

YOU
ARE
HERE



WildTech^{DNA}

You're on expedition in the wilds of Mexico with world-renowned scientists and explorers

Why? Because you helped us develop the technology wildlife protectors need. On your 4 or 7-day exclusive expedition, you'll be immersed in Mexico's most iconic ecological and cultural settings and contribute to the ground-breaking research that earned one of your guides the title of the "Batman of Mexico".

TAKE ME TO

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YOUR GUIDES

Dr Rodrigo Medellín



Senior Professor of Ecology at the Institute of Ecology, University of Mexico, National Geographic Explorer At Large and the original Batman of Mexico (featured in the BBC documentary of the same title). Dr Rodrigo Medellín has worked on the ecology and conservation of mammalian species for over 40 years. He founded the Program for the Conservation of the Bats of Mexico and is the Founding Director of the Latin American Network for Bat Conservation.

Dr Natalie Schmitt



Marine ecologist, conservation geneticist, and documentary presenter for both Discovery Channel and Nat Geo Wild. Dr Natalie Schmitt has a long history of deep passion and dedication to protecting biodiversity through hard science, public education and community conservation. She's worked side-by-side with Antarctic blue whales, snow leopards and New Zealand's subantarctic sea lions and she's the lead scientist behind WildTechDNA's species detection kit.

Eduardo Rendón



Deputy Director of the Terrestrial Ecosystem Program of the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Mexico. Eduardo has worked on Monarch Butterfly conservation since 1993, focusing on the systematic monitoring of monarch hibernation. His work aided in the management, restoration and conservation of the overwintering habitats of this iconic species. Now, he monitors the monarch's migration to establish conservation schemes and protect its migratory route.

Our wildlife is in danger

You've heard the statistics before... we lose up to 150 species every day. But, behind the numbers there's another story. One where an army of muddy-booted researchers, customs officers, community groups, kids and teachers, work to save our wildlife. They fight illegal trade, habitat loss and disease for the benefit of everyone and they do it with the same tools we've used for decades. Isn't it time we gave them something new?



THE FACTS

PERSIAN LEOPARD

Endangered

Fewer than 871-1,290 mature individuals left and declining² – poaching, human encroachment, and habitat fragmentation main causes.

ASIATIC CHEETAH

Critically endangered

Fewer than 50 individuals remaining³ – hunting, land-use change, habitat degradation and fragmentation, and desertification contributed to the decline.

BLACK RHINO

Critically endangered

5,500 left⁴ – threats include habitat changes, illegal poaching (main threat), and competing species.

SNOW LEOPARD

Vulnerable

<10000 left⁵ – main threats are poaching and illegal trade in skin and bone, fragmentation of habitat, loss of natural prey and retribution killings for attacking livestock.

¹ UN Convention on Biological Diversity
²⁻⁵ IUCN Red List

THE WILDTECHDNA Species detection kit

We're developing a new, paper-based technology that will identify species in the field 144 times faster and 20 times cheaper than the best conventional lab test.



