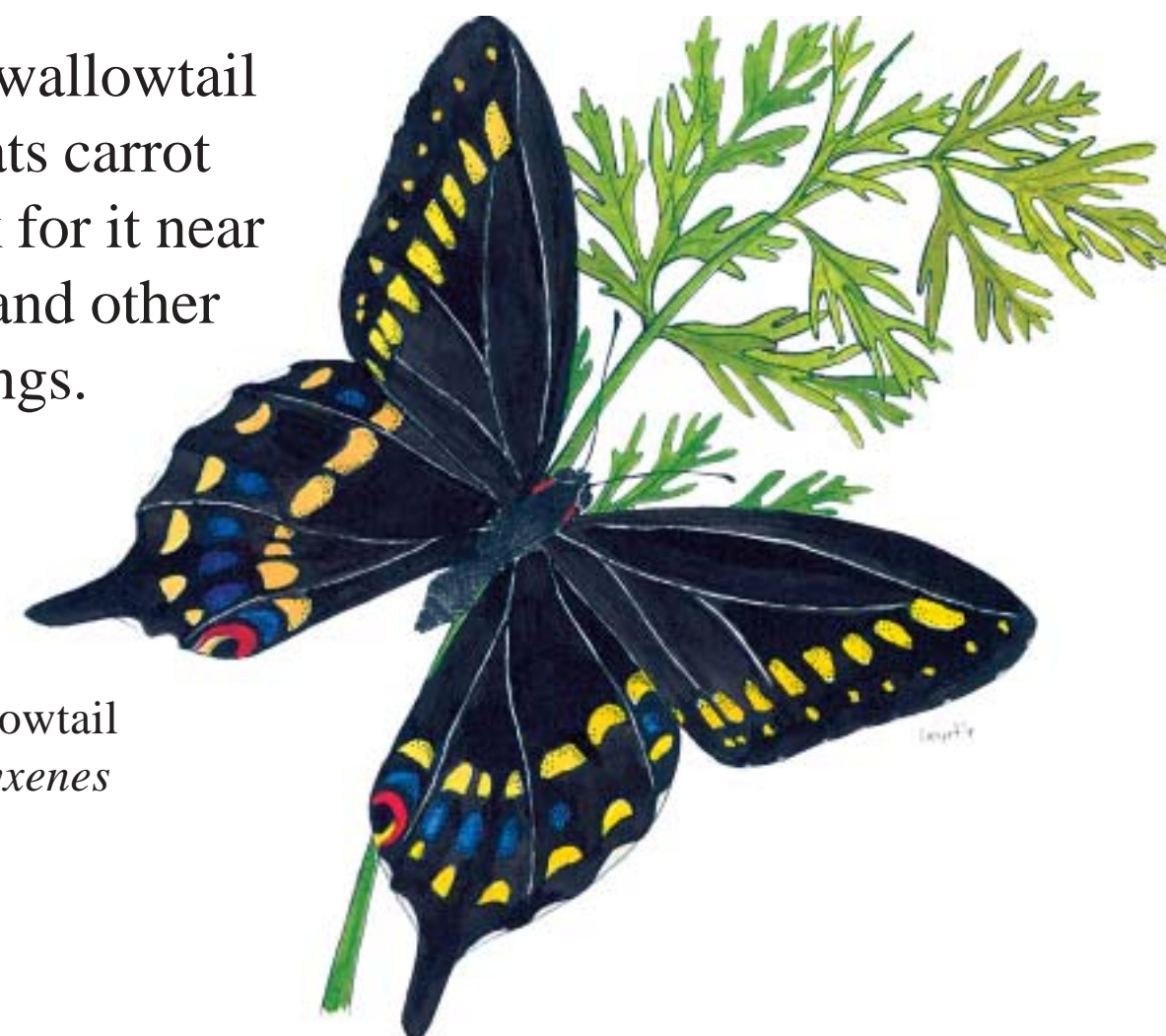
Monarch
Danaus plexippus

Red Admiral butterflies sometimes hatch out in large numbers in this area. Adults sip nectar from flowers or juices of rotting fruit from April to October. Caterpillars feed on nettles.



Red Admiral
Vanessa atalanta

The Black Swallowtail caterpillar eats carrot leaves. Look for it near the gardens and other sunny openings.



Black Swallowtail
Papilio polyxenes

The Giant Swallowtail is our largest butterfly. Sporting a five-inch wingspan, this "hang glider" likes zinnia nectar. Look for it near the zinnias in August.



Giant Swallowtail
Papilio cresphontes