



# Atala Chapter News

SUMMER/FALL 2002

**OFFICERS:**

*President*, Teri Jabour  
tleaj@earthlink.net  
561/848-4930  
*Vice-President*, Kathy Malone  
zlongwing@aol.com  
*Secretary and Newsletter Editor*,  
Alana Edwards  
edwards\_alana@hotmail.com  
*Treasurer*, Lana Edwards  
atala@prodigy.net

**HOTLINE:** 561/706-6732

**WEBPAGE:** www.naba.org/  
chapters/nabaac/index.html



Do you know this butterfly??  
**Answer on Page 2**

**Inside this issue:**

<i>Upcoming Meetings</i>	3
<i>Upcoming Field Trips</i>	3
<i>Special Events</i>	4
<i>Palm Beach County's Treasured Natural Areas</i>	2
<i>Miami Blue Update</i>	4
<i>Plant Society Day— Summer 2003</i>	5
<i>Butterfly Meadows at the Museums and Nature Cen- ter of Crane Point</i>	6

## Vanishing Caterpillars

 by Anne Kilmer

"Where do my caterpillars go?" they ask, sadly, as if they fear that the story has a sad ending.

But, indeed, the story has no ending at all ... like all stories, it is only a beginning. You could consider that the purpose of a caterpillar, like the purpose of a person, is to spread delight and to enjoy this wonderful world.

As it chances, caterpillars are delicious, nutritious, and essential to the diet of many of the other folks on this planet. Birds eat them, lizards eat them, wasps eat them, ants eat them, and in some cases, we eat them ourselves.

This is actually a good thing, because there are so many caterpillars that, if nobody ate them, they'd eat the earth bare and cover

it several feet thick. Quick.

Out of every 200 butterfly eggs, they tell me, one grows up to be a butterfly. That doesn't mean that

lucky one is special, either. Surely it is as high a calling to serve as dinner for the mockingbird, and inspire his songs, as it is to dance about the flowers and inspire the poets.

But perhaps your fine fat caterpillar is not dead after all, although yes, that would be all right. Perhaps it has only gone walkabout.



*Gulf Fritillary caterpillar on  
Passionvine*

*(continued on page 5)*

## High-altitude butterflies of the Pakistan-China Border

 David Spencer Smith

Until recently, access to the Hunza valley in the Karakoram (Western Himalaya) of northern Pakistan was very difficult, and knowledge of butterflies minimal. This region includes the world's greatest concentration of high mountains, many to over 25,000ft, and isolation of butterfly populations has led to the

evolution of many new forms. The opening of a route into China across the Khunjerab Pass has facilitated biological research. From 1994 to 1999 I carried out field work on butterflies annually in Hunza and several side valleys. In 2000 I led a

*(continued on page 5)*

## Palm Beach County's Treasured Natural Areas—by Matthew King & Ann Mathews

Where can you go in Palm Beach County to see and hear birds singing, see native plants in their natural environment, and butterflies busily looking for food? How about one of the several natural areas owned by Palm Beach County. In 1991 and 1999, county voters approved a total of \$250 million in bond funds for the purchase and management of lands for conservation purposes. To date, over 27,000 acres of Palm Beach County's last wild places have been acquired. These range from the fourteen-acre Rosemary Scrub Natural Area in Boynton Beach to the over 11,000-acre Loxahatchee Slough Natural Area in central Palm Beach County. These gems are managed by the County's Department of Environmental Resources Management (ERM) for the express purpose of preserving and enhancing the rare and diverse natural ecosystems, which can include removing invasive non-native vegetation to conducting periodic prescribed fires. Some of

the diverse ecosystems that can be found at the various natural areas include pine flatwoods, tidal swamps, hammock, scrub, and wetlands.

