

Badger ButterFlyer

The e-Newsletter of the Southern Wisconsin Butterfly Association **September, 2014**

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

1 NEXT MEETING ON WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 15

The next SWBA meeting will be held on **Wednesday, October 15, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.**, in the meeting room of the **Fitchburg Public Library, 5530 Lacy Road, Fitchburg, WI.** (mark your calendar!) **(SEE DIRECTIONS ON NEXT PAGE.)**



West

East

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 - ◆ Flowers, Butterflies and Birds of Shea Prairie.
 - ◆ Butterflies of Avoca / BlueRiver.
 - ◆ Butterflies and Blossoms at Pheasant Branch Conservancy.
3. **The 2014 Monarch population in southern Wisconsin.**
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 - ◆ Monarch Waystations.
5. **Texas Butterfly Festival Nov 1-4.**
6. **Butterfly Reports of August.**

Public Programs:

2014: The Year in Butterflies (Mike Reese)

Every butterfly year is different and has its own uniqueness and idiosyncrasies. As the 2014 butterfly season winds down, it will be good to sit back and take stock of how butterflies fared this year. In this 45 minute informative program, educator and butterfly expert, Mike Reese, will show some of the dazzling photos he has taken this year or that have been submitted to his award-winning website, wisconsinbutterflies.org, and tell about the most fascinating and significant butterfly encounters around the state for 2014. He will explain which butterflies were up and which were down.

In Praise of the Tiger Swallowtail (Professor Dave Hogg)

The centerpiece of this 30 minute presentation is an unsigned, hand painted, Civil War era illustration of this butterfly, and specifically the detective work Dave undertook to conclude that the artist was probably W.J. Holland (1848-1932), a recognized lepidopterist and author of several popular books: *The Butterfly Book* (1898) and *The Moth Book* (1903). Other aspects of Tiger Swallowtails will be discussed, including the presumed mimicry exhibited by the dark form of the female. Professor Hogg is Chair of the UW-Madison Entomology Department.



Eastern Tiger Swallowtail

Everyone is welcome to attend this free program.

The meeting will last from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. We will have displays, books, handouts and plenty of time afterward to enjoy *delicious* snacks and refreshments, and talk with our speakers and other butterfly enthusiasts.

DIRECTIONS TO MEETING:

From the Beltline, take Fish Hatchery Road (= County D) south for about 2.4 miles and turn left (east) at Lacy Rd. After 1 block the library is on the left, at the intersection of Lacey Rd. and Research Park Rd. Continue on Lacy and take the entrance road around the far (east) end of the library to access parking near the entrance, (behind the library).

OR if you prefer to park underground, turn left (north) onto Research Park Rd and then turn right into the ramp leading to the underground parking lot.

2 HIGHLIGHTS OF RECENT FIELD TRIPS

PAGE CREEK MARSH AND JOHN MUIR PARK (July 12)

This was an outstanding field trip! Our thanks to co-leaders **Dan Sonnenberg** and **Dr. Douglas Buege**. In spite of overcast skies and some sprinkles in the afternoon, there was an abundance of butterflies. Seventeen people scoured the area, and found 26 species. Several people found "life-butterflies", a butterfly that they had never seen before, adding it to their "butterfly life-list". The **Hickory Hairstreak** is seldom seen, but in spite of substantial wing loss, it could be identified. It was a Marquette County record! Other exceptional finds included **Striped Hairstreak**, **Little Glassywing**, **Appalachian Brown**, **Mulberry Wing** and **Dion Skipper**. The Dion is normally an inhabitant of sedge meadows but was found in an upper meadow, more than 100 yards away from the wetland. After lunch, a group of us hiked around the Ennis lake at John Muir Park. Here is what we found:



This Hickory Hairstreak was still able to fly!

