

Badger Butterfly

The e-Newsletter of the Southern Wisconsin Butterfly Association **JULY, 2010**

WEB SITE: <http://www.naba.org/chapters/nabawba/>

1 HIGHLIGHTS OF CHEROKEE MARSH FIELD TRIP



On June 19 we held the Cherokee Marsh Field Trip which was attended by a large group of 24 people. We toured the area and found 14 species listed below. Our leader, Kathy Kirk brought a dead mole she found and

showed us because they are rarely seen. We also saw dragonflies: Black Saddlebags, Red Saddlebags and Prince Baskettail.

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Cabbage White 1
 Clouded Sulphur 2
 Orange Sulphur 1
 Summer Azure 6
 Great Spangled Fritillary 8

Northern Crescent 3
 Baltimore Checkerspot 1
 American Lady 1
 Red Admiral 1
 Hackberry Emperor 2

Monarch 1
 Silver-spotted Skipper 1
 Least Skipper 2
 European Skipper 2

2 RESULTS OF 2010 MADISON BUTTERFLY COUNT

On July 3 a group of 16 butterfly counters spent 3 hours finding butterflies at the UW Arboretum. Two other parties counted elsewhere within the 15 mile diameter circle that is the boundary of this survey. A total of 15.2 hours of observing by the 3 groups found 283 butterflies of 30 species, listed below. The best butterflies at the Arboretum were 3 American Ladies, 10 Edward's Hairstreaks and 2 Black Swallowtails. The best butterfly of the entire count was the rare southern migrant, **American Snout**, seen by Edgar Spalding. Butterflies have "palps" on the front of the face which forms a sort of garage for storing and protecting the coiled up proboscis. In the American Snout the palps are extremely elongated, creating the appearance of a "snout". This "nose" actually provides the butterfly

with



superior camouflage by adding a stem-like appendage to its leaf-shaped wings. The American Snout typically lands on bare vertical sticks and pretends to be a leaf! That is why they have even landed on the antenna of our car! And others have reported the same thing.

The results are ranked by abundance:

Common Wood Nymph 49
 Red Admiral 42
 Monarch 38
 Great Spangled Fritillary 22

Clouded Sulphur 17
 Cabbage White 17
 Banded Hairstreak 14
 Summer Azure 13

Orange Sulphur 11
 Edward's Hairstreak 10
 Black Swallowtail 9
 Northern Crescent 8

Eyed Brown 4
Eastern Comma 3
American Lady 3
Dun Skipper 3
Mourning Cloak 3
Viceroy 2

Question Mark 2
Eastern Tailed-Blue 2
Northern Pearly-Eye 2
Bronze Copper
American Snout 1
Coral Hairstreak 1

Striped Hairstreak 1
Painted Lady 1
Dion Skipper 1
Mulberry Wing 1
Northern Broken-Dash 1
Silver-spotted Skipper 1

Also see the discussion of Monarch abundance, in article#6 below.

3 HIGHLIGHTS OF SWAMP LOVERS TRIP

On July 5 we held a field trip at Swamp Lovers which is a private preserve of over 600 acres. Although the weather forecast was for 70% to 95% chance of rain, 13 people showed up. We toured sedge meadow, prairie and ponds. The owner, Gerry Goth, explained the restorations of the past 15 years. Skies stayed overcast but rain held off for nearly the entire trip. Most dragonflies



Photo by Swamp Lovers Foundation

were kept away by the lack of sun but the butterflies were fairly active. We saw Common Wood Nymph, Eyed Brown, Northern Crescent, Monarch, Red Admiral, Cabbage White, Clouded Sulphur, Orange Sulphur, Summer Azure, Great Spangled Fritillary, and Black Swallowtail. We ended up on the hilltop picnic shelter and enjoyed the free burgers and hot dogs. Gerry Goth and Cheri Carbon were the cooks. Special thanks to Cheri for her work in getting the food and cooking!!

