

Badger ButterFlyer

The e-Newsletter of the Southern Wisconsin Butterfly Association **NOVEMBER, 2012**

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

1 HIGHLIGHTS OF OCTOBER'S MEETING

Mike Reese presented a PowerPoint program on 2012: An Extraordinary Year in Butterflies! 31 people attended the SWBA meeting. Mike talked about the many immigrant species that were usually rare but in 2012 were frequently reported. (Section 4 below discusses some of these). Mike noticed that Question Marks came streaming into the state in spring and that the photos indicated they were already the next (summer) generation, confirming that Question Marks undergo some migration. We were treated to photos from Mike's award-winning web site. Mike told about a Reakirt's Blue being seen in northern Wisconsin. Having never seen one, he traveled up north and thoroughly looked for it at the site, to no avail. He left for home, but the next day a friend from that area, Dave Hanson, went to the site, parked his car, got out, and immediately encountered the Reakirt's Blue! (It's all part of the agony and ecstasy of butterflying!)

Mike also noted that Endangered Regal Fritillaries showed up at some spots away from their usual breeding grounds.

There was plenty of time for folks to visit after the presentation. Some books were donated by Mike Reese for door prizes.

Thanks to Dorothy Legler, who brought homemade pumpkin bars and cookies, and fruit juice for refreshments.

IN THIS ISSUE:

1. Meeting Highlights
2. **Nov. 20: Audubon Talk on Karner Blue Habitat Restoration.**
3. Butterfly Gifts for the Holidays.
4. Butterflies of the Year!
5. October Butterflies.

2 AUDUBON TALK ON RESTORING HABITAT FOR KARNER BLUE BUTTERFLIES

Free Public Program: Madison Audubon Society, Tuesday, Nov. 20, 2012, 7:30 p.m. at Capitol Lakes Retirement Community, 333 West Main St., Madison.

The Karner blue butterfly was listed as a federally endangered species in 1992. Its historic range was from New York to Minnesota, but habitat loss and fragmentation have resulted in only isolated populations remaining in New York, Michigan, Indiana, and Minnesota. By far the largest populations of Karner blue butterflies remain in Wisconsin, chiefly through the central Wisconsin

SWBA and the Madison Audubon Society will sponsor a **field trip** in July to tour the Shillinglaw property and observe Karner Blues and other butterflies. Leaders will be John Shillinglaw and Mike Reese.

sand counties where the butterflies can survive on wild lupine, the

only food source the caterpillars can utilize. John Shillinglaw is an amateur restoration biologist who

is working on prairie restoration projects in Wisconsin and the driftless area of northeast Iowa.

Wisconsin has formulated a statewide habitat conservation plan to preserve and expand existing populations. (See: dnr.wi.gov/topic/ForestPlanning/hcpText.html).

The plan includes a private lands initiative that supported landowners who wished to enhance or create habitat for the butterflies.

The Shillinglaw property was enrolled in the US Fish & Wildlife Service's Partners for Fish and Wildlife program in 2000 and the results were so impressive, they were presented at the 2008 North American Prairie Conference. Because of John's



encouragement and expertise, other landowners are seeing Karner blues on their properties for the first time.

DIRECTIONS: At the Capitol Lakes Retirement Community, 333 West Main St., Madison. Free parking in the ramp across the street. Enter off

Washington Pl. (between W. Main St. and W. Washington Ave.). Take a ticket and park in spaces marked "Capitol Lakes Reserved." The front desk will validate your ticket.

3 BUTTERFLY GIFTS FOR THE HOLIDAYS -- OR ANYTIME!

Here is a list of recommended basic books and equipment that would make great gifts for anyone that enjoys butterflies.

BINOCULARS

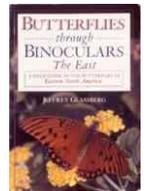
- The unique **Pentax Papilio 8.5x21 and 6.5x21** are specifically designed for observing butterflies, dragonflies and other insects. They are the closest focusing binoculars available (yes they also focus to infinity so you can observe birds and the moon). They can focus as close as 19 inches which provides spectacular views of butterflies. At six feet you see the butterfly as well as if you were holding it in your hand 10" from your eye. And at the close focus you see the butterfly four to five times larger than if you were holding the butterfly up to your eye! They are sharp, very light weight and compact, usable even while wearing glasses, and relatively inexpensive. (A must for the tiny damselflies!) These binoculars are very popular and have gotten rave reviews. We have used them for the past 9 years and love them! They are currently \$136 at Eagle Optics in Middleton www.eagleoptics.com. The 6.5x version is \$116. (If you are an experienced user of 8x to 10x binoculars, get the 8.5x Papilios, otherwise we recommend the 6.5x.)
- If intensive birding is your primary interest then there are some larger binoculars that are also good for butterflies: Eagle Optics' **Ranger 8X32** focuses down to three feet and costs about \$290. For bigger optics or more power there are the Eagle Optics' **Ranger 8X42** or **10X42**, both focus to 5.2 feet and cost around \$310.



