

Badger Butterfly

The e-Newsletter of the Southern Wisconsin Butterfly Association **OCT.-NOVEMBER, 2013**

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

1 FIRST SWBA MEETING HELD AT FITCHBURG PUBLIC LIBRARY



A sunny group of butterfly enthusiasts! Photo by UW Entomologist, Dave Hogg.

On October 9, we had a great turnout of 33 butterfly enthusiasts for our first meeting at the new facilities at Fitchburg Public Library! SWBA's President, Dr. Douglas Buege, emceed the festivities. We heard an informative report by Mike Reese on the ups and downs of 2013 butterflies, via some of the photos he has taken, or photos and reports that were submitted to Mike's award-winning website. Dorothy Legler gave a presentation on different methods for sowing seeds for butterfly gardens (fall sowing, winter sowing and spring seed starting).

Karl Legler showed video of Texas butterflies taken in 2002 at the Texas Butterfly Festival. He also received a (surprise) SWBA award for "lifetime achievement", presented by Dr. Buege. It was a lamp in the form of a butterfly.

Our thanks to Ginny Nelson, who provided free Swamp Milkweed and Whorled Milkweed plants, and thanks to Stan Rehm, who provided free seeds for butterfly gardens, and to Dorothy Legler who provided the delicious refreshments.



2 NEW STATE RECORD BUTTERFLY SEEN: OCOLA SKIPPER !!

Ocola Skipper at Olbrich Botanical Gardens

By Ann Thering

I was having a crazy day, and almost didn't make it to Olbrich Botanical Gardens on October 1. But it was beautiful and sunny, and you never know what you may find, so off I went. The lovely wedding garden – planted with Gomphrena (globe amaranth), mistflower, zinnia, salvia, and other plants – had attracted many immigrant species

already this year, most notably Gray Hairstreak and Checkered White. Several rare butterflies have been found at Olbrich in past years, including Pipevine Swallowtail, Funereal Duskywing, and Horace's Duskywing.

After visiting the herb garden, where Monarchs were mobbing the butterfly bush, I wandered over to the wedding garden. Soon, a medium-sized brown grass skipper caught my eye. I thought to myself: "I haven't seen this species before." I started to photograph the butterfly before it vanished. The worn insect was missing most of its fringe as well as a chunk from one hindwing. The forewings were much longer than the hindwings, a big clue to its identity, I later learned. It moved about constantly, and zipped away, flying low, whenever anyone passed by. The skipper favored *Gomphrena*, particularly the light pink variety. It took awhile to get a shot of the butterfly with open wings, which showed two arrowhead-shaped spots as well as smaller spots.

Once home, I studied my images and debated the Wisconsin skipper possibilities for a little while, but nothing fit. Then I opened my field guide and, bingo, there it was! An Ocola Skipper! Okay, now we are talking excited. A lifer, and a state record! The



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butterfly used to be called the Long-Winged Skipper for its long forewings. It also has a sporty racing stripe on its abdomen. Found along the Gulf Coast from Texas to Florida, and north to South Carolina, this skipper sometimes moves north later in summer. It's a rare vagrant from Massachusetts to the lower Midwest, and the southwest. Sugarcane, rice, and other grasses are reported as host plants.

I emailed some images to Mike Reese for verification, which he kindly did. I had completely forgotten that Mike had predicted last year that someone might find this skipper—the chances seemed slim that I would be lucky enough to spot it. But indeed 33 grass skipper species have now been sighted in Wisconsin. A big thanks to Olbrich Gardens for planting so many great nectar plants and providing such a beautiful place to walk. With global warming, it has been predicted that some butterflies will

continue to expand their ranges, and that their number of broods will increase.

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 10 years and love them!

The 8.5x 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 Papilio, 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.

MEMBERSHIP

- **Membership in SWBA** is always an excellent gift. SWBA is a Wisconsin chapter of NABA (North American Butterfly Association) and when you join NABA you automatically become a member of SWBA. Membership includes the quarterly publications **American Butterflies** and **Butterfly Gardening**. **NABA-CHAT** is a discussion list forum provided to NABA members to allow them to communicate with their fellow members about butterflies and related topics. Only NABA members have access to this forum. Membership for individual is \$30, family \$40.

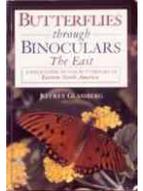
To **Join NABA/SWBA** print out the form on our website

www.naba.org/chapters/nabawba/membershipform.html and mail it.

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 below.)
- 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 below.)
- 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 last 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 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.)



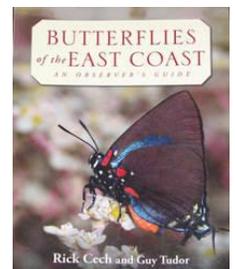
Quick-Index to the Butterflies of Wisconsin.