4 NEXT FIELD TRIPS 2010 (Mark These On Your Calendar !!!)

Saturday, July 10: Flowers, Butterflies and Birds of Schurch-Thomson Prairie

We will visit The Prairie Enthusiasts' Schurch-Thomson Prairie, and the adjacent privately owned Underwood Prairie. The latter is closed to the public, so this is a great opportunity to see it up close. These and adjacent properties form a complex of remnant prairie and CRP grasslands that are rich with grassland birds and other prairie animals. Summer flowers will be in bloom, and we hope to see the rare Regal Fritillary and other butterflies. Be prepared for a long hike and bring

binoculars for butterfly viewing (the closer they can focus the better). This is a joint trip with The Prairie Enthusiasts and the Madison Audubon Society. Leaders are Rich Henderson and Ann Thering.

The trip will last until noon.

Meet at 10:00 a.m. Directions: From Hwy 151 at Blue Mounds take F south (note: F makes a right turn). After 5 miles turn right onto Reilly Road. Go to the end and park by the barn. Call Rich at (608) 845-7065 only if you have a question about the trip.

Saturday, July 10: Moths: Denizens of Darkness **NEW!**

We'll be using an ultra-violet light on a sheet. If the weather's right, we may draw in some interesting things to see and photograph. I will be reminding people to avoid looking directly at the light as it can harm your eyes. (If you bring small children, make sure they understand this.) There is an amazing diversity of life at night that most people never see and you can share with me a little glimpse of this life that fills the darkness around us. Leader is Mark Evans. Wear pants and a long sleeved shirt. Bring mosquito repellent and a small flashlight (not a big bright one). Your camera with a flash is fine if you are taking close-ups but we'll try

to be as respectful of the dark as we can. Co-sponsored by the Madison Audubon Society.

Meet at 8:30 p.m. at the UW Observatory at Pine Bluff. This trip will last for 2 1/4 hours.

Directions: go West on Mineral Pt. Rd. about 3 miles West of Timber Lane to Co Hwy P; turn North on P and go about 0.5 mile; turn West on Observatory Rd and follow it for about 1.2 mile; the observatory will be at the top of the hill on your left; drive in & park in the lot. If there is fog or a light rain, this will be all the better. We would only cancel if it's raining really hard or there is a thunderstorm. Call Mark at (608) 833-4201 only if

you have a question about the trip or in case of questionable weather.

Sunday, July 11: Butterflies and Dragonflies of Sandhill Wildlife Area NEW!

The Sandhill State Wildlife Area, in Wood County, covers more than 14 square miles. It is managed by the Wisconsin DNR as a living laboratory for wildlife management techniques. Sandhill has large marshes and many flowages, interspersed with low sandy uplands, pine and oak barrens and restored prairies. Butterfly enthusiast **Ron Arnold** has been surveying the butterflies there for 19 years. On this trip Ron will lead us in finding such beauties as Acadian and Coral Hairstreaks, Aphrodite Fritillary, the rare Two-spotted Skipper, Bronze Copper, Eyed Brown, Northern Pearly-eye, White Admiral and many others. Skippers will include Black Dash, Broad-winged, Dion, Long Dash and many others. We may see beautiful Baltimore Checkerspot, Harris' Checkerspot and the Federally Endangered Karner Blue. We will also enjoy the many species of dragonflies at Sandhill. If time permits, we could also visit a nearby spruce/tamarack bog. (If you

want to walk in the bog bring boots. Bog Coppers have been seen there.)

Bring binoculars, the closer they focus the better. (We will have a few extra pairs of binoculars.) Also bring insect repellent to protect against mosquitoes, and ticks. A hat, long sleeves and long pants are recommended. Bring a bag lunch and water. Co-sponsor is the Madison Audubon Society.

Meet at 10:00 a.m. at the Sandhill Headquarters parking lot. (The tour will last until 3:00 p.m.) **DIRECTIONS:** Take I-90/94 up to the New Lisbon area in Juneau Co. and take Hwy 80 north. In Wood County, just 1/3 mile before Babcock, turn left onto County X. Go 1 1/4 mile on X to the Sandhill entrance. (Allow at least 1 hour and 45 minutes for travel.) Call Ron at (715) 424-2996 if you have a question about the trip. On the day of the trip Ron will have his cell phone on: (715) 741-0052. (If rain threatens, call Ron to see if the trip must be cancelled due to weather.)

