

Badger ButterFlyer

The e-Newsletter of the Southern Wisconsin Butterfly Association **AUGUST, 2013**

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

1 NEXT FIELD TRIPS Mark your calendar!

Butterflies of the Avoca/Blue River Area Saturday, August 10, 10:30 a.m.- 4 p.m.

In some years this can be the best butterfly trip of the year! This trip will highlight several areas in the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway, including Avoca Prairie and Savanna State Natural Area in Iowa County, and Blue River unit in Grant County. Leader will be **Mike Reese**. We expect to see late butterflies and several unusual southern immigrants. A hat and long pants are recommended. Bring a lunch and binoculars (the closer they focus the better). A few extra binoculars are available. This is a joint trip of the Southern Wis. Butterfly Association and Madison Audubon Society. Meet at 10:30 a.m. The trip may last until 4 p.m. Allow 50 minute travel time from Middleton. **DIRECTIONS:** Take Hwy 14 west to Lone Rock, south on Hwy 130 then turn right on Hwy 133. Go west about 5.0 miles, turn right on Hay Road, and drive north to the parking lot just before the creek. Call Mike at (920) 787-2341 only if you have a question about the trip.

IN THIS ISSUE:

1. **NEXT FIELD TRIPS:**
 - ▶ Butterflies of the Avoca/Blue River Area, Saturday, August 10.
 - ▶ Butterflies and Blossoms at Pheasant Branch, Saturday, August 24.
2. **NEXT MEETING:** Weds., Oct. 9
3. **HIGHLIGHTS OF RECENT TRIPS**
 - Butterflies & Dragonflies of Summerton Bog
 - Pretty Things with Wings
 - Flowers and Butterflies of Schurch-Thomson Prairie
 - Prairie Restoration for Karner Blues
4. **TEXAS BUTTERFLY FESTIVAL**
5. A guide to Rio Grande Butterflies.
6. Butterfly Reports of June/July, 2013

Butterflies and Blossoms at Pheasant Branch Conservancy Saturday, August 24: 10:00 a.m.- noon

Join us on a walk through the lovely Pheasant Branch Conservancy in Middleton. The many beautiful asters should be in bloom, and we hope lots of butterflies will be nectaring on these flowers. We can expect several species, including Monarchs, sulfurs, blues, and possibly some southern immigrants, such as Common Buckeye and Painted Lady. You never know what you may find! We will also learn more about restoration efforts at the conservancy. Long pants, a hat, water, and sturdy hiking shoes are recommended. Close-focusing binoculars are also useful. (We will have a few extra binoculars.) We will hike two or three miles. Leader is **Dreux Watermolen**.

Co-sponsors are SWBA, Friends of the Pheasant Branch Conservancy and the Madison Audubon Society. Contact the trip leader only if you have a question about the trip: Dreux Watermolen: (608) 266-8931, dreux.watermolen@Wisconsin.gov.

Meet in Middleton at 10:00 a.m. The trip will last about 2 hours. **Directions:** At the west end of Lake Mendota take Allen Boulevard north, then turn left on Century Avenue (Co. M). Track your mileage as you turn right onto Old Creek Road and then right on Pheasant Branch Road going north 1.2 miles to the small county parking lot on the right, at the beginning of the gated road.

2 NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD IN FITCHBURG!

The next SWBA meeting will be held on **Wednesday, OCTOBER 9, 2013** at a new location, the meeting room of the Fitchburg Public Library, 5530 Lacy Road, Fitchburg, WI. Our thanks to Ann Thering for calling our attention to these outstanding facilities! Mike Reese will give his annual presentation on The Year in Butterflies as seen through the thousands of reports and photos submitted to his website, wisconsinbutterflies.org

Details will appear in next month's newsletter.

3 HIGHLIGHTS OF RECENT FIELD TRIPS

Highlights of Butterflies and Dragonflies of Summerton Bog

20 people participated in this field trip, which was the first time we have had a trip to Summerton Bog State Natural Area. We had a nice view of the bog area. Even though our search for butterflies and dragonflies was limited to a few acres (out of the 480 acres), in about 2 hours we found 17 species!



After the walk in the prairie we ate lunch at the farm of the leader, **Dan Sonnenberg**, who lives nearby. We appreciated the shaded picnic table, restroom, and the barn which is decorated with large wooden cutouts of the butterflies that have been seen in Marquette County! They show the relative sizes of familiar butterflies and are scaled at 1 foot = 1 inch. The Giant Swallowtail is 5 feet across. Can you identify some of these butterflies?



A few of the many wooden butterfly cutouts that adorn the side of the Sonnenberg barn.

