



Hot Seens

Fall/Winter 2005/6

by Michael Reese

Butterfly sightings from the northern states wound down in November this year. Ten species were still flying on November 12 in Hamilton Co., TN, including a Dion Skipper (C. & B. Swafford), while 60 Western Pygmy-Blues were seen on November 13 in Clark Co., NV (S. Potter). On November 14 six species were observed in Allegheny Co., PA, including a Wild Indigo Duskywing (C. Lehman),

and 14 Monarchs were still flying at Gateway National Recreation Area, Brooklyn & Queens, NY (T. Fiore) on November 16. On November 18 a very worn Variegated Fritillary was seen in Baltimore, MD (J. Wilkinson). The last sightings of the year from the north were on November 20 and included an Orange Sulphur and two anglewings in Nottingham County Park, PA (A. Loudell) and a Mourning



Phil Kelly

Above: The third Gold-bordered Hairstreak to be reported from the United States made an appearance at the World Birding Center on Nov. 16 and was spotted by P. and J. Kelly.

Opposite page: The first painted white (Pieriballia viardi) seen in the United States was found at the Bentsen State Park on Dec. 6 by J. Booker, M. Gustafson, J. Dauphin et al.



Jan Dauphin



This first documented smudged hairstreak (*Rekoa stagira*) in the United States was seen at NABA International Butterfly Park by Gil Quintanilla on Dec. 28, 2005.

Cloak from Bronxville, NY (A. Block).

Just when things had died down in the north, they really came alive in the south, especially in southeast Texas. On November 16, a Gold-bordered Hairstreak was seen at the World Birding Center in Mission, Texas (P. & J. Kelly) — only the third record for the United States (see the article about *Rekoa* hairstreaks on page 26).

In December, an incredible four species new to the United States were seen in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, three of which were observed in one five-day period. On December 3, a **four-spotted sailor** (*Dynamine postverta*) made an appearance at NABA International Butterfly Park (T. Fuller *et al.*). Finding a new sailor in the United States is certainly thrilling! Not previously recorded north of southern Tamaulipas, this sighting highlights the possibility that virtually any species known from the Gomez Farias-Ciudad Victoria area

might eventually be found in the United States. Three days later, on December 6, a gorgeous female **painter white** (*Pieriballia viardi*) was seen at Bentsen-Rio Grande Valley SP, Mission, Hidalgo Co., TX (J. Booker, M. Gustafson, J. Dauphin *et al.*). A stunning **broad-tipped clearwing** (*Pteronymia cotytto*), was seen and photographed in Mission, TX (J. Dauphin, K. Davis, plus many other observers) on Dec. 7. Amazingly, exactly one year before, on December 6 2004, a thick-tipped greta (*Greta morgane*) was found at the same location, the first time in 100 years that a ticlear (species in the brushfoot subfamily Ithomiinae) had been found in the United States.

It wasn't just new species that were flying late in the year in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, as an amazing 95 species were observed on December 4 at NABA International Butterfly Park (W. Sekula, M. Reid,



This broad-tipped clearwing (*Pteronymia cotytto*) was the first of this species seen in the United States. December 6, 2005. Mission, Hidalgo Co., TX. J. Dauphin, K. Davis, *et al.*

D. Muschalek). Fifty-five species were also seen at NABA International Butterfly Park on December 21 (D. Hanson).

Later in the month, on December 28, yet a fourth new species for the United States was seen, a **smudged hairstreak**, (*Rekoa stagira*) seen at NABA Butterfly Park (G. Quintanilla)(see the article about *Rekoa* hairstreaks on page 26).

Hardly allowing one to catch one's breath, early butterflies for 2006 included 4 species at Burleigh Murray State Park, San Mateo County, CA (J. Hall, D. Edwards) on January 5, 32 species on January 21 at Kissimmee Prairie Preserve, FL (B. & L. Cooper, L. & B. Atherton, B. Bindschadler, M. & D. Cutler), an Eastern Comma at Maurice River Botanical Garden, Heislerville, NJ (J. E. DiOrio) on January 31, and an early Two-tailed Swallowtail from Hereford, Cochise Co., AZ, (B. Behrstock) on February 16. On February 26

a Satyr Comma and a Milbert's Tortoiseshell were seen at Niagara Springs WMA, ID (K. Fothergill), while on March 1 Eastern Commas and Mourning Cloaks were seen at Fontenelle Forest Nature Preserve, Sarpy Co., NE (D. Speltz). March 5 a Morning Cloak was reported from Silver Spring, Montgomery Co., MD (J. Wilkinson). Warmer 70+ temperatures in the second week of March had many people out looking for their first butterfly of the year and on March 11 Cabbage Whites were reported from Bear, DE (A. Loudell) and from Conyngham, PA (A. Gregory), and two Mourning Cloaks were reported from Mashomack Preserve, Long Island, NY (M. Diederich). March 11 was also a good day in Florida where a very fresh Frosted Elfin and nine Dusky Roadside-Skippers were seen at Ralph E. Simmons State Forest (D. Powell, B. Ahern).

