

Badger ButterFlyer

The e-Newsletter of the Southern Wisconsin Butterfly Association

JUNE, 2016

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

1 NEXT FIELD TRIP

Butterflies & Wildflowers at Pleasant Valley Conservancy

Saturday, June 18

11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Pleasant Valley Conservancy is a beautiful state natural area situated in the Driftless Area, with goat prairies, oak savanna, and a large high quality marsh. This time of year we hope to see Baltimore Checkerspot and perhaps some wetland skippers. Other possible butterfly species include swallowtails, Silvery Checkerspot, fritillaries, and blues. All of



Baltimore Checkerspot

these butterflies will have many wonderful native plants to nectar on this time of year. Long pants, a hat, water, and sturdy hiking shoes are recommended. Leaders are **Ann Thering and Tom and Kathie Brock.**

This is a joint trip of SWBA with Madison Audubon and The Prairie Enthusiasts. Optional: bring along a bag lunch for after the field trip; beverages and dessert will be provided. Bring binoculars--the closer they focus, the better. (We have a few extra binoculars.) Contact the trip leaders only if you have a question about the trip. Tom: (608) 238-5050, tdbrock@charter.net, or Ann: acthering@gmail.com, (608) 836-1097.

Directions: (4609 Pleasant Valley Rd, Black Earth, WI.) Heading south into downtown Black Earth follow County Hwy F as it turns right (west). After a mile or so, F turns left (south). Continue on F for another 3 3/4 miles turning left onto Pleasant Valley Road. Drive 3/4 mile (past the buildings on the right) to the state natural area sign. Park off the road. We'll meet near the sign/gate area and then proceed into the wetland.

2 UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

Butterflies of Cherokee Marsh

Saturday, June 25

10:00 a.m. to Noon

On this morning walk we'll observe and learn about butterflies, those small but exquisitely beautiful creatures that dance about our ankles in summer. **Karl and Dorothy Legler and Jan Axelson will lead** this 2 hour walk at Cherokee Marsh on the northeast side of Madison. We will observe a variety of butterflies as they take nectar from wildflowers, and learn about



Great Spangled Fritillary

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their identification, behavior, and lifestyle. Bring binoculars if you have them — close-focusing ones work best. We have a few extra pairs of binoculars. It's best to wear long pants and a hat for protection from the sun. This is a joint trip of the Southern Wisconsin Butterfly Association, with Madison Audubon Society, and Friends of Cherokee Marsh. Meet at 10:00 a.m. **DIRECTIONS:** On the north side of Madison take Northport Drive (Highway 113) then turn north on Sherman Ave. Meet at the Cherokee Marsh parking lot at the north end of Sherman Ave. (6098 N Sherman Ave, Madison, WI.) Call Karl at (608) 643-4926 or email karlndot@charter.net, only if you have a question about the trip.

Butterflies of Sandhill Wildlife Area (Wood Co.)

Saturday, July 2

10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

This could be the best trip of the year! The Sandhill State Wildlife Area, in Wood County, covers more than 14 square miles and is an outstanding area for butterflies. Sandhill has large marshes and many flowages, interspersed with low sandy uplands, pine and oak barrens and restored prairies. Butterfly expert **Ron Arnold** will lead us in finding such beauties as Acadian and Coral Hairstreaks, Aphrodite Fritillary, the rare Two-spotted Skipper, Bronze Copper, Eyed Brown, Northern Pearly-eye, White Admiral and many others. Skippers will include Black Dash, Broad-winged, Dion, Long Dash and many others. We may see the beautiful Baltimore Checkerspot, Harris' Checkerspot and the Federally Endangered Karner Blue. Bring binoculars, the closer they focus the better. (We will have a few extra pairs of binoculars.) Also bring insect repellent to protect against mosquitoes and ticks. A hat, long sleeves and long pants are recommended. Bring a bag lunch and water.



Acadian Hairstreak

Meet at 10:00 a.m. at the Sandhill Headquarters parking lot.

DIRECTIONS: Take I-90/94 up to the New Lisbon area in Juneau Co. and take Hwy 80 north. In Wood County, just 1/3 mile before Babcock, turn left onto County X. Go 1 1/4 mile on X to the Sandhill entrance. (1715 County Road X, Babcock, WI.) Allow at least 1 hour and 45 minutes for travel. Call Ron at (715) 424-2996 only if you have a question about the trip. On the day of the trip, Ron will have his cell phone on: (715) 741-0052. (If rain threatens, call Ron to see if the trip must be cancelled due to weather.)

Butterflies and Dragonflies of Swamp-Lovers Preserve

Monday, July 4

9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Celebrate July 4th at this beautiful private preserve that consists of remnant and restored wetlands, remnant bluff prairie, restored tall grass prairie, and dry hilly oak-hickory woodland. In past years, we have observed an impressive variety of dragonflies and butterflies as we explored the different habitats. Bring binoculars (close-focusing ones work best). (We will have a few extra binoculars.) Bring your own lunch and beverages to enjoy when we finish the trip by driving up to the bluff-top picnic shelter. Leaders are **Tod Highsmith, Karl and Dorothy Legler.**



Eastern Amberwing



Meadow Fritillary

This is a joint trip of SWBA and The Prairie Enthusiasts.

