

# Badger ButterFlyer

The e-Newsletter of the Southern Wisconsin Butterfly Association

A chapter of NABA (North American Butterfly Association)

APRIL, 2019

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

## 1 ANNUAL SWBA MEETING ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24, 2019

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!)

### DAN SONNENBERG MEMORIAL LECTURE SERIES

#### Endangered Species: Swamp Metalmark

The **Swamp Metalmark** is a small but beautiful butterfly that inhabits alkaline wetlands (fens) and is restricted to utilizing Swamp Thistle to survive. Unfortunately, over several years, its known locations in Wisconsin have continued to dwindle. It used to live on Riveredge Nature Center property but went extinct from that area. Swamp Metalmark was reintroduced there but went extinct again. Today we may be down to one site. What can be done?

We will also receive an update on the Endangered **Northern Blue**, a small but beautiful butterfly of northern pine forest openings which is dependent on Dwarf Bilberry (which is also Endangered).

#### IN THIS ISSUE:

1. NEXT SWBA MEETING 4/24/2019: The Endangered Swamp Metalmark.
2. NEXT FIELD TRIP: Bauer-Brockway.
3. Monarch winter population up 144%.
4. UW Arboretum and Monarchs.
5. Integrated Monarch Monitoring.
6. Spring Butterfly Sightings!
7. Top butterfly binoculars still available.
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Swamp Metalmark.



Northern Blue.  
Photo by Dave Hanson.

Our speaker will be **Jay Watson** who recently became the WDNR Natural Heritage Conservation program's first full-time Terrestrial Insect Ecologist. In this position he will lead the department's pollinator and terrestrial insect conservation efforts, critical work at a time when 40% of the world's insect species are on a path toward extinction over the next few decades, and multiple butterfly species have been proposed for Endangered Species Listing.

If time permits Karl Legler will give a short presentation on the past year in butterflies and the threats to NABA's National Butterfly Center and other wildlife refuges along the Texas border with Mexico.

### 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](mailto: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 speakers 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.

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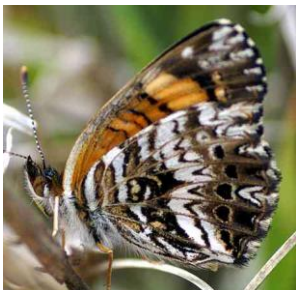
## 2 NEXT FIELD TRIP

Mark your calendar!

### **Butterflies of Bauer-Brockway Barrens (Jackson Co.)**

**Sunday, 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. **Butterfly Expert Mike Reese** (who runs the [wisconsinbutterflies.org](http://wisconsinbutterflies.org) website) 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, 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.