SIMPLE

Almost as simple as a pregnancy test



QUICK

Results in around 30 minutes



AFFORDABLE

Costs around \$1 per test



ACCESSIBLE

No specialist training needed



ACCURATE

As accurate as conventional lab tests



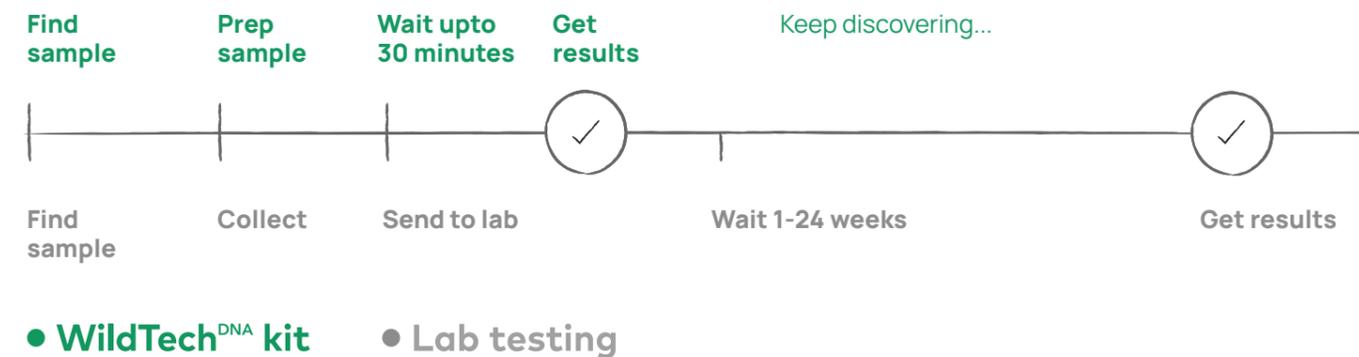
PORTABLE

Fits in the palm of your hand

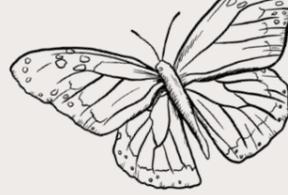


Testing timeline

FIELD VS LAB



4-DAY EXPEDITION



Monarch butterfly celebration & discovery trip



Every winter, a spectacular natural phenomena plays out in the mountains west of Mexico City. As the cold draws in, millions of Monarch butterflies head high up into the temperate forests to huddle together on the branches of oyamel fir trees and protect themselves from the extremes of the season's weather.

On this 5-day expedition, you'll work your way from Mexico City to the Monarch's winter home. Guided by two of the world's top conservation biologists, you'll explore the region's natural history, unique cuisine, invigorating culture and captivating archaeology. All while uncovering the bat friendly Mezcal responsible for saving many of Mexico's (and Rodrigo's) much-loved bat species.

DAY ONE

You meet Nat and Rodrigo in Mexico City and head out to sample the finest authentic Mexican cuisine at Las Mercedes – a unique restaurant famed for its traditional Chile en Nogada. Post-dinner, Rodrigo gives a talk on the conflict between bats and tequila and you sample a few choice distills from the 'Bat Friendly' range before being escorted to Hotel Camino Real Polanco – an icon of modernist architecture.

DAY TWO

You enjoy a buffet breakfast at the hotel before your first trek – a 50 minute climb through the fir forest of El Rosario sanctuary where you'll catch your first glimpse of a monarch colony. You pause among the monarchs for a talk by Nat and Rodrigo, who explain the area's unique ecology. On the return journey, you take in the culture, food and music of the local area before checking in to Rancho Cumbre Monarca hotel for dinner and a talk on Mexico's enchanting megadiversity.

