

# Badger ButterFlyer

The e-Newsletter of the Southern Wisconsin Butterfly Association

A chapter of NABA (North American Butterfly Association)

SEPTEMBER, 2018

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

## 1 NEXT SWBA MEETING

November 7, 2018

Mike Mossman will present a program on the history and ecology of the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area. Fitchburg Library, 7 p.m.



The Sauk Prairie Recreation Area, located in southeastern Sauk County, consists of a portion of the decommissioned 7,354-acre Badger Army Ammunition Plant (BAAP). The Sauk Prairie Recreation Area contributes important areas of grassland habitat needed to reconstruct and experience a natural mosaic of prairie-savanna-woodland at a landscape scale. Directly adjacent to Devils Lake State Park, it serves as an ecological transition from the Baraboo Hills to the Wisconsin River.

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## 2 HIGHLIGHTS OF FIELD TRIPS

### Lower Wisconsin Riverway (Avoca and Blue River Areas)

This field trip was held on August 4. There was a nice turnout of 22 people. The leader was butterfly expert Mike Reese. One purpose of this late-in-the-season field trip is to look for stray immigrant butterflies from south and west of Wisconsin. Each year is different in the species and numbers of southern immigrants coming into the southern portion of the state. The results of this trip are a measure of how good or how poor this season has been for immigrants. Altogether we found 159 individuals which is about average, but the total number of species was only 22 which is the 2nd lowest in the 12 years of this field trip. It was especially disappointing that in spite of abundant Partridge Pea we found no Little Yellows this year. (Nevertheless immigrants were being seen later in August and September. See next Article). On the other hand, we found the highest number of Least Skippers (47) and Clouded Skippers (32).



Common Sootywing. An immigrant butterfly. Photo by Lester Doyle.

Below are listed the species seen on this field trip (the best sightings are in bold-face):

Red-spotted Purple 1  
Eastern Comma 1  
**Gray Comma 1**  
Question Mark 1  
Eastern Tailed-Blue 3  
Summer Azure 2  
Pearl Crescent 15

Hackberry Emperor 2  
**Aphrodite Fritillary 1**  
Red Admiral 3  
Common Wood Nymph 5  
Least Skipper **47**  
Peck's Skipper 1  
**Common Sootywing 7**

Clouded Sulphur 32  
**Orange Sulphur 1**  
Black Swallowtail 3  
Eastern Tiger Swallowtail 5  
**Giant Swallowtail 1**  
Cabbage White 7  
Monarch 19

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### 3 BARN BUTTERFLY RAISING ON SONNENBERG FARM

Dan Sonnenberg, the 1st Vice-President of SWBA, passed away last year. His wife, Doreen, invited family members and several SWBA members to a potluck dinner on August 19, 2018. The large wood butterfly cutouts that Dan created and attached to the side of his barn had been removed to be refurbished. The highlight of the gathering was the use of a lift by family members to once again attach the repainted cutouts to the barn. They were designed at a scale of one foot of cutout equivalent to 1 inch of butterfly. This is one of the few displays that shows the relative sizes of different species and exhibits the considerable differences in size of



butterfly species, ranging from the tiny Least Skipper up to the Giant Swallowtail. For a nice summary of the event check out Stan Rehm's photos and article on his spectacular website:

<http://tywkiwdbi.blogspot.com/2018/08/refreshing-iconic-barn-in-central.html>



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### 4 2018 TEXAS BUTTERFLY FESTIVAL November 3 - 6, 2018

To get information or to register, click on:

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



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### 5 Monarch Butterflies Flying High This Year After Recent Declines ILLINOIS AND WISCONSIN

This article notes an increase in number of Monarchs observed at Chicago along Lake Michigan and elsewhere:

"The butterflies appear to be back after recent declines in population as they make their way through the city and the Midwest on their annual jaunt to Mexico."

"It seems to have been a good summer for monarchs, and so there's a strong migration that's come through," said Doug Taron, chief curator at the Notebaert Nature Museum.