(The answers are at the end of this newsletter. The first one in the first row is actually a hybrid of two subspecies, Red-spotted Purple and White Admiral. This hybrid occurs in central Wisconsin.)

Here are the butterflies seen on this trip:

Black Swallowtail 1
Cabbage White 2
Clouded Sulphur 3
Orange Sulphur 2
American Copper 5
Coral Hairstreak 1
Eastern Tailed-Blue 4

Great Spangled Fritillary 9
Pearl Crescent 2
Baltimore Checkerspot 1
Common Buckeye 2
Common Wood Nymph 15
Monarch 2
Silver-spotted Skipper 3

Northern Broken Dash 1
Black Dash 2
Dun Skipper 3

Highlights of Pretty Things with Wings: (Birds, Butterflies and Dragonflies of Lakeshore Nature preserve)

The most unusual butterfly seen on this trip was a Northern Pearly-eye. They are one of our two most shade-loving butterflies -- the other is the Appalachian Brown. Other species noted were Black Swallowtail, Cabbage White, Orange Sulphur, Great Spangled Fritillary, and Pearl Crescent.



Northern Pearly-eye
Photo by Edgar Spalding.

Highlights of Flowers and Butterflies of Schurch-Thomson Prairie

It was 85° and sunny with 20 people hiking in the prairie, enjoying the flowers and 21 species of butterflies -- including the endangered Regal Fritillary! Below is the final tally.

Black Swallowtail 2
Cabbage White 3
Clouded Sulphur 6
Orange Sulphur 3
American Copper 1
Coral Hairstreak 3
Eastern Tailed-Blue 6

Summer Azure 1
Variegated Fritillary 1
Great Spangled Fritillary 20+
Regal Fritillary 15+
Silver-bordered Fritillary 3
Meadow Fritillary 3
Pearl Crescent 9

Red Admiral 2
Common Buckeye 9
Red-spotted Purple 1
Common Wood Nymph 9
Monarch 2
Common Sootywing 2
Dun Skipper 3



Variegated Fritillary



HAND OF DAN: Dan Sonnenberg, displays a knack for coaxing butterflies (and other insects) onto his hand. From left: fly, robber fly, Coral Hairstreak, tiny bee. (Apparently, Dan is very sweet.)
Photo by Stan Rehm.

Highlights of Prairie Restoration for Karner Blues



Karner Blue

The **Karner Blue** butterfly is Federally Endangered. Wisconsin has the largest population of Karners in the country. Leader **John Shillinglaw** purchased 200 acres on the Mecan River, in Waushara Co., starting in 1985. He introduced wild lupine and now has a nice population of Karner Blues. 13 participants enjoyed the beautiful prairies, and lots of Karner Blues were flying. A few Cherry-faced Meadowhawks (dragonflies) were seen.

Two of the participants, **Dave and Shelly Hamel**--see photo-- have Karner Blues on their own property. This illustrates one of the rare but serious complications of watching Karner Blues for too many hours under the hot sun. Called "Karner-on-the-brain", these vestigial "wings", while painless, nevertheless are nearly useless for flying. Fortunately, there is a procedure that will remove the "wings" from the head without damaging sensitive areas. (At press time it was not known whether their insurance would cover the procedure.) Good luck, Dave and Shelly!



We found 17 species listed below:

Black Swallowtail 2
Clouded Sulphur 2
Orange Sulphur 3
American Copper 7
Coral Hairstreak 2
Eastern Tailed-Blue 5

Karner Blue 30+
Great Spangled Fritillary 2
Gorgone Checkerspot 2
Northern Crescent 1
Mourning Cloak 1
Common Buckeye 2

Common Wood Nymph 4
Monarch
Northern Broken Dash
Delaware Skipper 1
Dun Skipper 2

4 REMINDER:

18TH ANNUAL TEXAS BUTTERFLY FESTIVAL!

Join us for the nation's premier butterflying event!



Saturday, Nov. 2 – Tuesday, Nov. 5, 2013

Now a special production of NABA's National Butterfly Center, this year's event will feature:

Field Trips & Educational Activities for Beginners – Experts
The first 'Big Day of Butterflying' Species Count Competition
A North American Butterfly Photo Contest

Come to the Rio Grande Valley!

One of the most biologically diverse areas in North America sits along the border, between Texas and Mexico, where the Rio Grande winds its way toward the Laguna Madre. The Lower Rio Grande Valley (LRGV), in deep South Texas, encompasses no fewer than 11 different types of habitat, including tidal wetlands and riparian forest; and this region is home to more than 1,200 different species of plants, 500 species of birds, 200 vertebrate species, roughly 300 species of butterflies, and over 90 species of dragonflies!

