1 2020 FIELD TRIP SEASON CANCELLED!

Due to the continuing Corona Virus Pandemic, SWBA has decided to not conduct any Field Trips for the rest of the year. This eliminates the risk of infection for both the trip participants and the leaders.

Nevertheless, SWBA wants to encourage you to get out and observe butterflies during the summer. There are many interesting State Parks, State Forests, Wildlife Areas, State Natural Areas that can be explored. You can walk trails or park your car off of back roads and sample the roadside butterflies, then move on. You can report your sightings to Mike Reese’s Wisconsin Butterflies website. You can even submit photos if you have a camera. And if you visit wildlife areas outside of Wisconsin you can still submit a report and any photos to NABA’s Recent Sightings website which is also run by Mike Reese!

https://sightings.naba.org/

2 2019 SUMMER WAS TERRIFIC FOR MONARCHS! DID THEY HAVE A TERRIFIC MEXICAN WINTERING POPULATION?

NO THEY DID NOT! Wayne Throgmorton said, “World Wildlife Fund-Mexico just announced a 2.83 ha estimate of overwinter area occupied by the eastern monarch butterfly population in Mexico this winter (2019-2020). This estimate means that the population falls below the 4.0 ha threshold necessary to support the contention that the population has significantly increased since 2013.”

Here is an excerpt from the article by Professor Agrawal linked below.

"A year ago, we reported that the population was huge and the overwintering population in Mexico was the highest in 12 years, higher than predicted by many. Last summer (2019) the number of monarchs in the USA was also huge, leading many of us to predict a great migration and population making it to Mexico. Nonetheless, this points to the critical issue of the migration itself, what happens after the caterpillars feed on milkweed. Chip Taylor has noted that “the two biggest factors that appear to account for the lower numbers this winter are the lateness of the migration and the drought in Texas.” As I have previously argued, there is often a disconnect between summer breeding populations of monarchs and the overwintering population. Indeed, this means that limitation of milkweed host plant was not the driver of this year’s halving of the population. Annual fluctuations in spring and summer rains and temperature, coupled with the autumn climate, which dictates the trajectory of the southern migration, have apparently been leading to migratory failure. Drought, in particular, reduces milkweed quality during the breeding season, and perhaps more importantly, reduces availability of flowers and nectar (of other plant species) during the autumn migration." [emphasis added]

Here is the full article, "Monarch population size over winter 2019-2020 announced by WWF Mexico: not great news!" by Anurag Agrawal (author of the book Monarchs and Milkweed and a Professor at Cornell University)

