



In the autumn our woodland has become a grand bouquet of brilliant colors. The reds and yellows of the maples and russets and wines of the oaks glow against the dark green of an occasional stand of hemlock. In the deciduous trees, the green layer of food-producing chlorophyll has faded and left the leaves to revert to the colors that lie beneath—each species of tree true to its own coloration.

The gray-green pods of the **common milkweed** (*Asclepias syriaca*) are shaking out their silky white fluff on

every breeze. Orange-and-black **monarch butterflies** (*Danaus plexippus*), once anchored to the undersides of the tough milkweed leaves as pale green-and-gold pupae, congregate in the brisk fall air and prepare to fly south for the winter.

Soon, with the cooler weather, the songs of the insects will be stilled. A few birds will remain in our woodland throughout the winter, but flocks of others have already begun their migration southward.