Clouded Sulphur 6
Orange Sulphur 1
American Copper 5
Coral Hairstreak 16
Edwards' Hairstreak 3
Banded Hairstreak 8
Hickory Hairstreak 1
Striped Hairstreak 2
Eastern Tailed-Blue 5

Summer' Spring Azure 1
Great Spangled Fritillary 10
Northern Crescent 4
Red-spotted Purple 1
Northern Pearly-eye 5
Appalachian Brown 1
Little Wood-Satyr 7
Common Wood-Nymph 30
Monarch 10

Silver-spotted Skipper 7
European Skipper 4
Northern Broken-Dash 6
Little Glassywing 8
Delaware Skipper 10
Mulberry Wing 1
Dion Skipper 1
Dun Skipper 8

BUTTERFLIES OF SHEA PRAIRIE (July 19)



Regal Fritillaries mating.
Photo by Sylvia Edlebeck.

A large group of 33 people enjoyed the tour of Shea Prairie, owned by The Prairie Enthusiasts. The hill was a paradise for Fritillaries! We had a good view of the **endangered Regal Fritillary**, which is *one of Wisconsin's most beautiful butterflies*. (They have dissappeared from much of their original range in eastern U.S.)

There were also **Aphrodite**, Great Spangled, and Silver-bordered Fritillaries. Altogether we found 20 species of butterfly and some interesting birds: Grasshopper Sparrow, Willow Flycatcher, and **Clay-colored Sparrow**. Thanks to coleaders, **Dr. Douglas Buege** and **Rich Henderson**, and all the participants!

Red-spotted Purple
 Eastern Comma
 Eastern Tailed-Blue
 Summer Azure
Silvery Checkerspot
 Northern Crescent
Aphrodite Fritillary

Great Spangled Fritillary
Regal Fritillary
 Silver-bordered Fritillary
 Banded Hairstreak
Coral Hairstreak
 Red Admiral
 Monarch

Common Wood-Nymph
Common Sootywing
 Clouded Sulphur
 Orange Sulphur
 Black Swallowtail
 Eastern Tiger Swallowtail
Giant Swallowtail

BUTTERFLIES OF THE AVOCA / BLUE RIVER AREA (August 9)

This was our 8th annual Avoca field trip. Twenty-two people found 156 butterflies of **28 species** (about average). Immigrants found included **Giant Swallowtail** (10), **Little Yellow** (17), and **Fiery Skipper** (1). Five species were found in the highest numbers of the 8 years: Red-spotted Purple (8), Eastern Comma (4), Tawny-edged Skipper (2), Eastern Tiger Swallowtail (8) and Harvester (2). Mike Reese was able to persuade a **Harvester** to land on him ---- providing a prolonged photographic opportunity! We also found Little Wood-Satyr (3) which represents a seldom seen 2nd brood. Finally we saw 6 **Common Roadside-Skippers**. The main miss was the Red Admiral! (In spite of large numbers at some other sites in the state.) Other finds included **Blanding's Turtle**, a Band-winged Meadowhawk (dragonfly), a **Chinese Mantis**, a large hornet (**Cicada Killer**), and a **Northern Water Snake**. Thanks to leader Mike Reese for an enjoyable field trip!



Leader Mike Reese impressively persuaded a Harvester to land on him----a photo opportunity!



Harvester on Mike Reese.



Common Roadside Skipper. Note the checkered fringe, the oversize white chevron on the forewing, and the frosting on the hindwing.

The butterflies we observed:

Giant Swallowtail 10
 Eastern Tiger Swallowtail 8
 Cabbage White 3
 Clouded Sulphur 4
 Orange Sulphur 1
Little Yellow 17
Harvester 2
American Copper 1
 Eastern Tailed-Blue 4
 'Summer' Spring Azure 5

Great Spangled Fritillary 10
Aphrodite Fritillary 5
 Pearl Crescent 21
 Eastern Comma 4
 Mourning Cloak 1
American Lady 1
 Red-spotted Purple 8
 Viceroy 2
Hackberry Emperor 3
 Little Wood-Satyr 3

Common Wood-Nymph 7
 Monarch 10
 Silver-spotted Skipper 1
 Least Skipper 15
Fiery Skipper 1
Peck's Skipper 1
Tawny-edged Skipper 2
Common Roadside-Skipper 6

