



# Hot Seens

Winter 2007-2008

by Michael Reese

Usually the butterfly sightings reported in December and January are from Texas, Florida, and Hawaii. This winter was no different with all butterfly sightings submitted coming from those three states. NABA International Butterfly Park had its share of rarities with a Tropical Greenstreak reported on December 8 (G. Quintanilla), a Pale-spotted Leafwing and an Eight-spotted Longtail on December 11 (D. Hanson), an Angled Leafwing on December 21 (G. Quintanilla), and a Malicious Skipper on December 31 (G. Quintanilla). Other rarities observed in Texas included a Pearly-gray Hairstreak on December 8 at Bentsen State Park, TX (G. Quintanilla), a Common Melwhite, observed at Bentsen State Park, TX on December 11 (T. Pendleton) that was only the third sighting of this species in the United States. Besides the rarities there were also large numbers of species regularly being reported, with 49 species observed on December 25 in the Mission, TX area (D. Hanson and others), 56 species seen on January 11 at NABA International Butterfly Park and Bentsen WBC, TX (D. Hanson) 48 species seen on February 27 at NABA International BUtterfly Park (J. Glassberg).

Gil Quintanilla

Although there were few reports from Hawaii, the surprise butterfly of the winter season was the lesser grass-blue (*Zizina otis*) found in Waikiki, HI (J Snyder), which was first seen on March 15. This was a new species for Hawaii, bringing the total species seen in Hawaii to seventeen. This was also the first time this Southeastern Asian species has been recorded in the United States. (see article on page 42).

The December butterfly reports from Florida contained far fewer species than those seen in Texas but the total number of species continued to rise throughout the winter. On December 27, fifteen species were reported from the Morikami Japanese Gardens, Delray Beach, FL (M. Diederich) and from Bill Baggs Cape Florida State Park, FL (E. Golden). The number of species in the Florida reports increased to 30 species by January 29 at Kissimmee State Park, FL (B. & L. Cooper



*This Malicious Skipper closed out the year at NABA Butterfly Park on Dec. 31, 2007.*

and others), 37 species on February 15 at Kissimmee State Park, FL (B. & L. Cooper, and others), and 40 species on March 16 (R. M. Pyle, A. Edwards, B. & L. Cooper) also at Kissimmee.

February and March usually bring the butterflies from farther north out of hibernation and looking for their first butterflies of the year. Warm weather in early February (temperatures were in the 60s for two days) brought an unexpected report of a



Cat Taylor



T.H. Collins

*Top: This Banded Orange Helcionian, photographed at San Isidro on March 29, 2008, is the first individual of this species reported from Starr Co., TX.*

*Bottom: This Variegated Skipper, photographed in Kerrville, Kerr Co., TX on Nov. 17, 2007, provided the northernmost record for this species.*