DIRECTIONS: Meet at 9:30 a.m. Travel west from Cross Plains on Hwy 14. Just outside town take County KP to the right (north), go about 1.3 miles and turn left at the Swamp Lovers sign. Call Karl Legler at (608) 643-4926 or cell (608) 228-0743 only if you have a question about the trip or if the weather is questionable.

Butterflies of Page Creek Marsh

Saturday, July 9

9:30 a.m. to noon.

We will visit two areas looking for interesting butterflies. Located in the central sands of Wisconsin, **Page Creek Marsh** is a large 643 acre wetland preserve that supports a rich diversity of plants. It has sedge meadows and sandy oak savanna, fens, wet-mesic prairie, bog and seepage lakes. The second area we will visit is the nearby **John Muir Memorial County Park**, which contains a variety of upland and wetland communities surrounding Ennis Lake. We will eat lunch here. (Muir lived here in his youth, and became the founder of the Sierra Club and the father of the National Park system.)

Leader will be **Dan Sonnenberg**. This is a field trip of the Southern Wisconsin Butterfly Association. Bring binoculars, the closer they focus the better. (We will have a few extra pairs of binoculars.) Long pants, a hat, and sturdy walking shoes are recommended. Bring a bag lunch and water.

Meet at the Page Creek Marsh Parking Lot at 9:30 a.m.

DIRECTIONS FROM MADISON: take Interstate Highway I-39 north, past Portage, into Marquette County. Take Exit# 104 and follow County D east for 3.45 miles (going through Packwaukee, where D turns right and goes across the lake). Turn left (north) onto County K and go 0.86 mile to a gated entrance on the right (east) side of K. Park here. Call Dan at (608) 225-0451 only if you have a question about the trip.



Northern Pearly-Eye

3 HIGHLIGHTS OF BAUER-BROCKWAY BARRENS FIELD TRIP

This was our **10th annual** mid-May butterfly field trip to Jackson County in Central Wisconsin. Mike Reese was the leader and we had a great turnout of 15 people. We found 22 species, many of which are not found, or are

scarce, in southern Wisconsin. (The best sightings are in bold type.) Scott and Ann Swengel also extensively surveyed within other parts of the 15 mile diameter count circle. Their data will be added in, and the result sent to NABA as the "Wazee, WI Spring Count". We do this because this is an important butterfly area and so the butterfly observations



we make on this trip are also important. So we make our observations available to a national database archive, maintained and published by the North American Butterfly Association (NABA). Below are the results of our field trip. (The Swengels observed 5 additional species: Jutta Arctic, Frosted Elfin, Mottled Duskywing, Common Roadside Skipper and Silver-bordered Fritillary.)

Canadian Tiger Swallowtail 8

Olympia Marble 46

Clouded Sulphur 17

Orange Sulphur 1

Harvester 1

American Copper 18

Brown Elfin 2

Hoary Elfin 8

Eastern Pine Elfin 3

Eastern Tailed-Blue 2

Spring Azure 12

Silvery Blue 3

Gorgone Checkerspot 45

Mourning Cloak 1

American Lady 12

Common Ringlet 1

Northern Cloudywing 2

Dreamy Duskywing 6

Juvenal's Duskywing 28

Persius Duskywing 17

Arctic Skipper 1

Dusted Skipper 4

4 REMAINING FIELD TRIPS SCHEDULE

DAY	DATE	TRIP TITLE	LEADER(S)
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

5 2016 BUTTERFLY REPORTS TO wisconsinbutterflies.org

In May, Mike Reese's butterfly website received 325 reports which is 2nd only to the 368 reports during May of 2012. 2012 was the most extravagant year for butterflies ever, because of very early warm weather and eventual drought in Wisconsin. But generally a high number of reports tends to correlate with good conditions for butterflies; *people report because they are seeing enough butterflies to attract their attention and interest.*

In the last issue of this newsletter, a total of 37 species had been reported by May 8. Now, by June 11 the total for the state is 85 species reported. Some are commonly seen residents (Cabbage White, Eastern Tiger Swallowtail,



Painted Lady

Red-spotted Purple, Little Wood-Satyr, etc.). Some are seldom-seen scarce residents such as Purplish Copper, Western Tailed-Blue, West Virginia White, Mottled Duskywing, Frigga Fritillary and Jutta Arctic.

And some of the species have been (non-resident) immigrants that have come into the state from populations to our south and west, wafted here on hot winds. They are Gray Hairstreak (1), Painted Lady (2), Common Checkered-Skipper (1), Common Buckeye (3) and the very rare Cloudless Sulphur (1). I hope that their early arrival will be the harbinger of more extensive numbers of immigrants later in the year. (But it will depend on how the weather goes over the next months. Only time --and this website(!)-- will tell.)