BOOKS: Butterfly Field Guides

The butterfly field guides that SWBA recommends are:

- First, Jeffrey Glassberg's **Butterflies Through Binoculars, the East**. (1999) \$24.95 Numerous excellent photographs, range maps, food plants, and contains flight period information specific for Wisconsin! Check with UW Arboretum Bookstore at 1207 Seminole Highway, Madison. (608) 263-7888. (To get the free Quick-Index to Butterflies of Wisconsin for Glassberg see next page.)
- If you want a second guide, we recommend Kenn Kaufman's **Kaufman Field Guide to Butterflies of North America**. (2006) \$19.95 (To get the free Quick-Index to Butterflies of Wisconsin for Kaufman see next page.)
- If you would like a third guide, we recommend Larry Weber's **Butterflies of the North Woods**. (2006) \$14.21 Many of southern Wisconsin's scarcer species are not included but the coverage that is provided is very good and specific to Wisconsin. (Ignore the incorrect Hackberry Emperor photo on page 158.)
- Another major guide, published this year, is Jeffrey Glassberg's **A Swift Guide to Butterflies of North America**. (2012) The cost is \$30 (which includes shipping) and currently it can be ordered only from the Sunstreak Books website, either by mail or online: <http://www.sunstreakbooks.com/Order%20form.html> (To get the free Quick-Index to Butterflies of Wisconsin for *Swift* Guide see next item.)



Quick-Index to the Butterflies of Wisconsin.

These are **free PDF files** that can be downloaded, printed out and pasted on the two inside back cover pages of 3 major butterfly guides. It provides the page location of 155 species that occur in Wisconsin. The combination of alphabetization and display of taxonomic groups provides very quick access to the contents of each guide.

- **Quick-Index for Glassberg's Butterflies Through Binoculars, The East**
Click on this link: <http://www.naba.org/chapters/nabawba/Glassberg%20Index.pdf>
- **Quick-Index for Kaufman's Field Guide to Butterflies of North America**
Click on this link: <http://www.naba.org/chapters/nabawba/Kaufman%20Index.pdf>
- **Quick-Index for Glassberg's Swift Guide to the Butterflies of North America**
Click on this link: <http://www.naba.org/chapters/nabawba/Swift%20Index.pdf>

BOOKS: Caterpillars

- Jeffrey Glassberg, **Caterpillars in the Field and Garden.** (2005) \$19.77 900 photographs. How to identify the butterfly caterpillars of North America.
- David L. Wagner, **Caterpillars of Eastern North America.** (2005) \$19.77 1,200 photographs. 700 butterfly and moth caterpillars.

BOOKS: Dragonflies and Damselflies

- Karl and Dorothy Legler, **Dragonflies of Wisconsin.** (2007) \$16.00 201 color photos covering 107 species. Available exclusively at the UW Arboretum Bookstore at 1207 Seminole Highway, Madison, WI 53711-3726. To order by phone with a credit card, call (608) 263-7888. The bookstore is open on weekdays from 9:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. and weekends 12:30 - 4 p.m.
- Dennis Paulson, **Dragonflies and Damselflies of the East.** (2011) 538 pages. \$29.95 A massive and definitive work on 336 species of Odonata of Eastern North America.
- Bob DuBois, **Damselflies of the North Woods.** (2005) \$12.89 Photos by Mike Reese.



BOOKS: Butterfly Gardening

- David Mizejewski, **Attracting Birds, Butterflies and Other Backyard Wildlife.** (2004) 128 pages. \$5.18 at Amazon.com.
- Donald and Lilian Stokes, **Stokes Butterfly Book, The Complete Guide to Butterfly Gardening, Identification, and Behavior.** (1991) 96 pages. \$9.04 at Amazon.com

MISCELLANEOUS

- Rick Cech and Guy Tudor, **Butterflies of the East Coast: An Observer's Guide.** (2007) \$21.75 at Amazon.com This is a large and outstanding reference work on butterflies. Packed with detailed information about behavior, biology and ecology of butterflies along with species accounts and numerous superb photographs covering 243 species.
- "**Butterflies of South Texas**" is a set of 750 outstanding photos, taken by Dave Hanson, of 228 species of butterfly from the Rio Grande Valley of Texas. Dave is from Wisconsin, but spends half his time in Texas. (Many of these photos were shown at a SWBA program on South Texas.) The photos come on a flash drive. \$20. See <http://k9zvz.com/index.html>
- **Wildflowers of Wisconsin and the Great Lakes Region.** (2nd edition 2009) Merel R. Black and Emmet J. Judziewicz. A comprehensive guide. More than 1,100 species, 2,100 color photographs, Wisconsin

distribution maps, Wisconsin status (native, invasive, endangered, etc.) and derivation of Latin names. \$29.95.

