

Badger ButterFlyer

The e-Newsletter of the Southern Wisconsin Butterfly Association

APRIL, 2016

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

1 NEXT MEETING ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27, 2016

The next SWBA meeting will be held on **Wednesday, April 27, 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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Two Public Programs:

1) Aldo Leopold's Land Ethic and the Fate of the Monarch Butterfly

The Monarch Butterfly has declined by >90% over the last decade, and its future depends crucially on management practices on privately owned lands in the Midwest. Aldo Leopold's "land ethic" highlights the responsibilities of private landowners to care for the other species that live on their property, not because they are forced to do so by regulations or coerced to do so with subsidies, but because it is simply the right thing to do. **Professor Stanley Temple** will review the Monarch situation and explain how Leopold's land ethic will play a role in the butterfly's future.



Professor Stanley Temple is recently retired from the academic position at the University of Wisconsin once held by Aldo Leopold. He is now a Professor Emeritus and a Senior Fellow at the Aldo Leopold Foundation. Professor Temple is a noted authority on conservation issues and Aldo Leopold's contributions to the field.

2) 2015: The Year in Butterflies (Mike Reese)

Every butterfly year is different and has its own uniqueness and idiosyncrasies. It will be good to sit back and take stock of how butterflies fared this past year. In this 30 minute informative program, retired educator and butterfly expert, **Mike Reese**, will show some of the dazzling photos he took, or that have been submitted to his award-winning website, wisconsinbutterflies.org, last year. (It received more than 7,600 species-reports!) Mike will talk about the most fascinating and significant butterfly encounters around the state for 2015. He will explain which butterflies were up and which were down.



Funereal Duskywing

Also a brief Election of Officers

If you are interested in serving as an officer of SWBA for the next year, or would like to nominate someone else, contact the Nominating Committee Chairperson Tod Highsmith at (608) 242-1168 or at todhighsmith@me.com

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 NEXT FIELD TRIP

Mark your calendar!

Butterflies of Bauer-Brockway Barrens (Jackson Co.)

Saturday, May 21

10:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

The best place in the state to look for early butterflies in May is Jackson County. Butterfly expert **Mike Reese** will lead us in finding and observing many scarce and unusual species, many that only fly in May! Bring binoculars (close-focusing ones work best. A few extra pairs of binoculars are available.) Also, bring a bag lunch and water. A hat, long pants and long sleeves are recommended.

Meet in Jackson Co. at 10:30 a.m. at the corner of West Bauer Road and Brockway Road. We will butterfly until 3:00 p.m. **DIRECTIONS:** From the intersection of I-94 and Hwy 54 in Black River Falls, go east on Hwy 54 approximately 3.8 miles to Brockway Road. Turn right on West Bauer Road and drive 3.8 miles to the intersection with North Brockway Road. (This area is about 2 1/4 hours northwest of Madison via I-94.)

Participants must PRE-REGISTER for this trip by either calling Mike at (920) 647-0196, or include your phone number in an email to mikereese@wisconsinbutterflies.org (so we can contact you in case of postponement or cancellation due to weather).



Gorgone Checkerspot

3 MONARCH NEWS

This year Monarchs showed a good increase in their population on the wintering grounds in the forest sanctuary in the mountains of Mexico.

But an unusually **severe winter storm** hit on the weekend of March 12/13, killing about 3% of the Monarch population. The forest sanctuary has been degraded over the years, and the danger is precisely the



reduced ability of the forest to protect some of the Monarchs from being killed by severe winter storms. This is why it is imperative to

increase the population enough (by planting more milkweed) to minimize the possibility of a winter storm having a disastrous effect on Monarchs. See this website for more information on the winter storm:

<http://texasbutterflyranch.com/2016/03/13/at-least-1-5-million-monarch-butterflies-perish-in-deadly-ice-storm-in-michoacan/>

Monarchs are currently reaching Missouri and Illinois on their way to Wisconsin. Their arrival should be only weeks away!

4 2015 BUTTERFLY BIG YEAR: Chris Tenney 533 !

A "Big Year" is most often associated with birding and represents an attempt by someone to see as many bird species as possible in a single year, usually within a particular state. When the playing field is North America (always north of Mexico) a lot more travel and expense is involved. In 2011 the movie Big Year, starring Steve Martin, portrayed just such an event. But a few butterflyers have also embraced this incredible challenge! Robert Pyle, in the book Mariposa Road recounted his North American Big Year, the first ever done for butterflies. In 2015 Chris Tenney -- who already had a North American bird list of close to 700 -- did a butterfly Big Year. He started on January 1 in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas, finding more than 100 species over winter. He then criss-crossed the



country and was back to the LRGV in November for the Texas Butterfly Festival and for end-of-the-year species! The full results are listed at <http://www.butterflybigyear.net/> The exact total depends on what taxonomic list you follow! Most interesting is the detailed recounting of each week's travels and butterflies, with photos -- under the various "weeks".

Chris say's that one of his favorite Big Year butterflies was **Compton Tortoiseshell**. (See photo in next section.) Several Wisconsin observers have seen/photographed this great butterfly already in Wisconsin this spring. He also mentions several "misses" that he didn't find. One was the **Baltimore Checkerspot** !! We will see this great species on our early summer field trips!



Baltimore Checkerspot

5 2016 SPRING BUTTERFLY REPORTS TO wisconsinbutterflies.org

Each year is different in terms of butterfly populations. So will this year be a great year for butterflies?