Saturday, July 17: Pretty Things with Wings: Birds, Butterflies and Dragonflies of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve

On this two hour walk in the Picnic Point area we expect to see interesting bird species and at least half a dozen species of dragonflies and twice as many different butterflies. The walking route will include the edge of Mendota's University Bay, the woods of Picnic Point, and the Biocore Prairie. Bring your binoculars--the closer they focus the better. (We will have a few extra binoculars.) This

trip is co-sponsored by Friends of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve and the Madison Audubon Society. The trip leader is **Edgar Spalding**.

Meet at 10:00 a.m. at the Picnic Point Parking Lot, along University Bay Drive, on the UW campus. Call Edgar at (608) 265-5294 or 831-0616 only if you have a question about the trip or if the weather is questionable.

5 RECENT BUTTERFLY SIGHTINGS AT www.wisconsinbutterflies.org

The Wisconsin Butterflies Website is in its 6th year of acquiring butterfly sightings. In June, a total of 143 reports detailed thousands of individuals. **Red Admirals** continue as one of our most common butterflies this summer.

Interesting species recorded in June were Greenish Blue, Northern Blue, Hickory Hairstreak, Gray Copper, Bog Fritillary and Regal Fritillary.

Southern migrants that have come into the state in June were **Giant Swallowtail (1 report)**,

Painted Lady (5), Common Buckeye (5), Little Yellow (8), Fiery Skipper (1), Common Checkered-Skipper (1) and American Snout (1). Hopefully this presages more numbers of these and other migrants as the summer wears on.

Keep your sightings coming into www.wisconsinbutterflies.org

6 HOW ARE MONARCHS DOING IN OUR AREA?

At the end of 2009 Monarch populations were at record low levels due to cool conditions and drought in the Midwest. Then unusual storms and freezing temperatures on the wintering grounds in Mexico severely reduced their populations. Monarchs can snap back if conditions are favorable but how are they doing in 2010? Two

NABA "Fourth of July" Butterfly Counts in Dane and Columbia counties reveal that Monarchs are having a good year in 2010--so far. The Mud Lake Butterfly Count found Monarchs at the 3rd highest level of the 22 years of the count! And the Madison Butterfly Count found Monarchs at the 4th highest level of the 20 years of the count! The long term data collected by these counts gives us a good basis for comparison and allows us to evaluate the changing status of butterfly populations from year to year.

7 DATES FOR SOME NABA "4TH OF JULY" BUTTERFLY COUNTS

These butterfly counts are conducted exactly like Christmas Bird Counts: We identify butterfly species and count individuals within a 15 mile diameter circle. The data of many hundreds of counts is collected and published. Some 17 NABA Butterfly Counts take place in Wisconsin each year. Below are ones that are connected with SWBA.

- ❖ Trempealeau (Trempealeau County) Thursday July 8, 2010
- ❖ Northern Kettle Moraine (Fond du Lac County) Tuesday, July 13, 2010
- ❖ Sister Bay (Door County) Thursday, July 15, 2010

To join in on these counts or for more information about SWBA-sponsored NABA counts, please contact: Karl and Dorothy Legler, count coordinators: karlndot@charter.net (608) 643-4926. (NABA charges a \$3 fee to participate, in order to defray the cost of publication.) (For a list of additional Butterfly Counts in Wisconsin, visit NABA's Web site at www.naba.org/counts/um_g.html . Contacts are listed.)

**The Badger ButterFlyer flits to you every month (every other month in winter).
The next issue will be in AUGUST.**

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SWBA

The Southern Wisconsin Butterfly Association (SWBA) is a non-profit Wisconsin chapter of the North American Butterfly Association (NABA) which is the largest organization of people interested in butterflies. SWBA promotes public awareness, conservation and the enjoyment of butterflies through observation with close-focusing binoculars, chapter field trips, educational meetings, photography, butterfly gardening, monitoring and travel. SWBA's events are open to the public.

To become a member of SWBA simply join NABA. Membership benefits include 2 color quarterly magazines "American Butterflies" and "Butterfly Gardening". Please use the membership form on the SWBA Web site at <http://www.naba.org/chapters/nabawba/>

Our e-Newsletter, the Badger ButterFlyer, will be published monthly in spring to fall, and every other month in winter. Send any news notes to the editor, Karl Legler, at karlndot@charter.net

To stop receiving this e-Newsletter simply send an email to the above editor's address.