Whether you see an unusual butterfly, an early or late sighting of a common species, or have a whole list of the species that you have seen, we would appreciate hearing from you. Please send your butterfly sightings to sightings@naba.org. With the advent of the Butterflies I've Seen Web Site, those who record your sightings to that site can also just click on "email trip" and send it to the address above. Your sightings will go into the larger database and will be available for others to see on the Recent Sightings web page. 🦋

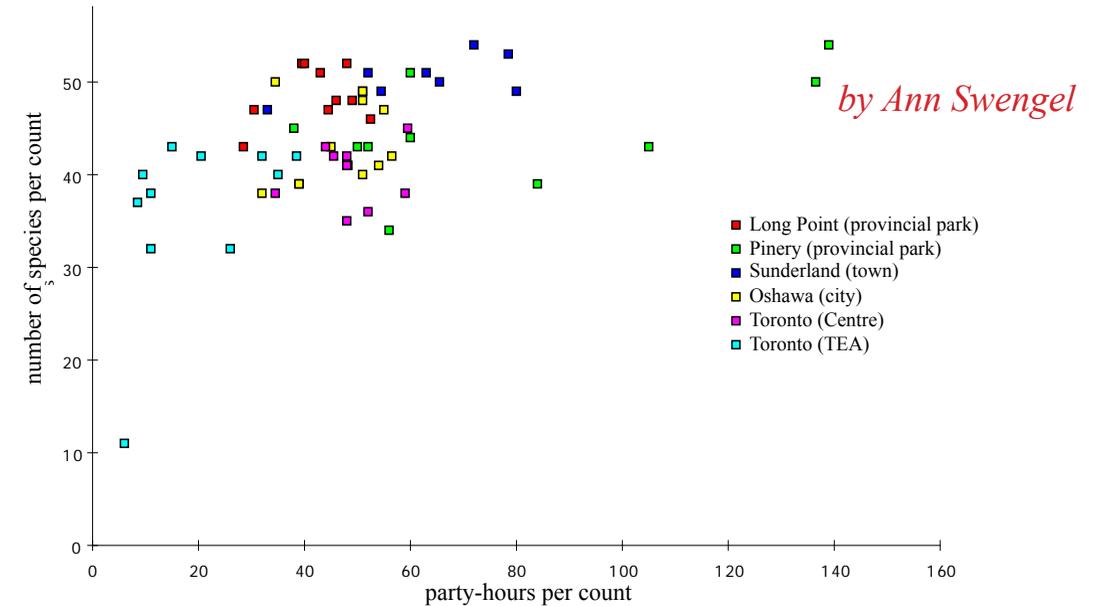
Right: A four-spotted sailor, new for the U.S., on Dec. 6, 2005 at NABA Butterfly Park.

Below: A second four-spotted sailor, this one a female, was seen at Bentsen SP on Dec. 7.



Dave Hanson (2)

NABA Butterfly Count Column



SPECIES RICHNESS in SOUTHERN ONTARIO

Last year's and last issue's columns illustrated the "species accumulation curve". The addition of new butterfly species to the list of species recorded on a count follows a pattern of biggest increases in the early years of the count and diminishing gain in later years.

The graph here plots the total species recorded in each year of each count, against the effort expended (in party-hours) on each count. Species totals aren't "accumulated" year to year but are totaled individually for each count in comparison to party-hours on each count. (Party-hours equal the sum of hours spent by each party, or group of counters, in the field.)

As in species accumulation curves, the more a count produces the most species with the fewest party-hours, the more species-rich the circle; the fewer the species seen with higher the party-hours, the lower the species richness. For the most effective comparisons, look up and down at the variation in species totals at about the same party-hours of counting effort.

Species totals varied greatly both within and among counts. Some of this is due to weather on count day, up-or-down fluctuations in butterfly abundance, and variation in count date.

The counts here all occur in a narrow latitudinal range in southern Ontario. Thus, the same but-

terflies, more or less, are in range in all the circles. The counts are listed in approximate order of increasing landscape development, from provincial parks to Toronto, the largest city in Canada.

It's not a dramatic pattern, but at the same amount of party-hours, counts in less developed landscapes tend to be higher up in the graph (more species) and counts in more developed landscapes tend to be lower in the graph (fewer species). Like the graph for southern Wisconsin (in vol. 12 issue 3) and for New York City area (in vol. 12 issue 4), this graph inspires hope for urban areas, as a variety of butterfly species have been counted in the most developed circles. If more butterfly garden and habitat projects are initiated in our cities, surely even more species are possible. But the contrast in species totals among these counts implies how many species have been lost as undeveloped areas became urbanized. 🦋

TO ORDER THE COUNT REPORT
Price for the 2005 report is \$10 (NABA members) or \$15 (non-members). Send your check or money order payable to NABA (in U.S. dollars) to: NABA Butterfly Count, 4 Delaware Road, Morristown, NJ 07960 USA. For more information, visit www.naba.org.