These lands are open to the public for passive, resource-based recreation, environmental education and scientific research. Currently, there are twenty-two natural areas in various stages of development, of which to date, seven have public use facilities (small parking lot, bicycle rack, nature trail, kiosk...). The natural areas with public use facilities are open from sunrise to sunset, seven days a week, including holidays. For a free copy of ERM's *Guide to Palm Beach County's Natural Areas*, which contains information on the seven natural areas with public-use facilities, please contact ERM at (561) 233-2400.

or go to [http://www.co.palm-beach.fl.us/erm/home/brochures/na\\_mailout.pdf](http://www.co.palm-beach.fl.us/erm/home/brochures/na_mailout.pdf)



### Become a Volunteer at a Palm Beach County Natural Area!

If you would like to help preserve one of the natural areas managed by ERM and help the butterflies at the same time call their volunteer coordinator at 561-233-2400.

## Who Am I?? Butterfly Quiz

The Pearl Crescent (on the cover) closely resembles the Phaon Crescent.

### Differences between the Pearl and the Phaon Crescent:

Pearl Crescents have an orange median band on the forewing, either an orange that is pretty much the same as the rest of the FW (males) or paler orange (female), but still orange. Phaons have a cream-colored median band on the forewing -- clearly a different color than the rest of the wing.

Underside (not shown), Phaons hindwing ground color is quite pale, cream to tan; Pearl Crescents HW below is usually somewhat darker, usually with a yellow or orange tone.



Pearl Crescent

Phaon Crescent

## Upcoming Meetings

All meetings are held in the B-1 auditorium at the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD). Take I-95 to Southern Blvd. Go west and exit right onto Congress Avenue exit. This road curves over Southern Blvd. Take a right on Gun Club Road. Turn right into the third entrance at SFWMD (by KinderCare and continue to visitor parking. **Meetings are at 7:00pm.**

**Monday, June 24, 2002**—At this meeting we will prepare for the 4th of July Butterfly Count. We encourage you to attend this meeting even

if you don't plan to count at one of the public sites as there will be an ID Slide show at the end of the meeting.

**Monday, August 12, 2002** - David Spencer Smith will give a presentation of the Butterflies of Pakistan-China Border.

**Monday, November 18, 2002** - Teri Jabour and Alana Edwards will present the Butterflies of Oregon & California, photos taken during 4th biennial NABA conference and post conference field trip.

---

## Upcoming Field Trips

**Butterfly Count** – We've decided to separate the counts over two weekends this year so that we aren't all spread out so "thinly." **Mark your Calendars! We need your help!**

Central Circle will be conducted on **June 29**.

North Circle will be conducted on **June 30**.

South Circle will be conducted on **July 7**.

**Sunday, July 14 - Highlands Hammock Butterfly Count** – Take I-95 to Blue Heron. Go West to the Beeline (710). The Beeline through Indian-town to SR70. Go West on SR70 through Okeechobee to SR98. Go North on SR98 to SR27. Go North on SR27 into Sebring. Take a left onto Highlands Hammock Rd. (also called 634. Landmarks: traffic signal and Fat Boy's Bar-B-Que). We will meet at the Ranger Station at **9:00am**. Bring a picnic lunch. ~2 ½ hours from WPB.

**July 18-21, 2002** – NABA Biennial Conference to be held in Bend, Oregon.

**Sunday, Sept 22 - Kissimmee Prairie Preserve**— Take I-95 to Blue Heron. Go west to SR 710 (Bee Line Highway). Take SR 710 to Okeechobee which is approximately 70 miles. At Highway 70, turn left (west) and continue through the city of Okeechobee Hwy.98). Turn right (north) on SR 700 and continue for approximately 15

miles. Bring a picnic lunch. We will meet at **9:30am** at the main entrance kiosk.

**Saturday, Oct 19 - Fakahatchee Strand State Preserve** - Field trip to Fakahatchee Strand. Guided by park biologist Mike Owens. Take I-95 to Atlantic Blvd. (Exit 37) West. This turns into the Sawgrass Expressway. Take the Sawgrass south to I-75. Go West on I-75 to State Road 29 (mile marker 80). Go South on SR29 about 15 miles to County Road 837 (a/k/a Jane's' Scenic Drive). Turn right onto CR 837 and go about 1/2-3/4 mile (road curves sharply to the right). We will meet at the office (brown) 100m North of the fire tower at **8:15am**. Bring food and water for the day. This is a butterfly count for the Preserve. Allow 3 hours driving time from WPB. If you plan to attend, call the hotline so that we can arrange for carpooling and know who to expect: 561/706-6732.

