

In Mission, Wish'in for the Good Stuff

Have You Been Flashed Today?

by Linda F. Cooper

A Report From The Ninth Biennial NABA Members Meeting

“Hey guys, I have a really big hairstreak over here.”

These words were barely out of Alana Edwards' mouth when NABA members who had arrived early for the grand opening ceremony for the new NABA National Butterfly Center started to converge on the bed of white plumbago where Alana stood. ‘Oh my gosh, it's one of those big Mexican hairstreaks’ I thought but couldn't remember which one. Someone found a book and shouted “Aquamarine!” By that time Alana was running for the office to get Jeff Glassberg.

He was on the telephone, trying to get the electricity hooked up to the new Visitors Pavilion (which was scheduled to open the next day!). Not wanting to interrupt his phone call, Alana wrote out “Aquamarine Hairstreak” in large letters on a piece of paper and dangled the paper in front of his face. Bolting from the chair, he came sprinting out to find lots of folks busily taking photos. “That's a U.S. lifer for me,” said Jeff and it was for most of us as well.

And so the Ninth Biennial Members Meeting in late October 2010 in Mission, Texas began...an incredible four days of rarities and not so rarities with members basking in the company of butterflies and each other.

14 *American Butterflies*, Winter 2010



An Aquamarine Hairstreak jump-started the NABA Members Meeting! Oct. 28, 2010. National Butterfly Center, Hidalgo Co., TX.

On Thursday afternoon the Mission Chamber of Commerce hosted a welcoming reception for the Meeting. The wonderful hospitality of the Mission Chamber was much appreciated, as was the “Border Buttermilk” (frozen pink lemonade and tequila).

Thursday evening Jeff Glassberg welcomed the 130 attendees to the Members Meeting and gave an update on the National Butterfly Center Grand Opening earlier that



Dick Vane-Wright, Saturday night's speaker

The big hairstreak drew a big crowd! Oct. 28, 2010. National Butterfly Center.

day. He introduced Dave Hanson, a winter Texan and Jan and Dave Dauphin, residents of Mission, who together kicked off Thursday's evening program with ‘Butterflies of the Lower Rio Grande Valley’ — butterflies we could expect to see with a sampling of rarities thrown in.

Friday's Keynote Speaker was sixth generation Texan Dr. Larry Gilbert, a professor at the University of Texas in Austin who was, for many years, the chairman of the Dept. of Zoology. His talk, “Ecological Perspectives on Butterfly Movements in Southern Texas and Northeastern Mexico” was based on his many years of field studies. He took us back in time, to the South Texas and Northern Mexico that existed 50 years ago, and then provided insights into the periodic population explosions of American Snouts and Tawny Emperors.

Saturday's Featured Speaker was Dr. Dick Vane-Wright, the recently retired head of entomology at the Natural History Museum in London, England with his enlightening program ‘Butterfly Biology, Behavior, Evolution and Human Attitudes Toward Nature.’ Several female members of the Florida delegation had sprouted colorful gossamer wings prior to the Saturday banquet. Had they evolved in preparation for Dr. Vane-Wright's program or because it was Halloween eve? In the event, Dr. Vane-Wright provided a fascinating and whirlwind tour of the variety of butterflies from around the world, followed by a penetrating discussion of the relationship between people and nature and butterflies. NABA members got a first look at previously unknown paintings, from the late 1700s, of butterflies from Jamaica that illustrated numbers of beautiful species, including some