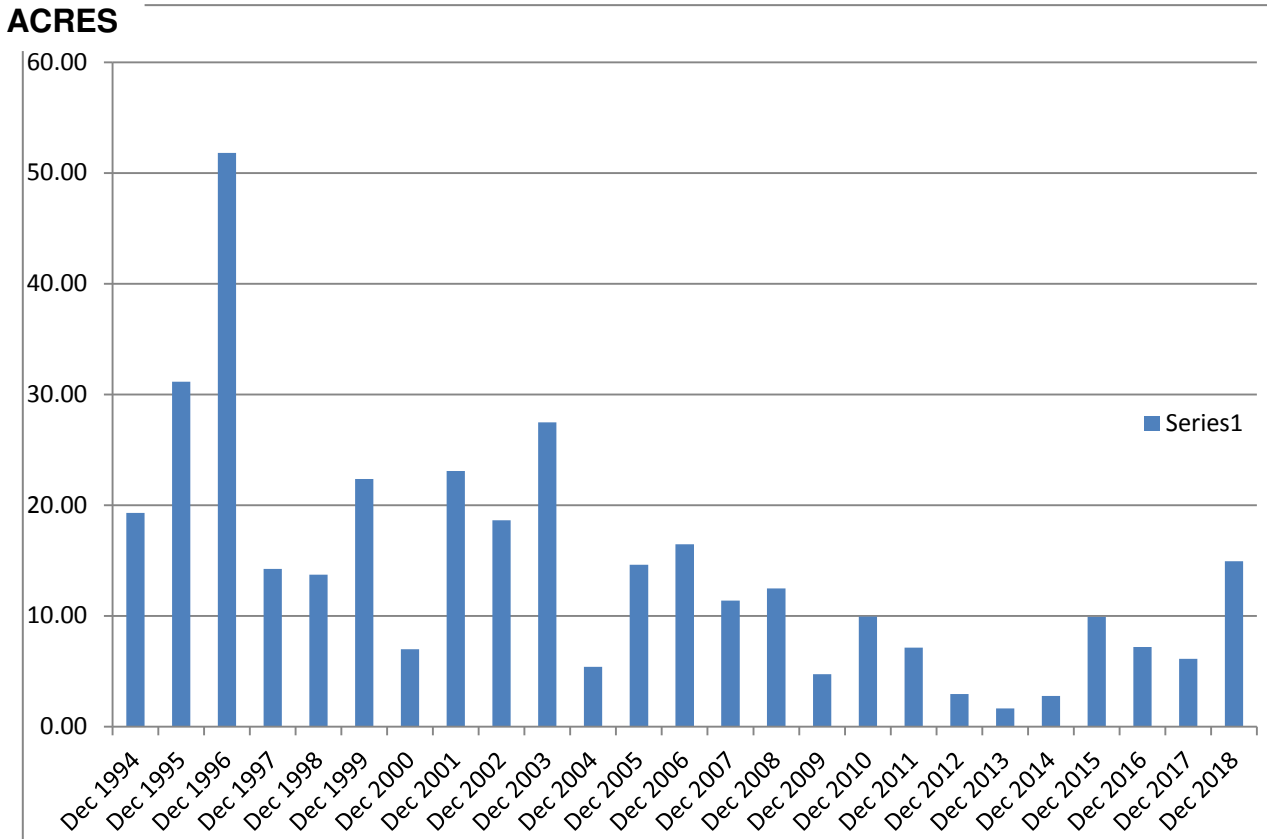
**DIRECTIONS:** From the intersection of I-94 and Hwy 54 in Black River Falls, go east on Hwy 54 approximately 3.8 miles to Brockway Road. Turn right on West Bauer Road and drive 3.8 miles to the intersection with North Brockway Road. (This area is about 2 1/4 hours northwest of Madison via I-94.)

**Participants must **PRE-REGISTER**** for this trip by either calling Mike Reese at (920) 647-0196, or include your phone number in an email to [mikereese@wisconsinbutterflies.org](mailto:mikereese@wisconsinbutterflies.org) (so we can contact you in case of postponement or cancellation due to weather).



**Olympia Marble**

### 3 MONARCH HAS 144% INCREASE OF WINTER POPULATION!



The Monarch migrates about 2,500 miles south to their wintering sanctuary in the mountains of central Mexico. The graph shows the population at that sanctuary for the past 25 years. There has been a severe decline in Monarch population over the past two decades. Population is counted in terms of total acres of forest covered by Monarchs. In 1996 they covered 51.8 acres but bottomed out at a perilous 1.66 acres in 2013. At such low numbers Monarchs are especially vulnerable to being wiped out by a severe winter storm. Last year Monarch's covered 6.12 acres. This year's 14.95 acres is the highest population since 2006, up nearly two and a half times! It is the minimum population



needed for Monarch's to withstand severe winter storms. Monarchs overflowed into some other sites this winter. That happens when the population has a large increase.

So what accounts for the excellent increase? Experts say that it was the "perfect weather" of 2018, not too hot, not too cold! However, next year is forecast to not be another year of perfect weather! Weather will be above average in temperature, especially in Texas which is a bottleneck in Monarch migration. The danger is that warm weather in Texas will send Monarchs to the north too early for optimum reproduction. Still, the Monarch can hopefully further increase its population in 2019.

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## 4 UW ARBORETUM AND MONARCHS

### MONARCH JOINT VENTURE:

The UW Arboretum joined the nationwide conservation cooperative, Monarch Joint Venture, in 2018. (NABA is also a member of the Monarch Joint Venture.)

### JOURNEY NORTH:

Having celebrated its 25th year in 2018, Journey North, one of North America's largest citizen science programs, is celebrating another milestone this year by moving to the UW–Madison Arboretum. As part of that transition, the Arboretum has hired Nancy Sheehan as its Journey North coordinator. Sheehan joins the other members of the Arboretum's Citizen Science Team, including Arboretum Director Karen Oberhauser,

research program manager Brad Herrick, Wisconsin native plant gardener Susan Carpenter and Citizen Science coordinator Jessica Ross.

"We think Journey North is a great model for citizen-based science," Oberhauser says. "It engages the public in minds-on science and has provided data that are key to our understanding of how organisms track the seasons."

