

# I Have a Little List

Many butterflyers keep lists of what they've seen. Day lists, month lists, year lists, house lists, park lists, county lists, state lists, country lists, world lists, butterflies seen at geraniums lists, butterflies seen in gymnasium lists, butterflies seen from cars lists and butterflies seen while engaging in amorous activities lists (revealing the existence of this last multitasking list spells trouble, as those who remember what happened to Superman when he used his x-ray vision to spot a crime while kissing Lois Lane will know). Compulsive are we? One of the sad symptoms of the compulsive butterflyer is that when deprived of time in the field, she/he becomes listless.

Ever since the time of the Mikado, lists have had a bad name. It's true that some butterfly listers don't care about butterflies per se but focus exclusively on adding names to their list — once on the list, the butterfly no longer holds any interest for them. Of course, there's nothing wrong with this — it's an innocent game — but it doesn't really add much to our knowledge of butterflies or to our ability to conserve butterflies. Less innocent, on the other hand, is list lust, one of the malachite sins.

One of the worthwhile fallouts from listing is that if you want to see everything — to complete your list — you have to go everywhere. Thus you visit every section of your park, or your county, or your state, or your country or your world! Lists are a great excuse to travel. And, if your horizon is just a smidge broader than the length of your list, you will allow a feast of natural forms to enter your field of view and will experience a lifetime of adventures in both the natural and man-made world.

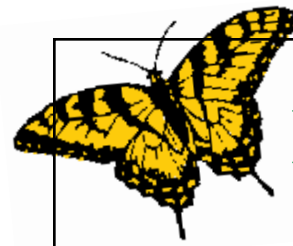
From the useful information standpoint, lists are a record of what was where, when. In this regard, your data enable scientists to ask and answer important questions about butterfly biology and populations, including ones that are critical for their conservation. That is why your participation in the NABA Butterfly Count Program (4th of July, 1st of July, 16th of Sept., and Memorial Day Count) and with the Butterflies I've Seen website is vitally important. On page 46 of this issue you can learn about some research using NABA Butterfly Count data. Recently, Dr. Leslie Ries at the University of Maryland has been awarded a National Science Foundation grant to study NABA's 4th of July Butterfly Count data.

I'm thinking about lists because during the Memorial Day weekend I traveled to western Massachusetts in search of Bog Elfins. I had seen Bog Elfins in Quebec, but never in the United States. As I write this, I am about to travel to southern California, in part to search for Hermes Coppers, another species I haven't seen (anywhere). The bad news is that I missed the Bog Elfins (actually, we probably saw one, but didn't get a good enough look to be sure), my second miss for this species in the U.S. The good news is that I get to go back to western Massachusetts. Actually, we all get a chance to go to western Massachusetts and hunt for Bog Elfins (and Early Hairstreak, etc.) because that is where the NABA Members Meeting is planned for June 1-4, 2006!

There are 722 species on the NABA Checklist of butterflies recorded in North America north of Mexico (another 11 species have been seen in the Lower Rio Grande Valley since its publication in 2001). The way I tally it, 561 of these species are either resident or are seen (almost) every year in the Lower 48 states of the United States. Another 147 species stray into or temporarily colonize parts of the United States, mainly along the Mexican border (especially in extreme southern Texas) but also in extreme southern Florida. Another 17 species are found in Alaska, another 6 in Hawaii and another 2 in Canada (which, considered by itself, has about 300 species).

I've seen 543 of the 561 resident/seen every year immigrant species, another 28 strays/temporary colonists, for a total of 571 species seen in the lower 48 states of the U.S. (plus another 5 in Hawaii). Although I've never tried to maximize the number of species I've seen in one year, I traveled extensively while working on the *Butterflies through Binoculars* series and in 1997 managed to see 356 species in the Lower 48 states.

Some butterflyers focus on their "local" areas. Buck and Linda Cooper have seen an incredible 165 of Florida's 183 (including strays) species; Chris & Paula Williams have seen 116 of New Jersey's 141 species; and Fred Heath (who lives in Ventura Co., CA) has seen 94 of Los Angeles county's 130 species.



The North American Butterfly Association (NABA)

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Please photocopy this membership application form and pass it along to friends and acquaintances who might be interested in NABA

**Yes! I want to join NABA, the North American Butterfly Association,** and receive *American Butterflies* and *The Butterfly Gardener* and/or contribute to the creation of the premier butterfly garden in the world, NABA Butterfly Park. The Park, to be located on approximately 100 acres of land fronting the Rio Grande River in Mission, Texas will use native trees, shrubs and wildflowers to create a spectacular natural butterfly garden that will importantly benefit butterflies, an endangered ecosystem and the people of the Rio Grande Valley.

Visit our web site at [www.naba.org](http://www.naba.org)

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Special Interests (circle): Listing, Gardening, Observation, Photography, Conservation,  
Other \_\_\_\_\_

Tax-deductible dues enclosed (circle): Regular \$30 (\$60 outside U.S., Canada or Mexico), Family \$40 (\$80 outside North Am.). Special sponsorship levels: Copper \$50; Skipper \$100; Admiral \$250; Monarch \$1000. Institution/Library subscription to all annual publications \$50 (\$80 outside U.S., Canada or Mexico). Special tax-deductible contributions to NABA (please circle): \$125, \$200, \$1000, \$5000. Mail checks (in U.S. dollars) to: NABA, 4 Delaware Rd., Morristown, NJ 07960

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