Below are listed the 58 species reported in the 3 months of meteorological spring (March - May). After the number is the date first reported, then the species. Names in bold type are Endangered, Threatened or of Special Concern. If the species has an asterisk (*), its spring flight is its only flight of the year. (However, species of late May will still be flying in June.) The species without asterisk can be seen again later in the year, in a second generation’s flight period, or in a continuous prolonged flight period. (Species with a N (north), or C(Central Wis.) or W(west) indicate that their range does not significantly extend down to Southern Wisconsin.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Species</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 March</td>
<td>Eastern Comma</td>
<td>30 May</td>
<td>Gorgone Checkerspot</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 March</td>
<td>Mourning Cloak</td>
<td>31 May</td>
<td>Sleepy Duskywing*</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 March</td>
<td>Compton Tortoiseshell N, C</td>
<td>32 May</td>
<td>Persius Duskywing*</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 April</td>
<td>Cabbage White</td>
<td>33 May</td>
<td>Mottled Duskywing N, C</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 April</td>
<td>Spring Azure*</td>
<td>34 May</td>
<td>Columbine Duskywing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 April</td>
<td>Green Comma</td>
<td>35 May</td>
<td>Wild Indigo Duskywing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 April</td>
<td>Olympia Marble*</td>
<td>36 May</td>
<td>Silver-spotted Skipper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 April</td>
<td>Mustard White N, C</td>
<td>37 May</td>
<td>Northern Cloudywing*</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 April</td>
<td>Red Admiral</td>
<td>38 May</td>
<td>Pink-edged Sulphur N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 April</td>
<td>Hoary Elfin* N, C</td>
<td>39 May</td>
<td>West Virginia White* N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 April</td>
<td>Henry's Elfin* N, C</td>
<td>40 May</td>
<td>Monarch</td>
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<tr>
<td>12 April</td>
<td>Brown Elfin* N, C</td>
<td>41 May</td>
<td>Red-disked Alpine* N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 April</td>
<td>Juvenal's Duskywing*</td>
<td>42 May</td>
<td>Canadian Tiger Swallowtail N, C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 April</td>
<td>Painted Lady</td>
<td>43 May</td>
<td>Freija Fritillary* N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 April</td>
<td>Meadow Fritillary</td>
<td>44 May</td>
<td>Jutta Arctic* N, C</td>
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<tr>
<td>16 April</td>
<td>Pearl Crescent</td>
<td>45 May</td>
<td>Frigga Fritillary* N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 April</td>
<td>American Lady</td>
<td>46 May</td>
<td>Pepper and Salt Skipper N, C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 April</td>
<td>Eastern Tiger Swallowtail</td>
<td>47 May</td>
<td>Western Tailed-Blue* N, C</td>
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<tr>
<td>19 May</td>
<td>Question Mark</td>
<td>48 May</td>
<td>Karner Blue NW, C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 May</td>
<td>Black Swallowtail</td>
<td>49 May</td>
<td>Dusted Skipper* NW, C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 May</td>
<td>Clouded Sulphur</td>
<td>50 May</td>
<td>Giant Swallowtail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 May</td>
<td>Eastern Tailed-Blue</td>
<td>51 May</td>
<td>Tawny-edged Skipper*</td>
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<tr>
<td>23 May</td>
<td>Frosted Elfin* C</td>
<td>52 May</td>
<td>Hobomok Skipper*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 May</td>
<td>Eastern Pine Elfin* N, C</td>
<td>53 May</td>
<td>Northern Crescent*</td>
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<tr>
<td>25 May</td>
<td>Dreamy Duskywing*</td>
<td>54 May</td>
<td>Little Wood Satyr* N</td>
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<tr>
<td>26 May</td>
<td>Silvery Blue*</td>
<td>55 May</td>
<td>Common Ringlet* N, C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 May</td>
<td>Common Roadside-Skipper</td>
<td>56 May</td>
<td>Arctic Skipper* N, C</td>
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<tr>
<td>28 May</td>
<td>Harvester</td>
<td>57 May</td>
<td>Common Sootywing</td>
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<tr>
<td>29 May</td>
<td>American Copper</td>
<td>58 May</td>
<td>Chryxus Arctic* N</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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One of the more striking butterflies of this spring was the **Painted Lady**. They are not permanent residents of Wisconsin (can't survive the winter). But they are two-way migrants that originate in Northern Mexico and the Southwest U.S. and make their way north to Wisconsin in summer, in moderate numbers, breed here, and then return South in the fall. Usually uncommon, they can invade in large numbers in some years. For example, in 2015, the first reported Painted Lady was as late as June 8 and had only a single report in August. In 2016 I reported that "Painted Lady has been pretty scarce this year." But then in 2017 the first report was early, on April 8, with 60 reports in August, including many sightings of multiple Ladies. But then in 2018, the population crashed; the first report was as late as July 17!! But in 2019 Painted Lady was reported as early as April 19 and in August there were roughly 180 reports. It became an outstanding year for the Painted Lady, which is one of our more attractive butterflies. Painted Lady catapillars have the ability to detoxify many plant poisons so it can eat 100 different species of plant. Its range is global and Painted Ladies migrate from Africa to Europe and back in the course of a year, which is a 9,000 mile route. This involves multiple generations of Ladies. Now this year, 2020, the Painted Lady has been reported on April 26, even earlier than its resident sibling species, the American Lady. And in the following 30 days there were another 11 reports. So it may be that the mild winter did not knock them very far south and they are in a good position to have another strong year in Wisconsin!