"We are just under twice as many as we saw last year"

Read the full article:

<https://www.dnainfo.com/chicago/20170921/lincoln-park/monarch-butterflies-migration-return-milkweed-notebaert-nature-museum-illinois-butterfly-monitoring-network/>

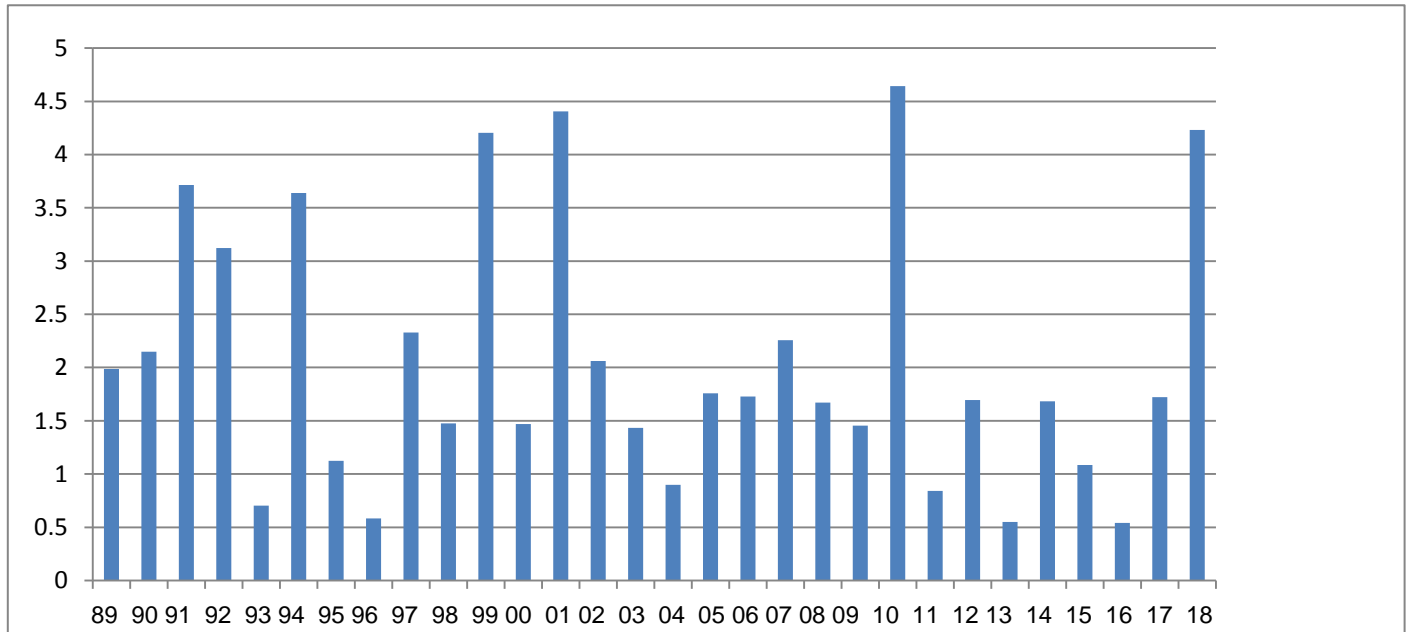


## MONARCHS PER HOUR BASED ON MULTIPLE NABA COUNTS IN SOUTHERN WISCONSIN OVER A PERIOD OF 30 YEARS.

The chart data for Monarchs in 2018 is based on 48 hours of butterfly surveys from 5 sizable areas in the southern half of Wisconsin. It shows a density more than doubled from last year. This year has seen the best Monarch population in Wisconsin since 2010.

However, once again we must remind ourselves that the Monarch population is really a North American population, not just Wisconsin, or Illinois, or just the Midwest. And now comes the hard part: they must fly a couple of thousand miles to their mountain retreat in Mexico.

Last year there were reports of large numbers of Monarchs north of the Great Lakes, yet the population in Mexico actually declined. Therefore we should be only cautiously optimistic. We will see the result this winter when the overwintering population is counted. That's what counts!



The height of the bars measure Monarchs per hour of observation. The bottom scale is the year.

## 6 BUTTERFLY SIGHTINGS OF AUGUST AND EARLY SEPTEMBER



Funereal Duskywing has white fringe on hindwing. Photo by Douglas Buege.

At this time of year there are usually a number of stray species from the south that finally get into the state and even reproduce but cannot survive our winter. Some are currently moving southward again. Other species will stay and die off overwinter.

In the August newsletter we reported that the immigrants seen were Variegated Fritillary, Common Buckeye, Gray



Horace's Duskywing (female). Photo by Douglas Buege.

Hairstreak, Common Checkered-Skipper, Pipevine Swallowtail, Little Yellow and American Snout.

In the past month some further immigrants have been reported: **Painted Lady, Fiery Skipper, Sachem, Common Sootywing, Funereal Duskywing, Horace's Duskywing, Dainty Sulphur and**

**Cloudless Sulphur.** The find of the year may well be Douglas Buege's sighting of two very rare butterflies at Olbrich Gardens on August 31: Funereal Duskywing and Horace's Duskywing!

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

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

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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](mailto:karlndot@charter.net)

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