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 species that occur in Wis.

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

Butterfly Field Guides for Other States.

- 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.
- **The Butterflies of Iowa** (2007). Dennis W. Schlicht, John C. Downey, and Jeffrey C. Nekola. \$25.69
- **The Butterflies of Indiana: A Field Guide** (2012) Jeffrey E. Belth. \$14.44



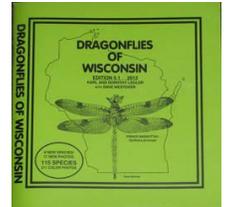
- **Butterflies of the Lower Rio Grande** (2004). Roland H. Wauer. \$29.95

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**. (2013) \$16.00 Updated: 211 color photos covering all 115 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

- "**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 a NABA member 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>
- Judy Burns and Wayne Richards. **The Life Cycles of Butterflies: From egg to Maturity, a Visual Guide to 23 Common Garden Butterflies**. (2006) 160 pages. \$13.58 at Amazon.com
- **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>
- **NABA online store**. A source of many interesting butterfly related items at www.butterflybuzz.com (Anyone can shop here, but NABA members receive a 10% discount!)

4 WINTER SOWING FOR THE BUTTERFLY GARDEN

By Dorothy Legler

Many gardeners have never heard of "winter sowing". The seeds of most *native* plants need a prolonged period of cold in order to germinate. Winter sowing is a fun alternative to planting seeds indoors under lights or on window sills. It involves planting seeds in containers and leaving them outdoors. This includes hardy annuals, perennials, biennials, shrubs and tree seeds.

It's important to keep records of when and what you planted. January and February are the best times to plant. Any container will work, but 1 gallon milk jugs are great. Cut the jug horizontally, in half, just below the handle, leaving some attached to make a hinge. Poke drainage holes in the bottom and fill with moistened potting soil 1" below the cut edge. Plant seeds and seal the jug closed with clear packaging tape. Make sure to label them. Leave the cap off. Set the jug outside in a location that is sunny and has exposure to rain and snow.

As the weather warms you may have to open the jug by day and close at night. Leave the jugs open when the danger of frost is past, and then transplant. You will perhaps have some failures and hopefully lots of success; so keep records. Check out the many sites on the internet with information on how to winter sow.



Plastic 1 gallon milk jug converted for winter sowing.

5 HIGHLIGHTS OF BUTTERFLIES REPORTED IN OCTOBER-NOVEMBER

AT www.wisconsinbutterflies.org

A new state record, **Ocola Skipper**, was found at Olbrich Gardens in Madison on October 1 by Ann Thering. (See article#2.) At the beginning of October, as many as 15 species at a time were being reported. The two best areas were the Mississippi River and Olbrich. The last strong reports (9 to 11 species) were on October 9 to 11.

RESIDENT SPECIES:

The last report of **Purplish Copper** was Oct 8. The last **Black Swallowtail** and **Bronze Copper** were seen on Oct. 11, and the last **Silver-spotted Skipper** was sighted on Oct. 13. After October 11 the butterflies were sparser. And beginning on October 19 there was night after night of hard freeze. It is always amazing to see the resiliency of some butterflies under such extreme conditions.



Purplish Copper (male)



Common Checkered-Skipper

IMMIGRANTS:

Although 2013 seemed to be a poor year for immigrants from the South, in the fall the immigrant species started showing up. 37 **Dainty Sulphurs** were seen on Oct. 1 and 1 was seen in Douglas Co. on the 10th. 3 of the tiny Dainty Sulphurs were seen at Cassville on October 27. **Common Buckeyes** seemed to be fairly common until the last part of October. 3 **Gray Hairstreaks** were seen in first half of October. Several **Painted Ladies** were seen. **Fiery Skippers** were seen occasionally and **Sachem** was seen by 4 reporters. There were 2 reports of **Common Checkered-Skipper** in October and a single report of **Little Yellow** on Oct. 1. The last migrant butterfly reported was a very tardy **Monarch** on November 5!

Finally, an overwintering species, **Mourning Cloak**, closed out the year on November 30!

6 PROPOSED LISTING OF POWESHEIK SKIPPERLING AS FEDERALLY ENDANGERED

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Proposes Endangered Species Act Protection for Two Butterflies

Two butterflies, the Dakota Skipper and the Poweshiek Skipperling, have been proposed for

protection under the Endangered Species Act due to steep population declines, according to the U.S.

Fish and Wildlife Service. The Service has proposed the Dakota Skipper (which is not found in Wisconsin) as a threatened species. It has experienced a dramatic decline in numbers and no longer occurs on half the sites where previously found.