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

6 LET THE BUTTERFLIES COME TO YOU?

In 1961, a butterfly, known from Canada, Minnesota and northern Michigan, was discovered in northern Wisconsin. The **Common Ringlet** was found in Burnett County. That was all that was known in Jim Ebner's [Butterflies of Wisconsin](#) (1970). It was a grassland species with one generation per year, in June. In 1988 I was preparing to co-lead the first binocular butterfly field trip for Madison Audubon, so Dorothy and I went up north to gain more experience with Wisconsin butterflies and we were very excited to stumble



onto a Common Ringlet in Douglas County! Thinking this was a big deal, we contacted the Milwaukee Public Museum which referred us to the premiere Lepidopterist in the state, Les Ferge. Les essentially told us it was not a big deal as other county records had been established in the northern tier of counties, since the publication of Ebner's book. But we learned that Les had just released a new detailed checklist of Wisconsin butterflies that would bring us up to date on the status of Wisconsin butterflies since Ebner. This was the point of

"take off" for us when our butterflying finally became more informed, organized, and dedicated. Having acquired a special fondness for the Common Ringlet, over the years we tried to track the spreading of its range southward. We found county records in Washburn (1991), St. Croix (1994), Pierce, Pepin and Dunn (1996) and Taylor counties (1998). Eventually we tired of chasing after Ringlets in northern Wisconsin.

Meanwhile the range of the Common Ringlet continued to inch its way southward over the decades and on May 30, 2016, *after 56 years of gradual southward range extension*, a Common Ringlet was spotted by Dorothy in

southern Sauk County just a few miles from our house! It momentarily landed to reveal its identity (although experienced observers can recognize it in flight).

Two days later, the Swengels found 3 elsewhere in the county. The next day Muffy Barrett photographed one at their Blue Stem Farm in Sauk Co., and on June 5 Ann Thering also reported one from Sauk County.

I guess the moral is that if you have patience -- and live long enough-- the Common Ringlet will eventually appear in a grassland near you!

I have not heard of any explanation for the unusual *southward* range extension; one authoritative source calls it unaccountable!

7 NEW STUDY SUGGESTS THE MAJOR CAUSE OF MONARCH DECLINE LIES IN THE SOUTHWARD MIGRATION RATHER THAN MILKWEED DECLINE

An interesting new study "Linking the continental migratory cycle of the monarch butterfly to understand its population decline" was published online in April. (This was referred to by Professor Temple at SWBA's Spring Meeting.) Lead author of the paper, was Hidetoshi Inamine, a graduate student in the field of ecology and evolutionary biology. Other authors were Stephen P. Ellner, the Horace White Professor of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, and **James P. Springer of the North American Butterfly Association**. The research was funded by Cornell's Atkinson Center for a Sustainable Future.

Here is the abstract of this study:

ABSTRACT: "Threats to several of the world's great animal migrations necessitate a research agenda focused on identifying drivers of their population dynamics. The monarch butterfly is an iconic species whose continental migratory population in eastern North America has been declining precipitously. Recent analyses have linked the monarch decline to reduced abundance of milkweed host plants in the USA caused by increased use of genetically modified herbicide-resistant crops. To identify the most sensitive stages in the monarch's annual multi-generational migration, and to test the milkweed limitation hypothesis, we analyzed 22 years of citizen science records from four monitoring programs across North America. We analyzed the relationships between butterfly population indices at successive stages of the annual migratory cycle to assess demographic connections and to address the roles of migrant population size versus temporal trends that reflect changes in habitat or resource quality. We find a sharp annual population decline in the first breeding



generation in the southern USA, driven by the progressively smaller numbers of spring migrants from the overwintering grounds in Mexico. Monarch populations then build regionally during the summer generations. Contrary to the milkweed limitation hypothesis, we did not find statistically significant temporal trends in stage-to-stage population relationships in the mid-western or northeastern USA. In contrast, there are statistically significant negative temporal trends at the overwintering grounds in Mexico, suggesting that monarch success during the fall migration and re-establishment strongly contributes to the butterfly decline. Lack of milkweed, the only host plant for monarch butterfly caterpillars, is unlikely to be driving the monarch's population decline. Conservation efforts therefore require additional focus on the later phases in the monarch's annual migratory cycle. We hypothesize that lack of nectar sources, habitat fragmentation, continued degradation at the overwintering sites, or other threats to successful fall migration are critical limiting factors for declining monarchs."

The original study can be downloaded by clicking on this link.

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/oik.03196/pdf>

Editor's comment: Keep planting Milkweed because the decline of Milkweed is almost certainly an important factor in the decline of the Monarch population. This study is interesting and even utilizes NABA butterfly counts in the analysis. But more analyses need to be done to confirm or reject the findings.

8 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

9 2016 NABA BUTTERFLY COUNT SCHEDULE

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, or if you have a question, 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 Co.	27
Dubuque (Wis. portion)	Sunday	July 10	Grant Co.	13
Trempealeau	Wednesday	July 13	Trempealeau Co.	26
Northern Kettle Moraine	Monday	July 18	Fond du Lac Co.	19

The Badger ButterFlyer flits to you every month from spring into fall.

The next issue will be in July.

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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. Send any news notes to the editor, Karl Legler, at karlndot@charter.net

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