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## 5 INTEGRATED MONARCH MONITORING PROJECT

This is "a national initiative to monitor monarch populations and habitat throughout the Monarch breeding range. The IMMP uses a spatially balanced sampling scheme and draws from existing citizen science programs to deliver a suite of protocols that capture many aspects of habitat quality, threats, and monarch use of that habitat. Data gathered through the IMMP contribute to existing population and habitat models that inform broad scale monarch conservation!"

<https://monarchjointventure.org/IMMP>

The IMMP will be holding a training event on Saturday, May 18 at the Leopold Center in Baraboo. At this workshop, you'll learn about monarch biology and how to conduct all activities in the Integrated Monarch Monitoring Program. You may choose to attend the full day (\$25, includes lunch) or watch certain training videos online and attend the afternoon only (\$15). [Consult their website for details:](#)

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## 6 FIRST SPRING BUTTERFLIES SEEN



Millbert's Tortoiseshell

We haven't had an early spring this year, with only 4 reports on [wisconsinbutterflies.org](http://wisconsinbutterflies.org). However, it hasn't been as poor as 2013 and 2014 when there was only a single report for March! Also, this year the first two butterflies reported were somewhat uncommon: two beautiful butterflies, the Milbert's Tortoiseshell and the Compton Tortoiseshell. The former was seen in Dunn County, the latter in Sauk County. Both of them were species that overwinter in the adult (butterfly)



Compton Tortoiseshell

stage. So when the weather warms up they are ready to get out and look for sap to feed on. They do not mate until spring arrives. They seek protection from winter in tree trunks, out-buildings and garages, etc.

The butterflies are getting out and looking around. We should too!

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



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## 7 THE TOP BUTTERFLY BINOCULARS ARE STILL AVAILABLE



The top binoculars for butterfly, dragonfly and insect-watching are the **Pentax Papilio II** binoculars. (The "II" is the Roman Numeral 2 indicating the 2nd edition.) These binoculars are relatively inexpensive, with sharp image, light-weight, suitable for eyeglass wearers, and have an incredible unmatched ability to focus

from infinity down to just 19 inches! At a distance of seven feet you can see a butterfly as well as if you held it in your hand up to your eye. And at the near-focus distance of 19 inches a butterfly appears 5 times larger than life-size! Used by top butterfly watchers around the country, they provide a great way to enjoy and identify the butterflies (or dragonflies and other insects). They come in two magnifications: the 8.5X (currently \$114 on Amazon) or the 6.5X version (currently \$99 on Amazon). (If you have never used binoculars, or primarily have used 7X binoculars then I would recommend that you get the 6.5X version. If you use binoculars in the 8X to 10X range then I would recommend the 8.5X version.) We have used them for a dozen years and love them.

--- *Karl and Dorothy Legler*

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## 8 SWBA 2019 BUTTERFLY FIELD TRIP SCHEDULE

DAY	DATE	FIELD TRIP TITLE	LEADER(S)
Sunday	May 19	Butterflies of Bauer Brockway Barrens (Jackson Co.)	Mike Reese
Saturday	June 15	Butterflies and Wildflowers of Pleasant Valley Conservancy	Douglas Buege Kathie and Tom Brock
Saturday	June 22	Butterflies of Cherokee Marsh	Karl & Dorothy Legler, Jan Axelson, Peter Fissel.
Thursday	July 4	Butterflies and Dragonflies of Swamp Lovers Preserve	Tod Highsmith Karl and Dorothy Legler
Saturday	July 6	Butterflies of Sandhill Wildlife Area (Wood Co.)	Ron Arnold
Sunday	July 7	Madison Butterfly Count	Leglers, Peter Fissel
Saturday	July 20	Butterflies and Flowers of Kalscheur Oak Savannah	Douglas Buege Rich Henderson
Saturday	July 27	Butterflies of Yahara Heights <b>NEW</b>	Ginny Nelson and Pam Skaar
Saturday	August 3	Butterflies of the Avoca and Blue River Area	Douglas Buege
Saturday	August 10	Butterflies of Sauk-Prairie Recreation Area <b>NEW</b>	Leglers

**Put these butterfly field trips on your calendar!!**

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## 9 IN NEXT NEWSLETTER:

- 1) **ANN SWENGEL PROVIDES 3 NEW GUIDES TO BUTTERFLY SITES IN WISCONSIN: Northern Bogs, Hogsback Prairie and Leola Marsh.**
- 2) **SWBA/NABA BUTTERFLY COUNTS 2019 SCHEDULE.**
- 3) **INTERACTIONS OF MOTHS AND BATS.**

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**The ButterFlyer flits to you every month in summer. The next issue will be in May, 2019.**

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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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