

Badger Butterfly

The e-Newsletter of the Southern Wisconsin Butterfly Association

JUNE, 2008

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

1 NEXT FIELD TRIPS

(For a complete list of SWBA field trips and butterfly counts, visit our web site.)

Saturday, June 28: 10 a.m. Butterflies of Cherokee Marsh

On this morning walk we'll observe and learn about butterflies, those small but exquisitely beautiful creatures that dance about our ankles in summer. Conservation Biologist **Kathy Kirk** will lead this two hour walk at Cherokee Marsh on the north side of Madison. We will observe a variety of butterflies as they take nectar from wildflowers, and learn about their identification, behavior, and lifestyle.

Bring binoculars if you have them -- close-focusing ones work best. It's best to wear long pants and a hat for protection from the sun. This trip is co-sponsored with the Madison Audubon Society.

Meet at 10:00 a.m. 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. Call Kathy only if you have a question about the trip, at (608) 442-1642.

Saturday, July 5: 9:00 a.m. Madison Butterfly Count

NEW AREA! This is our 18th annual count which will be conducted by SWBA and the Madison Audubon Society. The leader will be **Edgar Spalding**. Each summer butterfly enthusiasts all over North America participate in some 483 censuses of butterfly species. Each count is similar to a Christmas Bird Count. These censuses help to monitor the health of our butterfly populations and the results are published in an annual report. Last year on the Madison census 13 people in 3 groups found 643 butterflies of 42 species. If you can identify butterflies, or can help

spot butterflies, or just want to see and learn about butterflies, join us on this 2 hour count/field-trip. Bring binoculars, the closer they focus the better. Dress for protection from the heat and sun; a hat is recommended. The North American Butterfly Association (NABA) requires a \$3.00 fee from each participant to cover publishing costs.

Meet at 9:00 a.m. at the parking lot across from the entrance to Picnic Point, on the UW campus.

If you have a question about the butterfly count call leader Edgar Spalding at 265-5294 or 831-0616.

Saturday, July 12: 9:00 a.m. Flowers, Butterflies and Birds of Schurch-Thomson Prairie

We will visit The Prairie Enthusiasts' newest preserve, Schurch-Thomson Prairie, and the adjacent privately owned Underwood Prairie. The latter is closed to the public, so this is a great opportunity to see it up close. These and adjacent properties form a complex of remnant prairie and CRP grasslands that are rich with grassland birds. Summer flowers will be in bloom, and we hope to see the rare Regal Fritillary and other butterflies. Last year we found five species of fritillaries. Be prepared for a long hike and bring binoculars for butterfly viewing (the closer they can focus the better). We will have a few extra binoculars. This is a joint trip with The Prairie Enthusiasts and the Madison Audubon Society. Leaders are **Rich Henderson** and **Ann Thering**. The trip will last until noon.

Meet at 9:00 a.m. From Hwy 151 at Blue Mounds take F south (note: F makes a right angle turn). After 5 miles turn right onto Reilly Road. Go to the end and park by the barn. Call Rich at (608) 845-7065 only if you have a question about the trip.

2 UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS (Details will be in the July e-Newsletter. Or see our Web site.)

**Saturday, July 19:
Birds, Butterflies and Dragonflies
of Picnic Point Area.**

**Saturday, July 26:
Scuppernong Valley Prairie and
Butterflies.**

**Saturday, August 9:
Butterflies of the Avoca/Blue
River Area.**

**Saturday, September 6:
Butterflies at Olbrich Gardens.**

3 HIGHLIGHTS OF RECENT TRIPS

Butterflies and Flowers at Spring Green Preserve (May 4): About 30 people from 3 organizations (SWBA, Madison Audubon, The Prairie Enthusiasts) were ready to get out on a sunny day and enjoy what Nature had to offer. We had good views of many **Olympia Marbles** as they landed to bask or take nectar from Rock Cress, their caterpillar food plant. Many Bird's-Foot Violets were in bloom. Also Spring



Azure and American Ladies were seen. (Photo by Ann Thering.)

Bog Butterflies of Northern Wisconsin (May 17-



18). We had a good turnout for this long-distance trip with 12 butterflyers. The weather was borderline and then deteriorated with occasional rain sprinkles We saw many **Brown Elfins** but none

of the other rare bog butterflies put in an appearance. We enjoyed walking in the bog and afterwards we investigated some of the trails in the area and found some interesting birds: Osprey, a Loon, Ring-necked Duck, singing Hermit Thrush, Winter Wren, and Black-throated Green Warbler. We had great views of a Pileated Woodpecker.

Finding Frosted Elfins (Jackson Co.) May 20.

Considering that this was an unusual short-notice weekday trip to Central Wisconsin we had a good turnout with 8 people. One advantage of this spur-of-the moment type of trip is that we can hold out for the best weather and timing. Under sunny skies the butterflying was spectacular and we



found an impressive 21 species of butterflies including a record 15 of the rare and threatened **Frosted Elfin**. (The photo shows a Frosted Elfin laying eggs on the buds of Lupine, the caterpillar food plant.) We found ALL FIVE of Wisconsin's elfin species! Also seen were Harvesters, Silvery Blues, Persius Duskywing and Cobweb Skippers. (We are also submitting the data as a NABA Spring Seasonal Count in the Wazee circle.)

4 NEXT SWBA MEETING

OCTOBER 14, 2008. (Location to be announced in a later Newsletter.)

Sue Borkin of the Milwaukee Public Museum will talk about the Re-introduction of the Swamp Metalmark.

5 DATES FOR SOME OTHER NABA BUTTERFLY COUNTS

TREMPEALEAU (Trempealeau Co.) Thursday, July 10. For details contact Mike Reese at mikereese@wisconsinbutterflies.org or (920) 787-2341.