- **Wisconsin Butterflies iPhone Application.** A version of the online butterfly guide on Mike Reese's website. For more information see <http://wisconsinbutterflies.org/butterfly/iphone>
- **Membership in SWBA** (the Wisconsin Chapter of NABA) is always an excellent gift and includes the quarterly publications **American Butterflies** and **Butterfly Gardening**. Individual \$30, Family \$40. To Join SWBA print out the form from our Web site and mail it.
- Finally, a source of many interesting butterfly related items is the **NABA online store** at www.butterflybuzz.com (Anyone can shop here, but NABA members receive a 10% discount!)

4 BUTTERFLIES OF THE YEAR!

2012 has been an extraordinary year for butterflies. Weather had both positive and negative effects. On the positive side was a relatively mild winter, a 16 day extreme warm period in mid-March with southerly winds that transported southern butterflies towards Wisconsin, and plenty of warmth in summer to maximize butterfly development. But on the negative side, the hot weather of summer was not accompanied by adequate rainfall and a pattern of extreme drought spread over the central states and Midwest. This damaged both caterpillars and their food plants, slowing (or sometimes ending) their development. Nevertheless, there were so many exciting butterfly reports this year that there are many butterflies that stand out.

We've seen 4 exceptionally warm years out of the past 6 years: 2007, 2010, 2011 and 2012 -- with 2012 being the culminating record warm year with astonishing abundance of exceptional butterfly records. The following review not only points out some of the most remarkable butterflies of the year, but also incidentally reveals evidence for the effects of global warming on our butterflies. I want to call 2012 "a once-in-a-lifetime" butterfly year. But that will depend on what surprises the weather has in store for us in the coming years!

RED ADMIRAL -- Wisconsin has historically seen



invasions of Red Admirals about once every ten years. But lately the pace has quickened, possibly due to global warming, with 3

invasions in the past 6 years! This was the largest Red Admiral invasion in anyone's memory! I estimated that in late April they were streaming into Wisconsin across our southern border at the rate of 45,000 per minute! They came to be common in northern Wisconsin and Canada. (Also see Badger ButterFlyer May, 2012).

DAINTY SULPHUR -- The Dainty Sulphur is one



of our smallest butterflies. In an average year this immigrant species is either absent or found in small numbers in Wisconsin. On February 4, 2011, there was a snow and ice

storm in southern Texas that killed off Dainty Sulphurs. As a result, none were seen in Wisconsin that summer (2011). But 2012 has been an outstanding year: The Dainties appeared in the state

on May 28 and continued to build their population until they were often found to be the commonest butterfly at many sites! One site recorded as many as 350 individuals! And on what was probably the last day of the butterfly season (November 10) there was still 1 Dainty Sulphur left! This has been the best year for Dainty Sulphur in memory. Many observers got to see Dainties for the first time!

GRAY HAIRSTREAK Another small but



beautiful immigrant butterfly that came up from the South and was persistently seen throughout the season. In an average year, if you see one, you are doing good! They were

seen early (May 9) and were frequently reported, persisting in the state until October 24.

COMMON CHECKERED-SKIPPER



This immigrant from the South used to be rare. (I saw one in 1988 but not again until 19 years later, in 2007!) From 1991-2006 there were a few reports in 4 of the years. Then in 2007 there were a number of reports and a good number of

reports in 2010 and 2011. But 2012 has been the best year ever for the Common Checkered-Skipper. They even turned up in Central Wisconsin in May!

FIERY SKIPPER



This is a small but spiffy Skipper that comes into the state in late summer and is rather hyperactive. Normally it is rare to uncommon, but in 2012 they were common. Sometimes they were accompanied by the

SACHEM, another immigrant which is normally absent or rare but was frequently reported this year.

PIPEVINE SWALLOWTAIL



This very rare stray had no published reports in the 45 years prior to 2001! It was thought that Pipevine Swallowtails were no longer reaching Wisconsin. Then in 2001, the butterflies were found at Madison and Milwaukee.

In 2007 Pipevine Swallowtails were reported from 7 locations in the state! In 2010 they were found at one site and in 2011 they were reported at Ann Thering's garden in Middleton and at Olbrich Gardens in Madison from July 25 to September 12. But 2012 has seen the most reports ever and the earliest reports ever, beginning on May 21. By June 20 they had been seen in a record 16 counties! That is more sightings than all the preceding modern observations of this swallowtail! They continued to be reported until September 6.

(Also see Badger ButterFlyer, June 2012.)