BUTTERFLIES OF PHEASANT BRANCH CONSERVANCY (August 23)

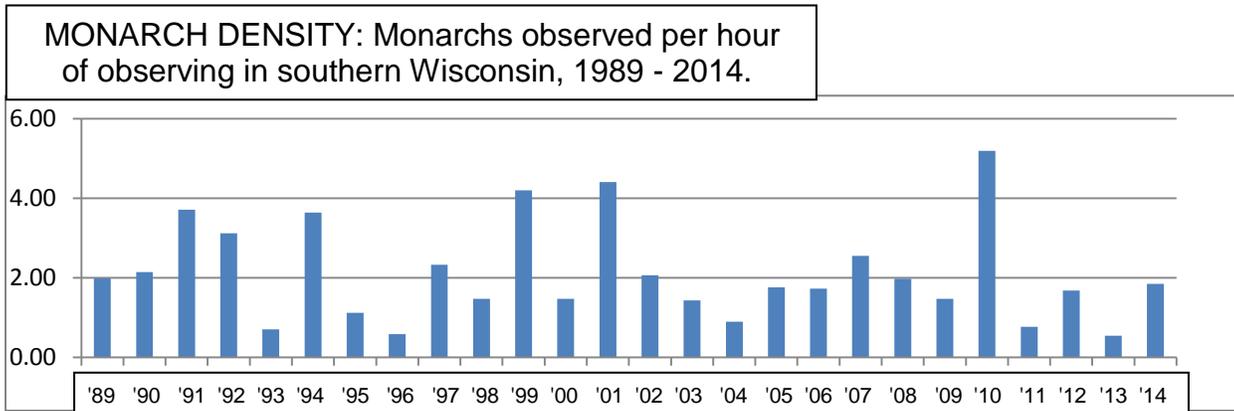
This was the last field trip of the season. Unfortunately we had really lousy, butterfly-unfriendly weather: very hot, 90%+ humidity, fog/haze, heavy overcast, dark skies. 10 people walked the trail and found 7 butterflies. We were lucky to see that much! But **our leader, Dreux Watermolen, provided lots of interesting information about the Conservancy and its history, and about butterflies in general.** We enjoyed the prairie and had a great view of the Conservancy from the hilltop, so it turned out to be a very enjoyable hike, in spite of the poor weather!

3 THE 2014 MONARCH POPULATION IN SOUTHERN WISCONSIN

We can take a preliminary look at this year's Monarch population based on 6 all-day NABA counts that are done annually in the southern half of Wisconsin. We have data going back 26 years! For 2014 the counts totaled 69.7 hours of observation. A total of 129 Monarchs were seen so that comes to 1.85 Monarchs per hour. That measures the density of Monarchs during the month of July. We can compare with previous years: This year's density is nowhere

near the record density of 2010, but it is a good improvement over 2013 and 2011, which were at very low levels.

However, the Monarch's true 2014 population depends on Monarchs from all over eastern North America. We won't know the actual population level until the Monarch numbers at the Mexican wintering site are determined and released in early 2015.



4 OTHER MONARCH NEWS

MONARCH PROPOSED FOR FEDERAL LISTING AS THREATENED

A coalition of nonprofits filed a petition in August to the Secretary of the Interior and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, to place the Monarch under the protection of the Endangered Species Act. The purpose is to list the Monarch as **Threatened**. As SWBA President Dr. Douglas Buege said on NABA-CHAT "The Endangered Species Act is one of the



strongest tools available to plant and animal preservationists. I think that this move is really smart!"

The petition is book-length, at 159 pages! It is a thorough documentation of the decline in population and the many threats that the Monarch faces. It makes for informative reading

for anyone concerned about the Monarch.

Here is a very brief summary from the Xerces Society: <http://www.xerces.org/after-90-percent-decline-federal-protection-sought-for-monarch-butterfly-2/>

To download the full petition click on <http://www.xerces.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/monarch-esa-petition.pdf>

The petition was filed by four parties:

The Center for Biological Diversity is a nonprofit, public interest environmental organization dedicated to the protection of imperiled species and the habitat and climate they need to survive.