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

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### 4 LEFTOVER FROM 2019: MUD LAKE NABA COUNT

We did not have enough space in last summer's Badger ButterFlyer to include the results of this NABA Butterfly Count. On July 1, 2019, Madison Audubon counted butterflies at Goose Pond property and SWBA counted butterflies within the rest of the 15 mile diameter circle. Altogether, 15 counters, in 6 parties, counted for a total of 21 hours of observation and found 651 butterflies of 30 species. We began with light rain but unexpectedly the sky cleared up and became mostly sunny for the rest of the day! We found the highest number of **Least Skippers** ever (73) and the **Monarch** was the most abundant butterfly (126)! We found a new species for the 31-year count: a **Karner Blue**! The Karner Blues, Federally Endangered, had been found by Lester Doyle, less than a week before the count. That was a Columbia County record and perhaps the most Southern Karner in Wisconsin. And they were within the count circle! Luckily a Karner Blue was found on the day of the count! The total number of butterfly species found in this circle over the 31 years is 69! Below is the full list of 2019 results:

- **Eastern Tiger Swallowtail** 1
- **Black Swallowtail** 4
- **Cabbage White** 15
- **Clouded Sulphur** 12
- **Orange Sulphur** 1
- **Bronze Copper** 4
- **Banded Hairstreak** 2
- **Eastern Tailed-Blue** 4
- **Summer Azure** 9
- **Karner Blue** 1
- **Great Spangled Fritillary** 8
- **Pearl Crescent** 34
- **Northern Crescent** 100
- **Baltimore Checkerspot** 8
- **Eastern Comma** 3
- **Gray Comma** 1
- **American Lady** 22
- **Painted Lady** 5
- **Red Admiral** 119
- **Common Buckeye** 1
- **Viceroy** 4
- **Hackberry Emperor** 13
- **Tawny Emperor** 2
- **Common Wood Nymph** 8
- **Eyed Brown** 9
- **Appalachian Brown** 1
- **Monarch** 126
- **Silver-spotted Skipper** 60
- **Least Skipper** 73
- **Mulberry Wing** 1
5 IN MEMORY OF PETER FISSEL

Peter Fissel, 63, a longtime member of Wisconsin Society for Ornithology, list administrator for Wisconsin Bird Net (Wisbirdn), field trip coordinator and a trip leader for the Madison Audubon Society, died in Madison on April 23, 2020, after a battle with pancreatic cancer.

Peter regularly attended SWBA meetings, helped to spot butterflies on our field trips, had agreed to become the field trips coordinator for SWBA, and helped on NABA Counts for many years, especially the Madison Count, Mud Lake Count, Dubuque Count and Northern Kettle Moraine Count.

His death is a tragic loss for SWBA and for the many field trip participants that knew him. He will truly be greatly missed.

6 AN UPDATE TO ANN SWENGEL'S GUIDES TO WISCONSIN BUTTERFLY HOTSPOTS IS NOW AVAILABLE ON WEBSITE

This three-page guide is an update to “The Beguiling Butterflies of the Jackson County Pine-Oak Barrens” published in 2009. Since then, an underground gas pipeline was installed right through prime habitat in Jackson County for Frosted Elfin (state listed as threatened). The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) implemented many measures to mitigate the effects of the pipeline. This update reports on observations of how Frosted Elfins have responded. The Stanton Creek Road area has had a wonderful revival of Frosted Elfin detectability. The conservation measures implemented by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources were particularly effective here. Additional sites in the pipeline right-of-way with good Frosted Elfin detectability are also noted. The pipeline installation didn’t work out as well at the South Brockway ATV Trail. We did not find Frosted here in 2019; we last found it here in 2016, which was since the pipeline was installed. Updates on Frosted Elfin detectability at sites unaffected by the pipeline are also provided.

This guide is based on years of surveys by Ann and Scott Swengel.

Click on https://www.naba.org/chapters/nabawba/watching.html#Anchor-Guides-49575 Find the title: Update on Finding Frosted Elfins in Jackson County, Wisconsin and click to download the PDF file.
The ButterFlyer flits to you every month in summer. The next issue will be in JULY, 2020.

**Officers of SWBA:**
President: Dr. Douglas Buege
djbuege@gmail.com
Vice-President: Karl Legler
karlindot@charter.net
Secretary: Dorothy Legler
Treasurer: Fred Dike

**Other SWBA contributors:**
e-Newsletter Editor: Karl Legler
Webmaster: Karl Legler
Butterfly Reporting: Mike Reese at
www.wisconsinbutterflies.org
Speaker's Bureau: Dorothy Legler
Dr. Douglas Buege
NABA Liaison: Joan Braune

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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 karlindot@charter.net

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