

Badger Butterfly

The e-Newsletter of the Southern Wisconsin Butterfly Association **DECEMBER / JANUARY 2010**

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

1 SWBA MEETING: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2010

At this meeting the speaker will be moth expert **Mark Evans**. His presentation subject will be on **MOTHS!!** **Mark it on your calendar!** Enjoy loads of great photos and learn about these beautiful, mysterious and incredibly diverse creatures with fascinating lives. Mark will also conduct an evening moth field trip in July (See Section 2.)

Where: Warner Park Community Recreation Center at 1625 Northport Drive in Madison.

When: 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

Everyone is welcome to attend this free program. We will have door



Cecropia Moth

prizes, displays, books, handouts and plenty of time afterwards to enjoy refreshments and talk with our speaker Mark Evans, and other lepidoptera enthusiasts.

DIRECTIONS: On Madison's north side, from the intersection of Sherman Avenue and Northport Drive (= Hwy 113) go west on Northport Drive for about 1/4 mile, then turn south into Warner Park. Turn immediately right into the Community Center parking lot. When you enter the Community Recreation Center, we will be in the meeting room on the left.

IN THIS ISSUE:

1. SWBA Meeting: Moths Tuesday, February 23 Speaker: Mark Evans
2. Field Trip Schedule for 2010
3. Field Adventures by Ann Swengel
4. Butterfly Garden certified by NABA at Gov. Nelson St. Pk
5. NABA 2010 Biennial Meeting
6. Butterfly News Note
7. Photo Exhibit by Ann Thering

2 SWBA FIELD TRIP SCHEDULE FOR 2010

Details will be available on our website in the spring.

Butterflies of Bauer-Brockway Barrens (Jackson Co.)	Monday, May 17	Mike Reese
Butterflies of Cherokee Marsh	Saturday, June 19	Kathy Kirk
Madison Butterfly Count	Saturday, July 3	Karl and Dorothy Legler
Butterflies, Dragonflies & Picnic at Swamp-Lovers	Monday, July 5	Leglers, Tod Highsmith
Flowers, Butterflies and Birds of Schurch-Thomson	Saturday, July 10	Rich Henderson & Ann Thering
Moths: Denizens of Darkness	Saturday evening, July 10	Mark Evans
Butterflies and Dragonflies of Sandhill Wildlife Area	Sunday, July 11	Ron Arnold
Pretty Things with Wings (Lakeshore Preserve)	Saturday, July 17	Edgar Spalding

Butterflies at Avoca and Lower Wisconsin Riverway	Saturday, August 14	Mike Reese
Butterflies and Blossoms at Pheasant Branch	Saturday, August 28	Dreux Watermolen
Grasshoppers!	Saturday, September 4	Kathy Kirk

3 FIELD ADVENTURES

Butterfly Fireworks on the 4th of July

By Ann Swengel

Last 4th of July, we'd gotten our bog surveys in northwestern Wisconsin completed by mid-afternoon. It was hard to leave Douglas County with the weather so fine. But we planned to survey Regal Fritillaries the next day at Buena Vista in central Wisconsin and saw a convenient opportunity to squeeze in an evening survey for Short-eared Owls there that night. En route we'd pass right by the Highway 54 bog, mentioned in SWBA's Jackson County online article. It'd be late in the day but with this warm summer weather, surely a few Bog Coppers would still be active. But as we drove south clouds built. Even though the statewide chance of rain was slim, we were heading straight toward a thunderstorm. At Eau Claire, I pulled out the weather radio. A lone severe thunderstorm was tracking southeast into Jackson County, flash floods in its wake. Alas, the perfect field lineup once again was not to be. But as we approached the bog, the rain let up. It was still drenched, cool (60s), darkly cloudy, and after 5 p.m. But what was there to lose? As we brushed past soaking shrubs, little glitters of silver flushed off their wet perches. Once again, we'd have missed out if we hadn't been

willing to try in improbable circumstances. In fact, we tallied by far our highest count of Bog Coppers ever here. This was the hardy little copper familiar from coastal bogs by Lake Superior - readily findable in season despite dense fog and cold lake breezes.