DAY THREE

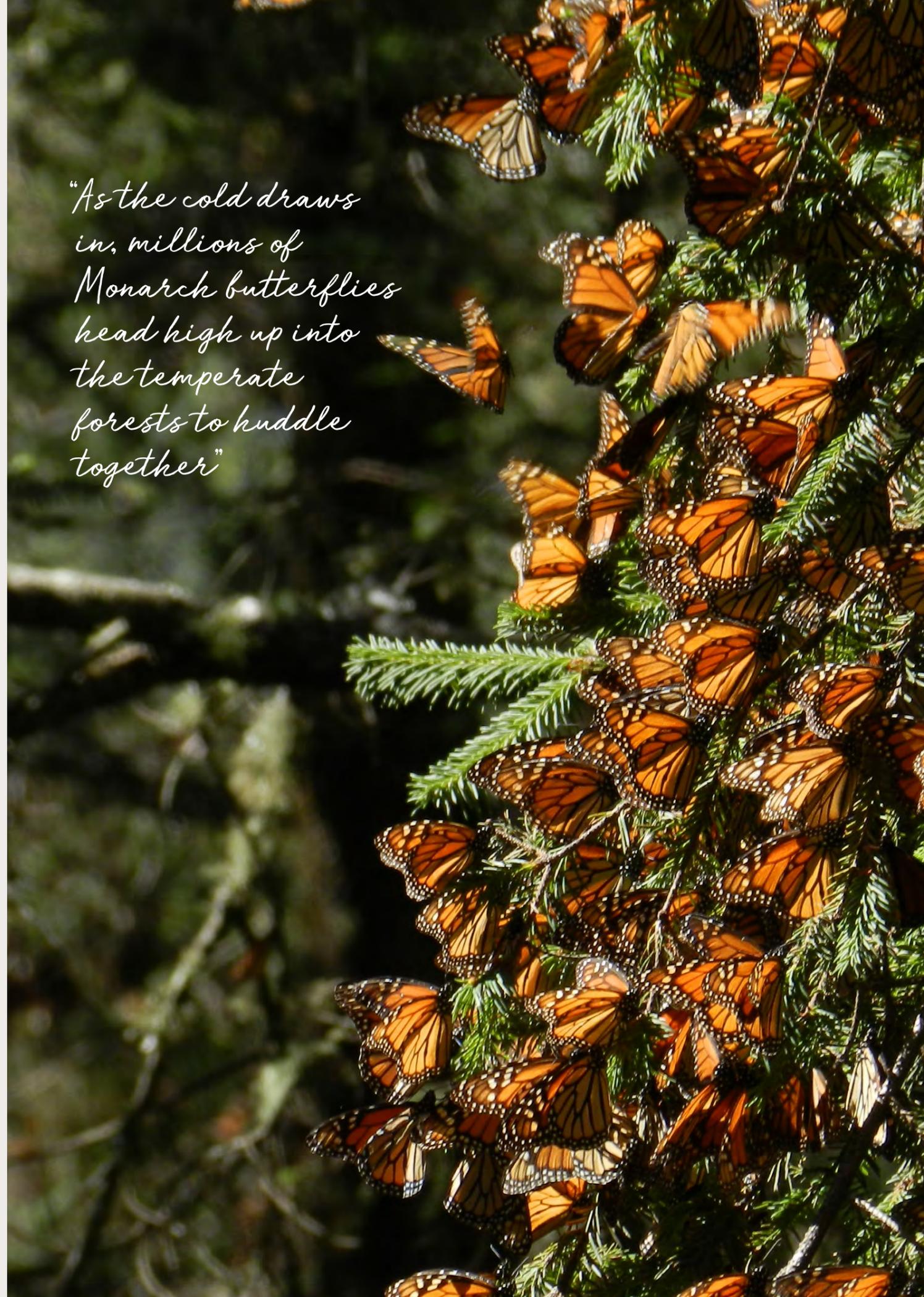
After an early start, you're driven to Chincua where you climb on horseback to your second monarch sanctuary. After a traditional lunch at the visitor centre, you're driven to Anganguero where you experience the local culture before heading back to the hotel. There's just enough time after dinner to reflect on your encounters with an evening talk, led by Nat, on how we can unite to save our incredible biodiversity.

DAY FOUR

Today, you visit a local tree nursery that supplies the Monarch butterfly forest reforestation project. You're joined by monarch conservation expert and WWF researcher, Eduardo Rendón who gives a talk among the seedlings. After enjoying a farewell lunch at La Escondida Restaurant, you travel to the Camino Real hotel in Mexico City to prepare for your departure the following morning.

*Itineraries subject to change

"As the cold draws in, millions of Monarch butterflies head high up into the temperate forests to huddle together"



7-DAY EXPEDITION

Tropical biodiversity research trip



The culture and traditions of the ancient Maya are woven throughout the Yucatan Peninsula like an intricate tapestry. Thanks to its physical isolation, the region – which is nestled between two seas in Mexico's easternmost corner – retains remnants of ancient cities and ecosystems that teem with abundant and unique plant and animal life. To Rodrigo, the "Batman of Mexico", it holds special significance as the home of 29 of the country's enigmatic bat species.