The Rio Grande Valley has earned worldwide recognition for its outstanding butterfly and birding spots, inviting thousands of visitors each year to discover its remarkable assortment of preserves, refuges, nature parks, trails, and more.



**Red-bordered
Pixie**

This year, the **National Butterfly Center** is honored to host the **18th Annual Texas Butterfly Festival**. Our goal is to provide attendees a fulfilling and rewarding experience. From November 2 - 5, 2013, attendees will spend 3 days exploring renowned public lands and private properties with world-class trip leaders and expert guides. The Festival is taking place during prime butterfly season, when you may reasonably expect to see 60 or more species in a day.

Three Events in One Week

It's official! Two other great events are scheduled to occur in the days following the Texas Butterfly Festival: The **20th Annual Rio Grande Valley Birding Festival** and the **Focus on Diversity Conference**. Plan to visit for one, two or all three special events!

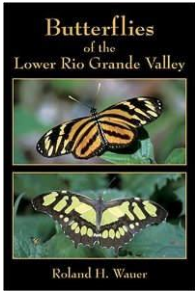
FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO REGISTER, GO TO THE WEBSITE:

<http://www.texasbutterflyfestival.com/>

5 A GUIDE TO RIO GRANDE VALLEY BUTTERFLIES

A book that is useful for butterflying in southern Texas is:

Butterflies of the Lower Rio Grande Valley, by Roland H. Wauer (2004) \$19.37 on Amazon. Here is Amazon's book blurb: "Roland Wauer's *Butterflies of the Lower Rio Grande Valley* is the only field guide to cover all the reported species in what he calls the "number one butterfly area" in the country. His book includes a description of each species, when and where they can be found, a comparison of similar species, and additional remarks on natural history and nomenclature. Full-color photographs of almost all



of the butterflies accompany the text. The book covers the area along the Rio Grande River in a band up to twenty miles north, beginning at the Gulf of Mexico and running 135 miles west to Falcon Dam. More like semitropical Mexico than anywhere else in the United States, the mild winters and hot, humid summers result in a rich diversity of plants and, therefore, butterflies, many of which do not occur farther north. The book begins with a guide to the twenty best sites for butterfly watching in the Valley, including the North American Butterfly Association's [National Butterfly Center], located near Bentsen-Rio Grande Valley State Park. The first facility of its kind, the [Center] has a series of gardens designed to attract butterflies and, according to the author, "is destined to become the single most important butterfly viewing site in North America."

Another excellent resource for butterflying in southern Texas is Jeffrey Glassberg's **A Swift Guide to Butterflies of North America** (2013) \$29.95 at Amazon.

Also of interest is **Finding Butterflies in Texas: A Guide to the best sites**, by Roland H. Wauer. (2006). \$16.95 on Amazon.

6 BUTTERFLIES REPORTED IN JUNE/JULY AT www.wisconsinbutterflies.org

Great Spangled Fritillaries have been occurring in record numbers this year. **Common Buckeyes** have turned up with surprising frequency again this year. Butterflies have been more abundant in the north than in southern Wisconsin. However, butterflies continue to produce surprises; they aren't done yet. The scarce **Greenish Blue** was seen only on July 1-2. **Bog Copper** has been seen throughout July. **Gray Copper** was flying in the first half of July. A very rare butterfly, **Tawny Crescent**, was reported in numbers in Bayfield Co. on Jun 26-27. **Variegated Fritillary** was found on July 14 & 20. **Gray Hairstreak** has not been seen since June 13. Some **Painted Ladies** continue to be seen. **Swamp Metalmark** seen on July 15. Only a single **Fiery Skipper** was reported in June, and a **Sachem** was seen on June 7. A single **American Snout** was reported on July 8. **Dainty Sulphur** was reported on July 24 & 29. **Little Yellow** was seen on July 11 & 23. **Giant Swallowtails** have been seen since June 1. A single **Pipevine Swallowtail** was reported on June 23.

KEEP SENDING YOUR REPORTS TO www.wisconsinbutterflies.org

The Badger ButterFlyer flits to you every month (every other month in winter). The next issue will be in SEPTEMBER.

ANSWERS TO BARN BUTTERFLIES:

First row: Hybrid, Checkered White, Eyed Brown, White-M Hairstreak, Painted Lady, Red Admiral.

Second row: Monarch, Eastern Comma, Orange Sulphur, Giant Swallowtail, Banded Hairstreak, Little Yellow.

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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.