**Sunday, Oct 27- Cannon Hammock County-Park** - Take Southern Blvd. (80) west to Clewiston. Just after the Palm Beach/ Hendry County line, take a left on CR Hwy. 835 (approx. 1 mile out of town-eastern edge of town). Stay on Hwy 835 for 17.5 miles to Cannon Hammock on the right (west). We will meet at **9:30am**. Bring a picnic lunch.



*Robert Michael Pyle in the field in Colorado*

## Special Event

**Florida Birding Festival and Nature Expo**—Sept 27-29th, Friday-Sunday — This year's conference will be held at Eckerd College in St. Petersburg and will include Robert Michael Pyle, author of Audubon's Butterfly Field Guide and many other natural history fiction and nonfiction books, as a keynote speaker on Friday (Conserving our Butterfly Heritage) and field trip leader. The registration kit for this event is still being developed but you can see the entire agenda at: [http://www.pcef.org/events-fbf\\_regkit.html](http://www.pcef.org/events-fbf_regkit.html). For more information call 800/822-6461.

## Miami Blue Action Plan by Alana Edwards

How can something so small cause such a stir? Well, when you are a beautiful, tiny butterfly with only one known population, butterfly enthusiasts tend to get excited. This is a good thing.....we need all of the bodies we can working to help us learn more about this endangered butterfly.

Last year, NABA petitioned the US Fish and Wildlife Service to have this butterfly listed (for more info on listing status, go to: [http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=2002\\_register&docid=02-36-filed.pdf](http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=2002_register&docid=02-36-filed.pdf)).

Recently, members of the Atala and Miami Blue Chapters of NABA established the Miami Blue Action Plan. As a result of this plan, NABA has begun surveying sites where the butterfly was known historically. And, in an effort to learn more about the life history of the butterfly, NABA has

hired a graduate student who will study the butterfly over the next year. The Miami Blue Fund was also recently established to help support this project and other research of butterflies known to be declining in southern Florida and the Keys.

Atala Chapter members are encouraged to help the Miami Blue by joining in on surveys, coordinating surveys (we will train you!) and by donating to the Miami Blue Fund. For more information, call 561/706-6732.



*Miami Blue*

## Get our Newsletter by email! by Lana Edwards

We now have 250 people on our Atala Chapter mailing list. This equates to \$350.00 in postage and printing costs annually. Our main source of income is derived from dues.....but did you know that, of the \$30.00 you pay annually to NABA for an individual membership, the local chapter gets just \$5.00? We have approximately 60 dues-paying members so you can see that our regular income is only \$300.00. As a way of cutting costs we would like to start e-mailing the newslet-

ters, in PDF format, to people who are not members of Atala Chapter. You can print it out and save it into a folder in case you want to print it again later. This version would also be in color!!! If you would like to get your newsletter by e-mail please send a note to me at [atala@prodigy.net](mailto:atala@prodigy.net). Those who have paid their annual dues or who have made cash contributions will continue to get their newsletters by regular mail.

## Plant Society Day—Summer 2003 by Jan Everett

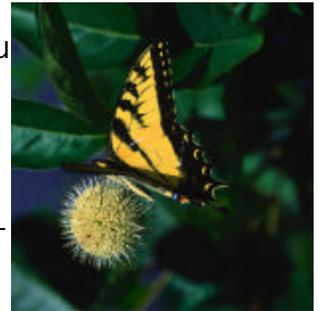
On May 7, 2002 representatives from different organizations that emphasize the importance of native plants (including our NABA-Atala Chapter) were invited to a brainstorming session at the Mounts Botanical Garden. The purpose of the meeting was to determine event ideas for a Plant Society Day at Mounts in the summer of 2003.

