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Badger ButterFlyer

The e-Newsletter of the Southern Wisconsin Butterfly Association

APRIL, 2018

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

1 NEXT MEETING ON TUESDAY, MAY 8, 2018

The next SWBA meeting will be held 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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Public Program:

ATTRACTING BUTTERFLIES TO YOUR YARD

by Dorothy Legler

Create a Butterfly Garden in your yard! Butterflies are a splendid addition to any garden! A Butterfly Garden will help to stem the loss of habitat that is contributing to a decline in butterfly populations. Dorothy will discuss the needs of Wisconsin's interesting and beautiful butterflies, their food plants and nectar sources, butterfly behavior, and provide ideas for attracting butterflies to your yard.

Our speaker will be **Dorothy Legler**, a retired educator, long-time birder and butterflyer, a Wisconsin Master Gardener and a Texas Master Naturalist.



Eastern Tiger Swallowtail

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 Karl Legler at 608 228-0743 or karlndot@charter.net

Everyone is invited 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 afterwards to enjoy *delicious* snacks and refreshments, and talk with our speaker and other butterfly enthusiasts.

DIRECTIONS TO THE 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 19

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



Gorgone Checkerspot

The best place in the state to look for early butterflies in May is Jackson County. **Douglas Buege** will lead us in finding and observing many scarce and unusual species, many that only fly in May! We hope to find all 5 of the state's Elfins, including the very rare (and State Threatened) Frosted Elfin. We should find Olympia Marble, Gorgone Checkerspot, Cobweb Skipper, Dreamy and Sleepy Duskywings, etc. Over the past 9 years we have averaged 21 species. Bring binoculars if you have them, 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 Karl Legler at 608 228-0743, or include your phone number in an email to karlndot@charter.net (so we can contact you in case of postponement or cancellation due to weather).



Olympia Marble

3 IN MEMORIAM: DAN SONNENBERG Aug. 19, 1960 - Nov. 18, 2017



Dan Sonnenberg at the 2013 Fall SWBA Meeting, sitting in the first row, on the right.

In October 2010, Dan found a White M Hairstreak, which is a very rare stray to Wisconsin.



SWBA is deeply saddened to announce the death of one of SWBA's Officers, and one of Wisconsin's outstanding butterflyers, **Dan Sonnenberg**. He was 57.

Dan was Vice-President of SWBA, a leader of field trips, and he maintained the SWBA web-site. He provided photos for the newsletter, showed photos at meetings, was a regular participant in NABA Counts, and sent in numerous valuable sightings and photos to wisconsinbutterflies.org. Dan was active in The Prairie Enthusiast's Prairie Sands Chapter. They sent a memorial donation to NABA/SWBA for Swamp Metalmark research. We extend our condolences to his wife, Doreen, and their family.

Some reminiscences from Douglas Buege:

"On our second Oconto County NABA Count, Dan's optimism improved the day significantly. I'd found the first Dorcas Copper seen in the county, with Nicole from the Forest Service, but neither of us had a camera. Nicole hiked back to find Dan and the others who had followed another road, hopefully allowing us to get photographic confirmation of the copper. I waited with the butterfly who decided to evade the drizzle by flying into the woods. When I told Dan, he just said we should go look for it! I'd

already given up but his certainty of finding it proved infectious. Indeed, we returned to the spot, walked into the woods, and quickly found the elusive beast.

I probably spent more time in the field with Dan than anyone else. His keen eye, even from the truck moving at 55 mph, could pick out butterflies I'd not even notice. His persistence pushed me to scour the shrubbery more effectively so I could keep up. The rare time I'd find something he'd missed told me I was improving, but I always had to work harder to stay with him. Dan's heart and mind went into every outing, even after hours when neither of us would dare show our exhaustion. He'd keep tromping along, believing that a rarity hid just around the next bend in the road. And he'd keep up morale with his humor".