For these next 3 counts contact Karl & Dorothy Legler karlndot@chorus.net

MUD LAKE (Columbia Co.) **DATE CHANGE!** Sunday, July 13.

NORTHERN KETTLE MORRAINE (Fond du Lac Co.) Tuesday, July 15.

SISTER BAY (Door Co.) Thursday, July 17.

6 BUTTERFLY GARDENING: BUTTERFLY WEED (*Asclepias tuberosa*)

By Dorothy Legler

Every butterfly garden should have some Butterfly Weed! SWBA member Ginny Nelson of Middleton is generously providing free Butterfly Weed plants to give away on Saturday, June 7 at the Madison Farmer's Market on the Square. (Our display is at the King Street corner of the Square.)

The flowers are orange (ranging from pale orange to deep red-orange, occasionally yellow).

Butterfly Weed grows in sunny prairies, fields, roadsides and gardens, reaching a height of from one foot to 2 1/2 feet. The soil is sandy loam. The plant requires dry to moderate moisture, never wet soil.

Butterfly Weed flowers from mid-June to August. It flowers in the second year from seeds, or in the first year from transplants. Seeds can be collected in September and October.



Treat the seeds by sowing them in spring 1/2" deep to produce transplants. Put transplants in permanent locations because roots grow very deep. Lightly mulch to prevent frost-heave in spring which exposes buds and causes injury. Two-inch root cuttings can also be used in the spring. Keep cuttings upright in a mixture of sand and peatmoss just moist, not wet.

Butterfly Weed belongs to the Milkweed Family, and is one of the Monarch caterpillar's food plants. This is the only Family of plants that Monarchs lay their eggs on and the caterpillars eat.

Milkweeds have a toxic chemical that Monarch's and their caterpillars store in their body and this offers some protection from predation.

Although the plant is well-named because butterflies are attracted to it for nectar, a better name would be "Butterfly Flower"!

7 BUTTERFLY PHOTOGRAPHS ON DISPLAY AT UW ARBORETUM

SWBA member **Ann Thering** will present an exhibit of her butterfly photographs, entitled "Butterfly Encounters" at the UW Arboretum Steinhauer Trust Gallery in the Visitor Center at 1207 Seminole Hwy., Madison. The showing will run from July 1 to August 29. The hours are 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. weekdays and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. For more information contact Ann at atching@gmail.com

8 SUMMARY OF MAY BUTTERFLY SIGHTINGS

REPORTED ON www.wisconsinbutterflies.org

At the end of April, thirteen species were flying: 3 Anglewings, 2 Tortoiseshells, Spring Azure, Red Admiral, Cabbage White, Mustard White, Olympia Marble, Brown Elfin, American Lady and Painted Lady. This last butterfly was the most extraordinary. The numerous sightings around the state this early were very remarkable. But the sightings stopped with hardly any sightings in May. May produced 36 more species flying by the end of the month. The species flying in the first 3 weeks of May were running about a week or so behind due to persistent cool spring weather. Notable sightings in the first week of May were Henry's Elfin, American

Copper, and both Black and Eastern Tiger Swallowtails. In the 2nd week of May Juniper Hairstreak, Hoary and Frosted Elfins, Harvester and Silvery Blue were reported.

In the 3rd week of May Sleepy and Dreamy Duskywings, Persius Duskywing, Cobweb Skipper and the first Monarch were reported. By the end of May butterflies were back on a normal schedule. Reports from the last week in May were of Gorgone Checkerspot, Giant Swallowtail, and northern rarities Freija Fritillary, Red-disked Alpine, Jutta and Chryxis Arctics.

Visit Mike Reese's important butterfly web site to see what's being seen around the state including photos that some reporters have taken. Send in your own sightings, online, even if just from your own garden or backyard. The information is important for understanding the details of Wisconsin's butterfly distribution, flight periods and the effects of weather.

9 MONARCH CONSERVATION

This spring NASA publicized new photos documenting continuing deforestation due to extensive illegal logging in the Monarch Butterfly Reserve in Mexico due to high timber prices.

http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/Newsroom/NewImages/images.php3?img_id=17943

Monarch Watch discusses some things that need to be done for Monarch's in Mexico and here in the United States. <http://monarchwatch.org/blog/> (Scroll down to Monarch Butterfly Conservation.)

This next organization is involved in the Michoacan Reforestation Fund and La Cruz Habitat Protection Project in Mexico. <http://www.michoacanmonarchs.org/>

10 VOLUNTEERS WANTED FOR SWBA DISPLAY AT FARMER'S MARKET

1-2 people are needed to staff a table display at the Madison Farmer's Market on the square on Saturday, June 14 and 21. Time is from 8:00 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. Have fun talking to other people interested in butterflies! For details contact Joan Braune at jbraune@sbcglobal.net

11 BUTTERFLY TRAVEL: NABA's Biennial Member's Meeting In Kernville, California, June 26-29.

Four days of butterflying (and birding)! We will be led by a number of experts, such as Bob Barnes. These folks know all the local birds and butterflies and where they are! For details look on the www.naba.org web site under "Biennial Meeting". See you there!

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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. NABA promotes public awareness, conservation and the enjoyment of butterflies through observation with close-focusing binoculars, chapter field trips, educational meetings, photography, butterfly gardening, monitoring, conservation and travel. NABA coordinates more than 500 annual butterfly censuses throughout North America including the Madison Butterfly Count. Most of 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 website at <http://www.naba.org/chapters/nabawba/>

Our e-Newsletter, the [Badger ButterFlyer](#), will be published monthly in summer and every other month in winter. Send any news notes to the editor, Karl Legler, at karlndot@chorus.net

To stop receiving this e-Newsletter simply send an email to the above editor's address.