Mounts will provide the Garden, publicity and parking for the event. Each group can have their own activity and have the opportunity to coordinate their efforts with other groups. Mounts events are usually very well attended by diverse populations so it would be an excellent opportunity for us to get the word out about butterflies.

This was a very informal session to get ideas on the table. Some of the ideas were sales of plants or products, educational presentations, raffles,

an auction and a collective coloring book featuring a page for each group. We could use this event as a forum to educate and/or raise funds for our chapter.

There will be another meeting in October. At that time, each group should have an idea of what they would like to do. What suggestions and/or ideas do you have? How do you think we could or should promote our mission and chapter? Please let me know by October 1st. You can reach me at 561/793-6131 or via email: [bibbysw@webtv.net](mailto:bibbysw@webtv.net). I look forward to hearing your thoughts on this wonderful opportunity. Thanks!



*(Vanishing Caterpillars—continued from page 1)*

A lively caterpillar can avoid predators, although not very well. A caterpillar that has gone catatonic, in that pupal case, is pretty helpless. Some of them manage to stink, but that's about it. So, when they get that special feeling, they walk purposefully off the host plant, find some safe shelter, attach themselves firmly, and adopt as good a disguise as they can manage.

Being easy to find is not cool, unless you are so filled with toxins that nothing can possibly eat you. That would be the Atala, for instance. But,

for most caterpillars, getting off the host plant must significantly reduce the chances of some predator finding the chrysalid and dining happily.

Butterfly gardeners who feel a need to see their chrysalids usually harvest a few caterpillars a day or so before they go into the J. These, they feed and confine in a viewing apparatus, and everyone seems to enjoy the experience. But you can let Nature take its course, and be sure that your caterpillars have not been wasted, wherever their personal story takes them.

*(China-Pakistan Border—continued from page 1)*

large expedition of entomologists, botanists and geologists into an uninhabited area of the border with China and Afghanistan that had been closed as a security zone for over 50 years, using yaks as transport. Work was carried out from 10,000ft to 17,000ft near the snow line, contributing much data on high altitude butterflies of Pakistan and Central Asia. Work was supported by the National Science

Foundation and (2000) the National Geographic Society.

*David Spencer Smith is a Professor of Zoology, Oxford University, UK, and a Courtesy Professor of Biological Sciences, Florida International University, Miami. He will present High-altitude butterflies of the Pakistan-China Border on August 12, 2002.*

## Butterfly Meadows at the Museums and Nature Center of Crane Point—D. Lloyd

With the proliferation of butterfly gardens across the country, people have become accustomed to the immersion aspect of many facilities. At Crane Point Hammock in the Florida Keys, our butterfly meadow



*Zebra Heliconian*

is an open area where butterflies enjoy numerous native and non-native species of nectar and larval plants and fly free. Scattered between native wild limes, porterweed, necklacepods and yellowtops, there are green shrimp plants, gallardia, and passionflower where you'll see butterflies attracted to the red, purple, yellow and blue flowers. Mosquito spraying is not allowed on the 64-acre piece of property so we count on the dragonflies and birds to take care of them naturally. Zebra Heliconians, Swallow-tails, Sulphurs, Monarchs, Skippers and Malachites fly throughout the property on their own by-ways, providing an aerial display as they carry on their busy lives. For those who have the time, walking the nature trails that wind through the thatch palm and hardwood hammock is a great way to see these beautiful species in their native habitat. We invite you to come visit. Call 305/743-9100 for more information or go to: <http://www.cranepoint.org>.



### ATALA CHAPTER OF THE NORTH AMERICAN BUTTERFLY ASSOCIATION

3206 Palm Drive  
Delray Beach, FL 33482

Butterfly Hotline: 561/706-6732

*Send your email address to  
[atala@prodigy.net](mailto:atala@prodigy.net) for updates on  
butterfly related topics and events  
throughout the year!*

We're on the WEB!

<http://www.naba.org/chaptersnabaac/index.html>