The **Poweshiek Skipperling is proposed as (Federally) endangered**. This butterfly, once found in eight states and Canada, now occurs only in a few native prairie remnants in Wisconsin and Michigan, and in Manitoba, Canada. Surveys indicate that Poweshiek skipperlings are gone from nearly 90 percent of the sites where they were previously found. Today in Wisconsin, they inhabit two locations in the southern Kettle Moraine Forest in Waukesha County and a third site, the Puchyan Prairie State Natural Area in Green Lake County. (The Poweshiek Skipperling has been classified as state-endangered, since 1989.) Both butterfly species use prairie habitat and are threatened by degradation or changes to their habitat.



Under the Endangered Species Act, endangered species are plants and animals that are in danger of becoming extinct. Threatened species are those that may become endangered in the foreseeable future. The Endangered Species Act protects listed species from take - which includes harming, harassing,

injuring or killing – and conserves habitat designated as critical for the species’ survival and recovery.

Critical habitat is defined by the Endangered Species Act as areas that contain habitat features that are essential for the conservation and recovery of a listed species, which may require special management considerations or protections. (A critical habitat designation imposes no requirements on state or private actions on state or private lands where no federal funding, permits or approvals are required.) No private land is affected in Wisconsin.

For the Poweshiek skipperling, the Service is proposing to designate 63 tracts, ranging in size from 23 acres to 2,887 acres, in Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin as critical habitat for the Poweshiek skipperling (two tracts in Wisconsin). Over the next year, they will evaluate whether any of these tracts may be excluded from the final critical habitat designation. To assist with this evaluation, the Service seeks input from the public and individual landowners on specific tracts proposed as critical habitat or other aspects of the critical habitat proposal. The public may also comment on the proposal to list as endangered. **Comments may be submitted through December 23, 2013.**

To comment, go to <http://www.regulations.gov>

Enter the code FWS-R3-ES-2013-0043 for commenting on listing as endangered.

Enter the code FWS-R3-ES-2013-0017 for commenting on critical habitat.

For detailed information see the 53 page PDF file:

http://www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered/insects/dask/pdf/FRpropListDASK_POSK24Oct2013.pdf

7 ODDBALLS: DOES THE JUTTA ARCTIC'S TWO YEAR LIFE CYCLE VARY ACROSS NORTHERN WISCONSIN?

By Ann B. Swengel

How could a pattern so dramatic not be obvious as we were experiencing it? When I think of Jutta Arctic, what I remember most is the struggle to get good enough weather for our slogs through all the bogs we want to check across northern Wisconsin each year. I recall their spunky flights through shadowy tree groves, then alighting on a tree trunk, snapping wings shut, and tilting. Jutta has a reputation for a two-year life cycle, with a tendency in parts of its range to fly primarily in either odd or even years, but in both

odd and even years elsewhere. We've easily found Jutta Arctic each year in Wisconsin since we began systematic annual bog surveys during their flight period (usually late May into June) in 2002.



But when we subdivided our data into subregions, dramatically different abundance patterns materialized. Northeast Wisconsin (Forest and Oneida Counties) wildly oscillated between very low numbers in even years (but found each of those years in a few bogs) and impressive

peaks in odd years. Over our twelve-year study period, the lowest odd year was over 8 times higher in observation rate (individuals per hour) than the highest even year. The average ratio of odd to even years is about 20 to 1! Within odd or even years, abundance varied 2-3 fold, familiar from other butterflies' fluctuations.

Meanwhile, in North Central (Ashland and Price Counties) and Northwest (Douglas County), 2008 was our best Jutta year ever. North Central had higher abundance consistently enough in even years during 2002-13 for this pattern to be statistically significant. But it's not nearly as regular or obvious as the reverse pattern right next door in Northeast,

so it's not as clear whether this pattern will continue in North Central.

Calling all butterflyers: please watch for even-odd patterns of Jutta abundance. Are there any bogs in Northeast Wisconsin that aren't dramatically lower in even than odd years? Moving northeast into Michigan, does the even-odd pattern become even stronger? Are there sites there where you do a lot of visits but can't find Jutta in even years at all? Moving south and west and northwest in Wisconsin, do you find a gradual or abrupt transition away from the dramatic Northeast pattern? Are there other pockets of dramatic even-odd oscillations elsewhere in northern Wisconsin? I hope you'll help figure this out!

8 TWO UPCOMING EVENTS IN 2014

SWBA Will Have a Display Booth at Garden Expo February 7-9, 2014.

We participated in Garden Expo in 2008 and 2009. There could be 20,000 visitors! This year SWBA will have displays and expects to sell books and butterfly garden seeds to raise money for butterfly conservation. Stop over and say hello! We will have more information in the next newsletter.

NABA Biennial Meeting to be in Tennessee: June 12-15, 2014

Every other year NABA (North American Butterfly Association) holds a 4-day get-together somewhere in the U.S. for daily field trips, educational programs and nightly banquets. We get to see a different part of the country and to encounter different species of butterflies. Details will appear in a later newsletter.

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

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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.