This was also a coda to the story begun the previous fall, when Dr. Robert Michael Pyle visited this bog with us. Before his visit, it had never occurred to me to slog in a bog in November, nor honestly has it since his visit either! But we were game to escort him on an unsuccessful search for Bog Copper eggs for his book Swallowtail Seasons: The First Butterfly Big Year coming out from Houghton Mifflin. Since then, Bog Dirig, who wrote about Karner Blues for American Butterflies, has told me of his intensive systematic and unsuccessful searches for those elusive Bog Copper immature stages. In an echo of the entertaining Englishman Matthew Oates ("never underestimate a caterpillar" finding the most beneficial microclimates even in Britain), I conclude: never underestimate a butterfly egg!

4 BUTTERFLY GARDEN CERTIFIED AT GOVERNOR NELSON STATE PARK

In 2009, the season pass sticker for all the Wisconsin state parks had beautiful butterflies as the theme. Under the "Nature" tab at the Governor Nelson State Park website there is a hyperlink to "Butterflies of Governor Nelson State Park". This past August, LTE park attendant and SWBA member Ellie Hetzer got Governor Nelson State Park NABA certified as a butterfly garden.

The park is located on the north shore of Lake Mendota across the lake from the city of Madison and the state capitol building. The park consists of over 400 acres of wet and mesic prairie, open grassland and oak woods and savannahs. There are over 8 miles of trails that meander through these various plant communities of milkweed, joe-pye

weed, bergamot, blackberry, nettle, compass flower, coneflower and aster. Besides beautiful hilltop vistas and a great view of Madison and the state capitol building from the beach, butterflies such as swallowtails, ladies, Baltimore Checkerspot, Hickory Hairstreaks and Silver-spotted Skippers can be seen throughout the park.

Restoration of the grasslands, marsh and woods has been ongoing since the park's inception in 1988. Renee Lee, the park manager and the only full-time employee, welcomes volunteers to help continue these restoration efforts. If you would like to volunteer your time to help maintain this beautiful butterfly habitat, call the park office at (608) 831-3005.

5 NABA BIENNIAL MEETING 2010

Mark your calendars! The next North American Butterfly Association (NABA) Biennial Meeting will be on October 28-31, 2010 in Mission, Texas. It is hoped that the 2010 Meeting will celebrate the official opening of the first major building at the National Butterfly Center: the Welcome Center. This should be a wonderful butterfly experience along the Rio Grande.

6 BUTTERFLY NEWS NOTE: How Caterpillars Manipulate Ants (from the blog Not Exactly Rocket Science -- science for everyone by Ed Yong)

“Ants are among the most successful of living things. Their nests are well-defended fortresses, coordinated through complex communication systems involving touch and chemical signals. These strongholds are stocked with food and secure from the outside world, so they make a tempting prospect for any burglars that manage to break in.

One species of butterfly - the Mountain Alcon Blue (*Maculinea rebeli*) - is just one such master felon. Somehow, it manipulates the workers into carrying it inside the nest, feeding it and caring for it. The caterpillar does so little for itself that it packs on 98% of its eventual adult weight in the company of ants. How does it do it?”

Discover the fascinating answer at

http://scienceblogs.com/notrocketscience/2009/02/butterflies_scrounge_off_ants_by_mimicking_the_music_of_quee.php



7 PHOTO EXHIBIT by Ann Thering

Enjoy the magic of butterflies at photographer Ann Thering's "Butterflies and Blooms" exhibit at Olbrich Botanical Gardens (3330 Atwood Ave.) in Madison, Wisconsin. The exhibit is open **January 10 through April 4, 2010, on Sundays, 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.**, and whenever the Evjue Commons gallery is not in use during Olbrich's regular hours (call before you visit). Note that in January-March, Olbrich hosts a winter concert in the Evjue Commons on Sunday, from 2-3 p.m. so plan accordingly.



**The Badger ButterFlyer flits to you every month (every other month in winter).
Due to a scheduling conflict the next issue will be in MARCH.**

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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 website 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.