THE RAREST OF 2012 BUTTERFLIES

BRAZILIAN SKIPPER Observed and photographed by Judith Huf on July 6, 2012 at Schlitz Audubon Nature Center in Milwaukee County. This stray from the South was a new species for the state! This is the first new butterfly on the state list since 2002. It brings the total of the Wisconsin Butterfly List to 157 by my count.

WESTERN WHITE Ashland County. Photographed on April 20, 2012 by Ryan Brady. This was only the 3rd record for Wisconsin. A stray from Minnesota.

ZEBRA SWALLOWTAIL



Photo by Lori Artiomow

This is a beautiful but very rare stray to Wisconsin. The caterpillar food plant (Paw Paw) does not even reach northern Illinois.

In the 30 years from 1969 - 1998 there was only a single sighting in Wisconsin.

Then in 1999 and 2000 there were single sightings. In 2007 there were 2 sightings and a single sighting in 2008, 2010 and 2011. But this year there were an unprecedented 5 reports of Zebra Swallowtail in the state. Even more incredible, one was photographed this year, in Ely, Minnesota, 90 miles north of Duluth!

SLEEPY ORANGE



Photo by Karl Legler (left) and Mike Reese (right).

Prior to 1969 this beautiful immigrant butterfly was quite rare in Wisconsin. Only after 18 years was there a single report of Sleepy Orange in 1987 and again 12 years later in

1999. Then, starting in 2007, we entered a period of warm years that was conducive to butterflies. In 2007 there were Sleepy Oranges seen at 6 sites in Wisconsin with up to 15 individuals at one site! Moreover in the past 6 years (2007 - 2012) 4 of the years have seen Sleepy Oranges. The caterpillar food plant is Senna which occurs sparingly in southwestern Wisconsin. Since two known sites with Senna have turned up Sleepy Oranges in 4 out of the past 6 years, this suggests that it would be worth while to plant good stands of Senna in Butterfly Gardens. Moreover, immigrant sulphurs tend to breed here forming a colony, e.g. in 2010 one colony of Sleepy Oranges had up to 20 individuals!

HORACE'S DUSKYWING First seen in Wisconsin in 1987 and 1988 but not again until the three recent warm years, (2010-2012). A stray from the south. Found in 2012 when the 6th and 7th records were photographed (Ann Thering August 15, 2012 Dane County; Karl and Dorothy Legler, September 6, 2012, Kenosha County.)

WHITE M HAIRSTREAK This is a very rare stray that was first seen in Wisconsin in 1930. It was not seen again for 80 years! Then in 2010 there were 4 reports! And in 2012 there were 3 reports, the 6th to 8th records. (Tom Elliott, May 27, Dane Co.; Terry Leasa, July 13, Fond du Lac Co.; Mike Reese, September 30, Grant Co.)

FUNERAL DUSKYWING This immigrant from Texas was first discovered in 2002 on the Trempealeau NABA Butterfly Count. Then there were 2 sightings in 2007, an amazing 6 sightings in 2010 and 2 sightings in 2012 -- the 10th and 11th record for this species. (John Davis, July 14, Crawford County; Steven Lubahn, September 12, Milwaukee County.)

5 BUTTERFLIES REPORTED IN OCTOBER TO www.wisconsinbutterflies.org

Twenty-six species were recorded in October. The most interesting were:

Gray Comma	Painted Lady	Common Checkered-Skipper
Common Buckeye	Red Admiral	Dainty Sulphur
Purplish Copper	Fiery Skipper	Little Yellow
Variegated Fritillary	Peck's Skipper	Black Swallowtail
Gray Hairstreak	Sachem	Checkered White

Butterflies took a hit with a low temperature of 23° on October 12. They took a bigger hit on October 27-29 with 3 nights of 25° or less. After that, observers reported finding just 1-2 butterflies. But reports continued until November 10.

CORRECTIONS: In the previous issue of Badger ButterFlyer (October), two sightings were overlooked. Mike Reese's discovery of a White M Hairstreak in Grant Co. on September 30 and the sighting of Funeral Duskywing by Steven Lubahn on September 12 in Milwaukee County should have been mentioned in the October issue in the article on September butterflies.

Also the sighting of the Funeral Duskywing by John Davis on July 14 in Crawford County (added later to the archives) should be added to the list of "Migrant/Immigrants From the South" in the August and September issues. That brings the number of migrants/immigrants for 2012 to a record high 24!

The Badger ButterFlyer flits to you every month except winter. The next issue will be in JANUARY.

Officers of SWBA:
President: Karl Legler
karlndot@charter.net
Vice-President: Dr. Douglas Buege
djbuege@gmail.com
Secretary: Dorothy Legler
Treasurer: Ginny Nelson

Other SWBA contributors:
e-Newsletter Editor: Karl Legler
karlndot@charter.net
Webmaster: Ann Thering
Butterfly Reporting:
Mike Reese at
www.wisconsinbutterflies.org

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.