During this one-off ecotourism experience, you'll explore the Yucatan and assist Rodrigo with his bat monitoring work. You'll navigate the caves and Mayan tombs they call home and witness the bat volcano in Calakmul Biosphere Reserve which sits at the heart of the second largest rainforest in the Americas. With Nat's guidance, you'll set up camera traps along major game trails to check for the presence of jaguars and collect data that will provide a lasting contribution to conservation efforts.

DAY ONE

You meet Nat and Rodrigo in Cancun airport and head south to one of the Riviera Maya's beautiful beach-side hotels, Zoetry Paraiso de la Bonita. You enjoy a relaxing ocean swim and sample traditional Mayan cuisine before Rodrigo introduces you to his world-renown bat research.



DAY TWO

Indulge in a morning of leisure, spa sessions or snorkeling on the Mesoamerican reef – the 2nd largest in the world. After lunch in the hotel's renowned restaurant, you're driven to Akalki hotel, Bacalar Lagoon, where you stay in one of its celebrated bungalows, carefully poised over the turquoise waters.

DAY THREE

You spend the morning enjoying the seven color lagoon of Bacalar and the hotel's luxurious facilities. Well-rested, you meet with Rodrigo and the rest of the group for a talk on the biodiversity of this Maya heritage land. As evening draws in, you travel to Kantemoh and the Cave of the Serpents. Here, you observe the blind fish, eels and isopods that call it home and the bats and snakes that hide in its crevices. You join a local Mayan family for an intimate dinner before making your way back to the hotel for a comfortable night's sleep.



DAY FOUR

You wake to the sounds of wildlife and spend the morning exploring the lagoon at Akalki. After lunch you head to Hotel Puerta Calakmul, an ecological retreat tucked away in the Calakmul Biosphere Reserve. As darkness sets in, you venture to "El Volcán de los Murciélagos" to witness 3 millions bats emerge from the cave into the waiting grip of bat falcons, grey hawks and brown jays.

DAY FIVE

After breakfast at Hotel Puerta Calakmul, you choose between a morning of pool-side R&A or a walk-and-talk in the forest with Nat and Rodrigo. Later, you leave for Hormiguero Mayan archaeological site to rendezvous with Rodrigo's crew. Here, they study the carnivorous *Vampyrum* spectrum that lives within the ruins. You venture inside a tomb to collect samples of the bat's leftover prey and help the team set up mist nets to capture and tag the bats with miniature GPS trackers – work that will help map their migration routes.

DAY SIX

You leave the hotel after breakfast carrying a lunch prepared by its gourmet chefs. Your destination is Calakmul, a spectacular Mayan archaeological site where hundreds of temples and structures are completely embedded in the tropical rainforest matrix. It's home to howler and spider monkeys, ocellated turkeys, many species of parrot and one of Mexico's core jaguar populations. With Nat's help, you set up camera traps along key game trails in the hope of capturing a glimpse of this elusive species. After lunch on-site, you're driven back to the hotel to reflect and relax.

DAY SEVEN

You head out early to check the camera traps at Calakmul before moving on to Tulum in the Riviera Mata. Here, you enjoy an afternoon of sun and ocean from your luxurious beach hotel. In the evening, you join Nat for a talk on the challenges and opportunities faced by conservation and how you can get involved.



What's next?

Save one of 24 expedition spots by donating to our research. Your gift will help us develop the technology wildlife protectors need.

THE PROCESS

- 1 Tell us you're interested**
Send us an email to get more information about our expeditions
- 2 Claim one of just 24 spots**
Donate your deposit and we'll save a space on your chosen trip
- 3 Prepare for your trip**
Connect with our partners, Ecotours De Mexico, who'll help you get expedition-ready

QUESTIONS? *TALK TO NAT*
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@WildTechDNA



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