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Badger ButterFlyer

The e-Newsletter of the Southern Wisconsin Butterfly Association

SEPTEMBER, 2015

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

1 NEXT SWBA MEETING ON THURSDAY, September 24, 2015

At 7:00 p.m., in the meeting room of the **Fitchburg Public Library, 5530 Lacy Road, Fitchburg, WI.** (**Mark your calendar!**)

West



East

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1. SWBA MEETING 9/24/15
2. HIGHLIGHTS OF RECENT FIELD TRIPS.
3. 2015 Texas Butterfly Festival.
4. Immigrant Butterfly Reports.
5. The Current Monarch Forecast.

Public Programs:

1) Federally Endangered Species: Karner Blue

This 45 minute presentation on the recovery of Wisconsin's most beautiful resident "blue", will be given by **Bob Hess, the coordinator of the Karner Blue Butterfly Recovery Program for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.**

The Karner Blue has disappeared from much of its former range in eastern North America. Today, Wisconsin has the largest remaining population of Karner Blues and they are Federally listed and protected as Endangered. Bob will discuss Karner range, life cycle, habitat requirements, population trends, climate change impacts and future plans for the Karner recovery program.



2) The Butterflies of Texas: Lower Rio Grande Valley and the upcoming Texas Butterfly Festival 2015.

This is a 30 minute presentation on some of the common and fascinating butterflies of this unique region. Karl and Dorothy Legler spend time in Texas each year and will participate in this year's Butterfly Festival (Oct 31-Nov 3).



Gulf Fritillary

Everyone is invited to attend this free program. The meeting will last from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. We will have displays, books, handouts and plenty of time afterwards to enjoy *delicious* snacks and refreshments, and talk with our speaker 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:

HIGHLIGHTS OF Madison NABA Butterfly Count

This census has been an annual event for 25 years! Eleven observers in 4 groups, spent a total of 19.1 hours, observing and counting butterflies within a 15-mile diameter circle. We saw 349 individuals of 31 species! Here are the results of the count:

Viceroy 2	Edward's Hairstreak 8	European Skipper 1
Eastern Comma 3	American Lady 3	Least Skipper 6
Question Mark 1	Red Admiral 13	Mulberry Wing 8
Summer Azure 14	Monarch 12	Northern Broken-Dash 3
Baltimore Checkerspot 8	Little Wood-Satyr 2	Silver-spotted Skipper 8
Bronze Copper 2	Eyed Brown 2	Clouded Sulphur 5
Crescent 1	Common Wood-Nymph 66	Orange Sulphur 1
Hackberry Emperor 4	Little Wood-Satyr 1	Black Swallowtail 3
Great Spangled Fritillary 42	Northern Pearly Eye 1	Mourning Cloak 6
Banded Hairstreak 74	Delaware Skipper 1	Cabbage White 38
Coral Hairstreak 11	Dion Skipper 1	

COMPARISON WITH OTHER YEARS:

We had the first report of Eastern Comma in 5 years! (This was a good year for them.) We had the first miss of Eastern Tailed-Blue in 11 years. The first Bronze Copper in 4 years. Lowest Crescent count of the 25 years!! First **Hackberry Emperor** in 3 years. Red Admirals were prevalent this year. Their numbers were the 6th highest out of 25 years. Delaware Skipper seen for the first time in 10 years! The scarce Dion Skipper was seen. 31 species is about average for this count. But the number of individuals (349) is about 21% below average.



A big THANKS to all those that spent time counting butterflies on the Madison NABA Butterfly Count!! Special thanks to Area Captains, **Dave Fallow, Edgar Spalding, and Glenda Denniston!**

HIGHLIGHTS OF Summerton Bog State Natural Area

15 people participated in this field trip, led by **Dan Sonnenberg**. We sighted 10 species while standing in the parking lot! A Common Wood Nymph landed on many people. Even though our search for butterflies was limited to a few acres (out of the 480 acres), in about 2 hours we found 24 species! Afterwards, we ate lunch on Dan's nearby farm. 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! The most exceptional butterflies seen were **Gorgone Checkerspot and Acadian Hairstreak!** Thanks to all who attended! Here are the butterflies seen on this trip:



Acadian Hairstreak

Black Swallowtail 1	Eastern Tailed-Blue 3	Red Admiral 8
Cabbage White 1	Summer Azure 4	Northern Pearly-eye 4
Clouded Sulphur 2	Great Spangled Fritillary 5	Common Wood Nymph 14
Orange Sulphur 2	Gorgone Checkerspot 5	Monarch 4
American Copper 20+	Pearl Crescent 9+	Silver-spotted Skipper 4
Coral Hairstreak 2	Baltimore Checkerspot 9+	European Skipper 6
Acadian Hairstreak 4	Eastern Comma 2	Northern Broken Dash 6
Edward's Hairstreak 5	American Lady 1	Delaware Skipper 7

HIGHLIGHTS OF Walking Iron County Park

This was SWBA's first field trip to Walking Iron. 13 participants explored this Dane County Park and found 139 butterflies of 23 species. We heard the fairly scarce Dusk-singing Cicada calling--in the morning! We got to see a Hog-nosed Snake flatten its body in order to mimic a poisonous Adder! We saw Scarlet Tanager and Tufted Titmouse.



