

Badger ButterFlyer

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

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

1 NEXT MEETING Tuesday, October 23, 2012

Meet at 7:00 p.m. in Madison at the Warner Park Community Recreation Center, 1625 Northport Drive.

Program:

2012: An Extraordinary Year in Butterflies!

This presentation will be a retrospective and summary of the amazing sightings, and some of the most remarkable photographs, that **Mike Reese's** wisconsinbutterflies.org website has received during 2012. Some species were unusually abundant while others were scarce. What southern strays turned up along Lake Superior? How did endangered species do this year? How did the unprecedented warm March effect butterflies? How did the severe drought affect our butterflies? What was being seen in butterfly gardens? Was 2012 a very good butterfly year? Mostly yes! Mike Reese will provide the overview.

Mike Reese receives reports on many thousands of butterflies and photos from all over the state at his award-winning website, wisconsinbutterflies.org, and scours the state to find and photograph Wisconsin butterflies.

Everyone is welcome to attend this free program. The meeting will last from **7:00 p.m. to 8:45 p.m.** We will have displays, books (including a new North American field guide), handouts and plenty of time afterwards to enjoy snacks and refreshments, and talk with our speakers and other butterfly 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.

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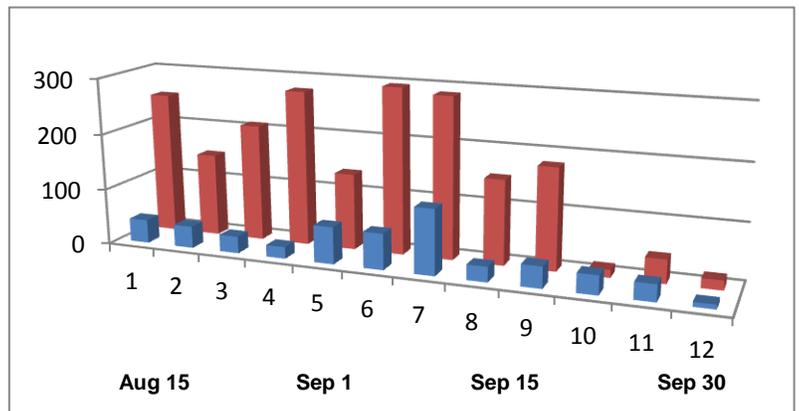


Fiery Skipper (male)

2 MONARCH MIGRATION 2012

In a previous issue of Badger ButterFlyer we learned that NABA counts in late June to mid July showed the southern Wisconsin population of Monarchs was down 23% below the average of the past 24 years.

But we can make use of other Wisconsin data obtained later in the season: Mike Reese's website wisconsinbutterflies.org. The chart shows the total number of Monarchs reported during Monarch migration (August 15 -- September 30). Migration during two years, **2010 (red)** and **2012 (blue)** is shown. 2010 was a very good year for Monarchs in Wisconsin. That year they doubled their population. But with a historically low population, the Monarchs needed more



successes like 2010. By comparison 2012 (**blue**) was a poor year for Monarchs. The population Wisconsin has produced is only 1/4 of the 2010 population. It looks like

the drought of 2012 has had a serious impact on our Monarch population.

We can confirm this at the national level by looking at the Monarch Migration Maps for 2012 produced by Journey North, which tracks the annual spring and fall flight of Monarchs. Their map for 2012 shows an unusually large migration along the Atlantic Coast but a very noticeably weak migration in the Midwest:

http://www.learner.org/jnorth/monarch/fall2012/c10041_2_pathway.html

You can compare with the 2010 peak migration map to see what a very favorable migration looks like. Just click on

http://www.learner.org/jnorth/maps/monarch_f10_peak.html



The exact pathway Monarchs from the east travel to Mexico is not known in detail. But this year, because the movements of the eastern Monarchs are not swamped by the data from the (usually) higher density Midwestern Monarchs, the specific route that the eastern Monarchs take to reach Mexico should show up clearly in this year's migration.

The low population in the Midwest is unfortunate because the Midwest normally has the highest density of Monarchs! Of course, we won't know exactly how well or poorly the Monarchs have fared, until the Monarchs from all over the eastern U. S. reach Mexico, and an estimate of the population is made at the Mexican overwintering grounds in December.

