



NABA St. Louis

March
2010

FLUTTERBY

NEWS AND EVENTS

2010 Calendar of Events

Here is a list of upcoming events (details to follow). Mark your calendars to save the dates! Additional walks and social events may be added later.

Directions are available on our chapter web site, www.nabastl.org. Click on Activities and Events, then click on Field Trip sites and Directions. Field trips last between two and three hours.



Falcate Orangetip - female

Pat Garner Photo

Date and Time		Event	Location
March 21	10:00 a.m.	NABA St. Louis Garden Work Day Bring your garden tools. Call Jim (314 781 7372) if you have questions.	Bush Conservation Area - Jim Ziebol Garden
April 10	10.00 a.m.	State Butterfly Count	Bush Conservation Area
May 29	10.00 a.m.	State Butterfly Count	Bush Conservation Area
June 5	10:00 a.m.	Butterfly Walk	Mark Peters' Prairie
June 26	10.00 a.m.	State Butterfly Count	Bush Conservation Area
July 4	10:00 a.m.	4 th of July Butterfly Count	Bush Conservation Area
July 17	10:00 a.m.	Butterfly Walk	Weldon Spring Site - Howell Prairie Garden led by Jeannie Moe
July 31	10.00 a.m.	July Butterfly Count	Horseshoe Lake State Park
August 28	10.00 a.m.	Seasonal Butterfly Count	Horseshoe Lake State Park
September 18	10:00 a.m.	Butterfly Walk	Route 66 State Park
October 16	10:00 a.m.	Butterfly Walk	Bush Conservation Area



ATTRACTING BENEFICIAL PREDATORS TO YOUR GARDEN

By Dennis Bozzay

A walk in the garden on a warm summer day has me vigilant for a butterfly or its larva—maybe something new or rare for my garden. Perhaps I will witness a Pipevine Swallowtail laying her eggs or find a newly-emerged Red-Spotted Purple sunning and flexing before it takes first flight. I may be stumped trying to identify that worn skipper on the coneflower. Then, my attention is diverted to the showy bumblebees and honey bees as they busily go about their business. But there is much more going on here than meets the eye. In my pesticide-free garden there are countless insect interactions happening, mostly unseen.

There are many insects that feed on our coveted garden plants—on their leaves, stems, roots, seeds, and the sap within. Since synthetic pesticides are counterproductive where you are trying to encourage favored insects such as butterflies, try a more natural approach to insect control such as insect predators. Inviting beneficial predatory insects into your garden will greatly reduce the need for pesticides. There are many beneficial insects that can control plant-eating insects. Parasitic wasps and flies, lacewings, ladybugs, robber flies, spiders, praying mantis, and many others can in one stage or another keep down undesirable insect populations. Some act while in their larval stage, while others are directly predatory, capturing and eating their prey. Many are parasites, injecting their victims with eggs that will hatch inside the body and eat from within, eventually killing the host. Although this type of action can kill some desired butterfly caterpillars, this is nature and the toll is small compared to the benefits received from not putting toxic chemicals into the environment.

Many adult predatory insects are very active while going about their business, and use flower nectar for fuel, and some flowers are better suited for providing nectar. Parasitic wasps and flies are often tiny, and the nectar of many flowers is simply out of reach to them. Flowers with small, flat heads and shallow nectar provide the best access. Composites with many small flowers suit these insects well. Herbs, too, often have the right flowers for tiny insects.

Good plants for inviting beneficial insects into your garden include fennel, dill, parsley, cilantro, Queen Ann's Lace, sedums, yarrows, any of the asters, Culver's Root, Golden Alexanders, wild quinine, Mountain Mint and goldenrods. Some of these plants are familiar butterfly nectar and host plants; others are best integrated into the garden seasonally. For example, the short-lived cilantro provides many seeds for you to plant next year and allows room for other garden plants after it withers.

But, as in the rest of nature, diversity is needed to keep the balance. There are some plants that invite beneficial insects that may best be suited to a natural area or corner of the garden that is left to be more wild or woodsy. Chenopodium (commonly known as Lambs Quarters) and Eupatorium (Boneset) or Snakeroot are often volunteers in my back garden and are welcome. Their seeds are easily harvested and can be broadcast in the back area of the garden where plants and insects can be left alone. To attract butterflies, include an abundance of nectar and host plants. Milkweeds, Spicebush, coneflowers, Joe Pye Weed, Rudbeckia, and Liatris are just a few. Providing puddles and a concoction of fruit mash will attract butterflies, too.

Some of the beneficial insects can be purchased from stores or catalogs and released into your garden. Going this route can be not only expensive, but often unnecessary. Even an urban area will have modest access to populations of beneficial insects ready to move in with just a little bit of encouragement.

As the season progresses, don't forget to provide homes for insects. Hollow twigs, leaf litter, an old log, even the mulch itself provide homes for insects (desirable and undesirable) in all their stages, and allow for a more natural balance. In the suburban environment where I live, with its mowed lawns, trimmed hedges, liberal use of sprays, etc, I think of my garden as an oasis for insects of all kinds. And the payoff is evident. In the last 20 years I have used no pesticides—zero—and have had no serious outbreaks of pests. Yes, there are sometimes aphids on the milkweed but left alone, nature and the beneficial insects remedy the problem—and at no charge. Being tolerant and accepting the ways of nature and beneficial insects will make our gardens better and more interesting.



NABA St. Louis

March
2010

The Current Board of NABA St. Louis

Position	Person	Contact
President	Jim Ziebol	(314) 781 7372
Vice President	Yvonne Homeyer	swamp metalmark(at)sbcglobal.net
Secretary	Kathleen O'Keefe	
Treasurer	Ann Earley	aee623(at)prodigy.net
Butterfly Gardens	Dennis Bozzay	dbozzay(at)sbcglobal.net
Conservation	Ann Earley	aee623(at)prodigy.net
Education	Mary Eileen Rufhahr	merufkahr(at)aol.com
Newsletter	Pat Lynn	plynn42(at)gmail.com
Webmaster	Sherry McCowan	nabaweb(at)waxwingwebs.com
Walks and Counts	Jim Ziebol	(314) 781 7372

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

If you would like to join NABA, please fill out this application. You will become a member of both NABA and the local St. Louis Chapter if you live within the St. Louis metropolitan area or nearby Illinois area.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone () _____ E-mail _____

Dues are \$30 (regular) and \$40 (family) per year. Please make check payable to NORTH AMERICAN BUTTERFLY ASSOCIATION. Mail this form with your check to: Scott Marshall, Membership, 609 West Lockwood, St. Louis, MO 63119.