American Copper

Here are the butterflies seen on this trip:

Giant Swallowtail 5	Summer Azure 4	Mourning Cloak 1
Eastern Tiger Swallowtail 4	Great Spangled Fritillary 6	Red Admiral 3
Cabbage White 3	Aphrodite Fritillary 2	Hackberry Emperor 1
Clouded Sulphur 1	Pearl Crescent 30+	Common Wood-Nymph 9
American Copper 20+	Northern Crescent 1	Monarch 12
Coral Hairstreak 3	Question Mark 1	Silver-spotted Skipper 15+
Banded Hairstreak 2	Eastern Comma 4	Northern Broken-Dash 10
Eastern Tailed-Blue 1	Gray Comma 1	

3 THE 2015 TEXAS BUTTERFLY FESTIVAL

This is the premier butterfly event in the country. It is run by NABA's National Butterfly Center in Mission, Texas. The million-dollar building was opened in 2010. NABA's purpose in acquiring the 80 acre property adjacent to the Rio Grande River and Bentsen State Park was to preserve a superlative site for butterflying. It is located in the southern-most tip of Texas, in the Lower Rio Grande Valley (an area about 120 miles long by 20 miles wide) which is the most productive butterfly-finding area in the United States. The climate with mild winters results in a rich diversity of plants and animals with a southern affinity, many of which do not occur farther north. Proceeds from the Butterfly Festival go to NABA's National Butterfly Center.

The 20th Annual Texas Butterfly Festival !

SATURDAY, OCT. 31 - TUESDAY, NOV. 3, 2015

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!

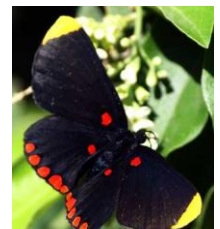
NABA's **National Butterfly Center** is honored to host the **20th Annual Texas Butterfly Festival**. From October 31 - November 3, 2015, attendees will spend 3 days exploring renowned public lands and private properties with world-class trip leaders and expert guides. The Festival is taking place during 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/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/TexasButterflyFestival>

BIRDERS: **Rio Grande Valley Bird Festival** at Harlingen, Texas starts the following day, Wednesday, November 4 through Sunday, November 8. Attend both festivals! For more information go to <http://www.rgvbf.org/>



Red-bordered Pixie

4 BUTTERFLIES REPORTED TO www.wisconsinbutterflies.org

Apart from Monarch and Red Admiral, it seemed to me that 2015 has been a relatively poor year for **immigrant butterflies**, i.e. strays from the South that cannot survive our winter. They do breed here but each year must repopulate the state (in low numbers) by migration from the South. That simply means that immigrant species are not permanent (all year round) residents of Wisconsin. There have been no sightings so far of Dainty Sulphur.



Funereal Duskywing

Nevertheless, there have been a few excellent sightings so that it is worthwhile to list the immigrant sightings so far in 2015. Of course additional sightings may turn up in September and perhaps in October -- depending on the weather. So the butterfly season is not over! Keep reporting to www.wisconsinbutterflies.org

IMMIGRANT SPECIES	# OF REPORTS	# OF INDIVIDUALS	DATES
Reakirt's Blue	1	1	Aug 22
Common Buckeye	14	15	July 1, 4, 18, 22, 23, 25, 25, 27 Aug 3, 5, 6, 11, 15, 21
Variegated Fritillary	1	1	Aug 4
Gray Hairstreak	1	1	June 6
Painted Lady	10	13	June 8, 14, 14, 21, 27, 28 July 4, 7, 25 Aug 23
Fiery Skipper	2	2	Aug 3, 21
Common Checkered-Skipper	1	1	Aug 8
Funereal Duskywing	3	3	May 1 July 21 Aug 18
Little Yellow	6	22	July 12, 22, 27 Aug 13, 21, 26
Sleepy Orange	1	1	Aug 31
Pipevine Swallowtail	1	1	June 19

Keep sending reports to www.wisconsinbutterflies.org

5 FORECAST FOR THIS WINTER'S MONARCH POPULATION

In Wisconsin, Monarchs got off to a late start and seemed to be having a poor year. But that was before mid-July. Also, Monarch populations depend on what's happening throughout eastern North America. In the August 6, 2015 Monarch Watch Blog, Chip Taylor waxed optimistic as he prognosticated: "I'm encouraged by the egg data. As I've mentioned in previous status updates, the size of the migration is strongly influenced by the number of eggs laid between 20 July and 7 August. Most of the butterflies that result from these eggs become non-reproductive and join the migration from late August through early October as it moves progressively southward starting about the 10th of August at 50N (Winnipeg)." Incorporating weather forecast

projections he said, "The 45-day forecast is also encouraging since it suggests that temperatures will be favorable for the development of the migratory generation. If this forecast is more accurate than the one I used to make my predictions in early May – and conditions during the migration are storm-free – the number of monarchs at the overwintering sites could occupy an area of 1.8 – 2.3 hectares. This would be a substantial improvement given that the total last year was 1.13 hectares and that of the previous year was .67 hectares. . . . More would be better of course, since the predicted El Niño could take a toll on the population during the latter part of the coming winter." It will be interesting to see how the migration unfolds.

READ the full blog article at <http://monarchwatch.org/blog/>

The Badger ButterFlyer flits to you every month (every other month in 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

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