Of course it's too early to say, but we can take a look at 2016 up through April 18. The early spring has outpaced the

(Up to April 18.)	2015	2016
EARLIEST REPORT	March 9	February 20
TOTAL REPORTS	80	113
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	409	601

previous 3 years (2013-2015). Reporters have found 50% more individual butterflies than the same period last year. And the Compton Tortoiseshell is certainly one of our state's most beautiful butterflies!



Compton Tortoiseshell

(Here it basks in the sun on the side of a shed at a state park.) Note the mention in previous Section!

Here is a list of species that have been seen so far:

Eastern Comma	American Lady	Green Comma (Northern Wis)
Mourning Cloak	Cabbage White	Olympia Marble
Compton Tortoiseshell	Spring Azure	Mustard White
Red Admiral	Clouded Sulphur	Brown Elfin
Gray Comma	Satyr Comma (Northern Wis)	Eastern Tiger Swallowtail

One of the more remarkable observations this spring is a large number of Mourning Cloaks reported from Sandhill Wildlife Area (30) on April 16 and from Necedah National Wildlife Refuge (100) on April 17, both in central Wisconsin. At the end of 2015 bird migration was extremely late because of mild weather. Normally some of the Mourning Cloaks also migrate further south. Perhaps they lingered instead of moving south creating a larger overwintering population. Also the winter was comparatively mild.

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

6 NABA's RECENT SIGHTINGS WEBSITE

Many people enjoy posting sightings, numbers and photos to the award-winning wisconsinbutterflies.org website which is run by Mike Reese. It represents a tremendous collection of data on butterfly flight periods, fluctuating populations, and the effects of weather, rain, drought, and allows comparison over several years, etc. And it provides a great incentive to get out and observe butterflies during the year. It is also an opportunity to share photographs and see the photos of others. It also allows us to literally watch the butterfly season unfold, on our computer monitors and tablets, etc. And the data and photos are archived so you can look back to last year or five or ten years ago to see what was happening. (I know that our own butterflying has increased



Guava Skipper

due to this inspiring, informative and fun website.)

As if that weren't enough, Mike also has another similar website for the North American Butterfly Association *with a national focus*, called **Recent Sightings**:

<http://sightings.naba.org/>

It has reports and photos from all over the United States. It's a great way to learn about and enjoy butterflies from butterfly hotspots all over the country. It means that if you step outside Wisconsin, whether it's just the other side of the Mississippi River or vacationing at the bottom of Texas or somewhere else, you can still report sightings, numbers and photos to another (familiar) Mike Reese website, Recent Sightings. Take a look!

7 NABA 12th BIENNIAL MEMBERS' MEETING, Oct. 29 - Nov. 1, 2016

Registration is now open! www.TexasButterflyFestival.com

Every other year NABA members get together for outstanding butterflying somewhere in North America. Every 6 years the Biennial Meeting is in Mission, TX at NABA's fabulous 140 acre National Butterfly Center. The Biennial Meeting will coincide with the Texas Butterfly Festival. We will visit spectacular butterfly sites around the Lower Rio Grande River Valley. The 4-day event will be held on October 29 - November 1, 2016. (Non-members can still go to the meeting. There is an additional \$25 charge which pays for one year of NABA membership.)



Long-tailed Skipper

8 FIELD TRIP SCHEDULE FOR 2016 (mark these on your calendar!)

These field trips are free and open to the public.

DAY	DATE	TRIP TITLE	LEADER(S)
Saturday	May 21	Butterflies of Bauer Brockway Barrens (Jackson Co.)	Mike Reese
Saturday	June 18	Butterflies and Wildflowers at Pleasant Valley Conservancy	Ann Thering Kathie and Tom Brock
Saturday	June 25	Butterflies of Cherokee Marsh	Karl & Dorothy Legler and Jan Axelson
Saturday	July 2	Butterflies of Sandhill Wildlife Area (Wood Co.)	Ron Arnold
Monday	July 4	Butterflies and Dragonflies of Swamp Lovers Preserve	Tod Highsmith Karl and Dorothy Legler
Saturday	July 9	Butterflies of Page Creek Marsh	Dan Sonnenberg
Saturday	July 16	Butterflies and Flowers of Shea Prairie	Eric Preston Dr. Douglas Buege
Saturday	July 23	Butterflies of Walking Iron County Park	Karl and Dorothy Legler
Saturday	August 6	Butterflies of Avoca/Blue River Area	Mike Reese

9 2016 NABA BUTTERFLY COUNT SCHEDULE

These are a few of NABA's "4th of July" butterfly counts, open to the public. These butterfly counts are conducted exactly like Christmas Bird Counts: On one day, identify butterfly species and count individuals, staying within a 15 mile diameter circle. Various areas within the circle are visited. In North America, the data from 451 counts is collected and published annually. Some 15 NABA Butterfly Counts take place in Wisconsin each year. Below are ones that are connected with SWBA. This is a good way to gain more experience with a range of butterflies. Whether experienced or novice, you are always welcome to participate. To join in, contact the coordinators (Karl and Dorothy Legler, karlndot@charter.net, (608) 643-4926).

(NABA charges a \$3 fee to participate in a count, to help defray the cost of publication.)

(For a list of additional Butterfly Counts in Wisconsin and elsewhere, visit NABA's Web site at www.naba.org/counts/us_mx_map.html Contacts are Listed.)

COUNT NAME	DAY	DATE	COUNTY	NUMBER OF YEARS
Mud Lake	Friday	July 1	Columbia County	27
Dubuque (Wis. portion)	Sunday	July 10	Grant County	13
Trempealeau	Wednesday	July 13	Trempealeau County	26
Northern Kettle Moraine	Monday	July 18	Fond du Lac County	19

The Badger ButterFlyer flits to you every month in summer. The next issue will be in May.

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.