The **Center for Food Safety** is a nonprofit public interest organization whose mission

centers on protecting public health and the environment by curbing the adverse impacts of industrial agriculture and food production systems on public health, and the environment, and by promoting sustainable forms of agriculture.

The Xerces Society is a nonprofit organization that protects wildlife through the conservation of invertebrates and their habitat. For forty years, the Society has been at the forefront of invertebrate protection worldwide.

And **Dr. Lincoln Brower** who is currently Distinguished Service Professor of Zoology Emeritus at the University of Florida and Research Professor of Biology at Sweet Briar College. He has authored and coauthored more than 200 scientific papers on the Monarch.

PLANTING MONARCH WAYSTATIONS

SWBA received this email in July:

"Raul De Luna and I have been busy planting **Monarch Waystations** this Spring. We have tried to place them in places where they are visible and get attention from people. **Liliana's Restaurant in Fitchburg** allowed us to put a Monarch Waystation at the front door of the restaurant. Maybe members of the Southern Wisconsin Butterfly Association could . . . patronize the restaurant and let them know their appreciation in helping educate people on the plight of the Monarch."

Kevin Thies
Raul De Luna
NABA members

Liliana's Restaurant offers New Orleans dining. Their website is <http://www.lilianasrestaurant.com>

Thanks to Kevin and Raul for their dedication in helping the Monarch! Anyone can plant a 10 foot X 10 foot Waystation by obtaining the seeds from Monarch Watch. See the article "Butterfly Gardening: Planting a Monarch Waystation" in the March 2014 Badger ButterFlyer which can be downloaded from the SWBA website: <http://www.naba.org/chapters/nabawba/WBAPDFs/SWBANews2014Mar.pdf>

Or check out these links:

Monarch Waystation: <http://www.monarchwatch.org/waystations/>
Waystation Seed Kit: http://www.monarchwatch.org/waystations/seed_kit.html

(When I checked the site they were out of seed kits. But they will notify you when they have more kits. A good time to plant is in the fall.)

5 The 19th Annual Texas Butterfly Festival !

SATURDAY, NOV. 1 - TUESDAY, NOV. 4, 2014

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, 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!

NABA's **National Butterfly Center** is honored to host the **19th Annual Texas Butterfly Festival**. From November 1 - 4, 2014, 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 more than 60 species in a day.

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

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



Red-bordered
Pixie

6 BUTTERFLIES REPORTED IN AUGUST AT www.wisconsinbutterflies.org

So how do the butterfly sightings of August 2014 compare with last year: August 2013? One indicator is the number of **immigrants** that come into Wisconsin from the South. In August of 2013 there were 137 seen but in 2014 there were only 78 seen, only 57% of

what was seen in this month, one year ago. The biggest difference was 86 **Common Buckeyes** in Aug. 2013 but only 7 this month. Observers reported 7 times more **Gray Commas** this August than last August.



Gray Comma

Several Coppers were seen in much higher numbers this August than a year ago. For **Bog, Bronze, Dorcas, Gray and Purplish Coppers** a total of 92 were seen in August '14 but only 8 were seen last August! And this is not even counting the huge population of

Purplish Coppers reported by the Swengels this year (234)! Other species that seemed more plentiful this August were **Mustard White, Pink-edged Sulphur, Striped Hairstreak** and **Regal Fritillary**.

[Keep sending reports to wisconsinbutterflies.org](http://www.wisconsinbutterflies.org)

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

Officers of SWBA:

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

Other SWBA contributors:

e-Newsletter Editor: Karl Legler
karlndot@charter.net
Webmaster: Dan Sonnenberg
Butterfly Reporting: Mike Reese at
www.wisconsinbutterflies.org
Speaker's Bureau: Dorothy Legler
Dr. Douglas Buege
NABA Liaison: Joan Braune

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.