3 WISCONSIN DNR PROPOSES LISTING OTTOE SKIPPER AS ENDANGERED

The Ottoe Skipper (pronounced ah-TOE'-ee) is a rare resident butterfly in Wisconsin. It is currently known from only about 4 sites in the state. But it used to be more common. Years ago I can remember finding them without too much difficulty at Spring Green Preserve (Sauk Co.) and Muralt Prairie (Green Co.). They have declined over the past 20 years, so the new proposed listing is welcome. The decline is due to loss of habitat and the excessive use of fire in land management (too large of an area burned and burned too frequently).

The Ottoe is a skipper of tallgrass prairies, hill prairies, grasslands and sand prairies. The



Male. Photo by Mike Reese

caterpillar food plant is little bluestem and other grasses.

A 2010 DNR summary of the Ottoe Skipper in Wisconsin is at

http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/endangeredresources/documents/Hesperia_ottoe_3-5-12.pdf

A recent article in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel on line, on the proposed changes to the Endangered and Threatened List, has a few words of wisdom from SWBA member, Tod Highsmith. To read the article click on:

<http://www.jsonline.com/news/wisconsin/state-proposes-taking-16-species-off-protected-list-adding-8-cb73n32-172740491.html>

4 A NEW GUIDE TO NORTH AMERICAN BUTTERFLIES

A Swift Guide to Butterflies of North America by Jeffrey Glassberg

According to the advertisement, this guide is:

"The most user-friendly butterfly field guide ever created! This *Swift Guide* illustrates, with **3500 gorgeous full color photographs**, all of the butterflies found in North America, including strays. For most species, both topsides and undersides, males and females, and variants are shown. Caterpillars and caterpillar foodplants are shown for many species.

Hundreds of new field marks allow easy identification of most species. The verbal descriptions are connected to the actual field marks by arrows, showing you exactly what to look for. Succinct field marks allow easy identification of most species. Arrows show you exactly what to look for. Detailed range maps include information about number of broods in each area and where strays have occurred. Color boxes give caterpillar foodplants [green box], abundance and flight period [black], habitat [gray], comments [brown], and more.



Two page spread from *A Swift Guide to Butterflies of North America* by Jeffrey Glassberg.

Includes a caterpillar foodplant index and a quick visual index. 415 pages and a trim size of 5 inches by 8 inches allows easy field use. Glassberg's books have introduced thousands of people to the beauty and excitement of butterflies. The *Swift Guide* takes the next step!"

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>
(We should have a copy available for perusal at the October 23 Meeting.)

5 BUTTERFLIES REPORTED IN SEPTEMBER TO www.wisconsinbutterflies.org

Here are the eight most common butterflies of this September, followed by the highest number seen in a single day reported by

a single observer:

Dainty Sulphur (350)
Monarch (60)
Cabbage White (50)
Fiery Skipper (50)
Clouded Sulphur (40)
Orange Sulphur (35)
Eastern Tailed-Blue (26)
Mourning Cloak (22)

Additional highest single day reports:

Red Admiral (20)
Sachem (20)
Little Yellow (18)
Common Buckeye (15)
There were several reports of
Painted Lady (9 counties)
and
Checkered White (6 counties)

Other good sightings are listed below with county and date:

Bronze Copper Trempealeau (9/14)
Purplish Copper: two sightings in northern Wis.
Harvester: Marquette (9/5)
Dion Skipper: Burnett (9/1)
Leonards Skipper: 5 reported from Dane on 9/10.
Wild Indigo Duskywing: Rock (9/12)
Horace's Duskywing: Kenosha (9/6)
American Snout: Grant (9/29)
Sleepy Orange: Iowa (9/2 and 9/24)
Pipevine Swallowtail: Dane (9/3) (up to 5 seen on 9/4). Two seen in Milwaukee (9/6 and 9/16).



Horace's Duskywing

There were no new immigrant species found in September.

The best sightings were the very rare **Horace's Duskywing**, **Sleepy Orange** -- which continued its flight in Iowa County, and **Pipevine Swallowtails** at

Olbrich Botanical Garden in Madison and at Boerner Botanical Garden in Milwaukee. Unusual was the late **Dion Skipper**.

The late **American Snout** of September 29, points up a curious coincidence:

In 2012 a single American Snout was reported in September, on September 29.

In 2011 a single American Snout was reported in September, on September 29 !

In 2010 a single American Snout was reported in September, on September 29 !!

(Other years do not agree: in 2008 and 2009 no American Snouts were seen in any month. And in 2007 many American Snouts were seen, but the last was on August 10.) These late September dates indicate a few isolated 3rd brood individuals. (But even so, some degree of coincidence is also involved!)

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

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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.