Reminiscences from Karl and Dorothy Legler:

"I think Dan's butterflying "took off" when he photographed a hairstreak and reported it to the wisconsinbutterflies.org website, thinking it was a worn, uncommon stray, the Gray Hairstreak. But Mike Reese noticed that it was actually a very rare stray, the White-M Hairstreak! There had been only a few sightings ever in Wisconsin! That's an awe-inspiring moment!

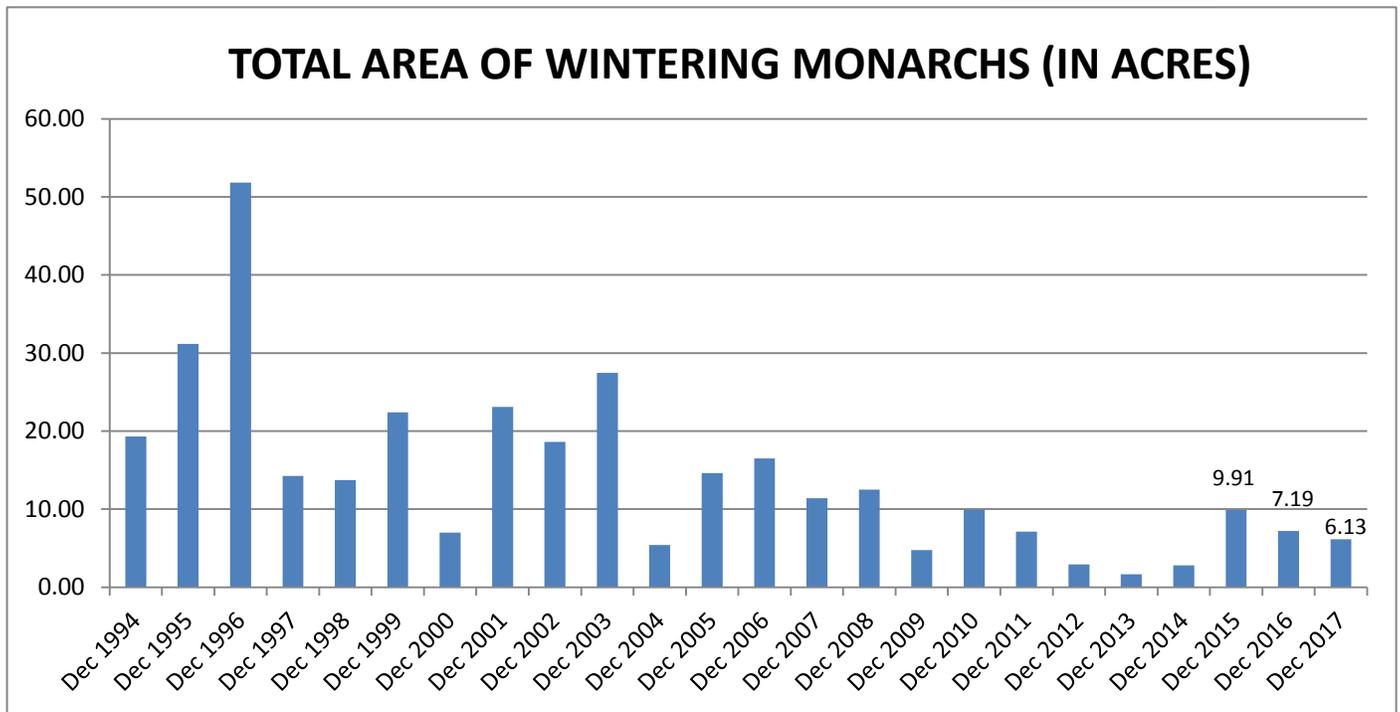


Dan made dozens of large wood replicas of butterflies of Marquette Co. on his barn.

He had the eyes of an Eagle. Even when Dan was not leading a trip, he was always helping out by spotting butterflies that no one else noticed. When we had so many people on our trips (40-60!) he was there to take part of the group. Dan did a Wisconsin Butterfly Big Year in 2016. Dan was known as the "butterfly whisperer" for his ability to coax butterflies onto his finger. And he especially enjoyed transferring the butterfly to the finger of some wide-eyed child -- to share and inspire a love of nature."

In short, Dan was indispensable, and SWBA is heart-broken.

4 MONARCH WINTER POPULATION 2017-2018: Down 15%



This is a disappointing result! In September's issue of the Badger ButterFlyer, we reported on optimistic forecasts at the beginning of migration that expected significant increases in this winter's Monarch population:

The Monarch Larva Monitoring Project (MLMP) summarized their summer results as "about 2-3 times more eggs and larvae than last year!" Monarch Watch, at the end of July, said it "looks to be a good year for Monarchs" with a "good

prospect" that the winter population will increase by about 37%. And we also noted that our NABA Butterfly Counts in Southern half of Wisconsin also showed very good Monarch numbers. Yet the overwinter population was 15% LESS than the previous winter! Why?

The MLMP offered the explanation that "Last fall's late and lackluster migration provides valuable clues. Unseasonably warm temperatures -- along with persistent south winds -- held the migration back." In spite of the reports mentioned above, the high summer numbers did not produce high migration numbers. "The north



shores of the Great Lakes had one of the strongest migration seasons ever . . . Those butterflies did not appear in Texas in large numbers."

This serves to remind us that the decline of Monarchs involves multiple factors. Loss of Milkweed habitat, loss of nectar sources on the way south, decline of the sheltering capacity of the Mexican mountain forest preserve due to past illegal logging, extreme weather due to global warming, and global warming itself, plays some role in the population decline.

5 EAGLE OPTICS GOES OUT OF BUSINESS. YOU CAN STILL GET PENTAX PAPILO CLOSE-FOCUSING BINOCULARS ON AMAZON.

The best close-focusing binoculars, for viewing butterflies, dragonflies, damselflies and other insects, remain the unique **Pentax Papilio binoculars**. They were specifically designed for ultra-close viewing of insects and can focus as close as 19"! (Or out to infinity, e.g. the moon.)

For many years we have been able to purchase these amazing binoculars from Eagle Optics in Middleton, a national mail-order retailer. However, at the end of December in 2017, Eagle Optics went out of business after 30 years. But the new 2nd edition of Papilio binoculars, "Papilio II" remain available online at Amazon.

Papilio binoculars from Pentax represent a real break-through in ultra-close-focusing design. They come in two models, 8.5X and 6.5X. Even at a distance of 7 feet you will see the butterfly as well



as if you held it in your hand! The binoculars focus down to an amazing 19 inches! At that close range you can see the butterfly MUCH better than if you held it in your hand! You can inspect minute structural details quickly, in the field. It's like looking at a macro photograph!

We've used them for the past 10 years and highly recommend them. Many of SWBA's members use Papilios and love them. They are compact, very light-weight (10 oz.), suitable even for eye-glass wearers, and inexpensive at about \$126 for the 6.5X model or \$133 for the 8.5X model (shipping is free).

(If you have used 8X, or more powerful binoculars for birding, choose the 8.5X Papilio. If you have had little experience with binoculars, or primarily used 7X binoculars, then choose the 6.5X Papilio.

6 FIELD TRIP SCHEDULE FOR 2018 (mark these on your calendar!)

These field trips are free and open to the public.

DAY	DATE	TRIP TITLE	LEADER(S)
Saturday	May 19	Butterflies of Bauer Brockway Barrens (Jackson Co.)	Douglas Buege
Saturday	June 16	Butterflies and Wildflowers at Pleasant Valley Conservancy	Ann Thering Kathie and Tom Brock
Saturday	June 23	Butterflies of Cherokee Marsh	Karl & Dorothy Legler and Janet Battista
Wednesday	July 4	Butterflies and Dragonflies of Swamp Lovers Preserve	Tod Highsmith Karl and Dorothy Legler
Saturday	July 7	Butterflies of Sandhill Wildlife Area (Wood Co.)	Ron Arnold
	TBA	Madison Butterfly Count	TBA
Saturday	July 21	Butterflies and Flowers of Shea Prairie	Karl and Dorothy Legler Rich Henderson
Saturday	August 4	Butterflies of the Avoca and Blue River Area	Mike Reese

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

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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. 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.