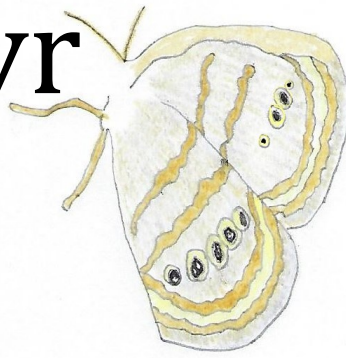


The Lonely Satyr

For Butterfly Enthusiasts
of Indiana, Michigan, Ohio



May 1, 2025

In case you missed it - a fen is saved!

"Habitat protected for one of North America's rarest butterflies, other endangered species"

This press release, dated December 18, 2024, has been reprinted with permission from the Central Indiana Land Trust. The original can be found on their website at <https://conservingindiana.org>. A special "Thank you!" to Shawndra Miller, Communications Director, for sharing this information with us, and to the entire staff for all of their hard work. Consider donating to their conservation and restoration efforts at <https://conservingindiana.org/ways-to-give/>

Indiana's only site for Mitchell's satyr, a species on the brink of extinction, safe from development

The purchase of a 13-acre property containing a high-quality wetland in northern Indiana will help to protect one of the rarest species in the U.S.

The Central Indiana Land Trust, Inc. (CILTI), a private nonprofit conservation group, worked with partners to purchase the land known as Larimer Fen from private owners with the intention of selling it to the Indiana Department of Natural Resources in the future when funding comes available. Due to its sensitive nature, it will not be open to the public.

The survival of Mitchell's satyr, a federally endangered butterfly, requires the unique conditions of high-quality wetlands like Larimer Fen. Nationally, the loss of similar habitats is putting Mitchell's satyr at risk of extinction. Only a handful of sites remain that are hospitable to the species, and Larimer Fen is the only one in Indiana.

But the butterfly isn't the only imperiled species making its home in the damp and peaty environment of Larimer Fen. Blanding's turtles, sphagnum sprite damselflies, elfin skimmers (North America's smallest dragonfly), and death camas, a state-threatened plant, also rely on the habitat for survival.

About the site, noted conservationist and best-selling author Kenn Kaufman said, "The Mitchell's satyr is an unbelievably rare butterfly, worth protecting in its own right, and it's also an indicator of unique, high-quality habitat. This fen is also home to rare wildflowers, rare dragonflies, and other special creatures. I am so pleased this natural gem is preserved forever." A native Hoosier, Kaufman is co-author of a popular butterfly field guide, among other books. He now lives in Ohio, where there is one site remaining for the Mitchell's satyr.

Fen continued

CILTI president Cliff Chapman expressed gratitude for the organization's generous donors and forward-thinking board that enabled swift action on the purchase. "Thanks to our support base, we can move fast when speed is of the essence," said Chapman. "We're interested in more partnerships with individuals, groups, and state government when it means protecting the natural places that make Indiana special."

A unique resource for a private nonprofit organization, CILTI's Evergreen Fund for Nature made the rapid transaction possible. Donors contribute to the fund so the land trust has access to ready capital, which allows it to move quickly when desirable land is for sale. This project's critical endangered species habitat also brought support from donors as far away as California. In cases like Larimer Fen, CILTI can hold onto a property until the state can free up funds to purchase it for long-term protection.

"Even though the site will never be open to the public, I believe saving part of our natural heritage increases overall quality of life in Indiana. It's wonderful to know that places like this still exist in 2024, and we were fortunate to put a deal together fast enough to buy the land, ensuring that the state wouldn't end up with development that would wipe out the endangered species," Chapman said.

I asked Shawndra to give us a spring project update, and she explained there will be some upcoming inventories on the property. Michigan Natural Features Inventory will monitor the site this year in the hopes of seeing Mitchell's satyrs (and any other butterflies and endangered species).



Larimer Fen
Credit: John Brittenham

Butterfly Sightings

Right: Zebra Swallowtail
Credit: John Michael Durback
Shawnee State Forest, Scioto Co., OH
4/12/2025



Right: Mustard White
Credit: Dawn Pietrykowski
Eagle Creek Nature Preserve,
Garrettsville, OH
4/18/2025



Left: Eastern Comma
Credit: Mary Durand
LaGrange Co., IN
4/3/2025

If you'd like to use a photograph in this newsletter, or any other "The Lonely Satyr," please contact Leslie Arnold, who will seek permission from the photographer. These amazing photos are hard work, so we want to give credit where it is due!

Butterfly Sightings

Right: Starry Cracker
Photo credit: Ronda Spink
Honduras
1/2025



Left: Yellow-fronted or Pale Owl Butterfly
Photo credit: Ronda Spink
Honduras
1/2025

Right: Falcate Orangetip (female)
Photo credit: John Michael Durback
Shawnee State Forest, Scioto Co., OH
4/12/2025



Community Calendar

Contact the event host prior to traveling to make sure it's not cancelled.

Saturday, May 31

9:00am - 1:00pm

Riverview Native Nursery Spring Open House

6911 Hathaway Rd., Fort Wayne, IN

Call 260-619-6741 for more information.

Thursday, May 15

5:30 - 8:30pm

Butterfly Monitor Training (Indoor Presentation)

Merry Lea Environmental Learning Center, Albion, IN

Help Merry Lea learn more about their butterfly populations. Training goes over Michigan Butterfly Network Protocols. Learn native butterflies and how to monitor a specific route. John Brittenham, Instructor.

Register at <https://merrylea.goshen.edu/get-involved>. Scroll down to the Google Form. Call 260-799-5969 with questions.

Sunday, June 8

1:00 - 4:00pm

Butterfly Monitor Training (Outdoor Field Portion)

Merry Lea Environmental Learning Center, Albion, IN

Indoor presentation required prior to attending. Practice a monitoring route. Register at <https://merrylea.goshen.edu/get-involved>. Scroll down to the Google Form. Call 260-799-5969 with questions.

Wednesday, May 28

5:30 - 8:30pm

Butterfly Monitor Training (Indoor Presentation)

Maple Wood Nature Center, LaGrange, IN

Training goes over Michigan Butterfly Network protocols. Learn native butterflies and how to monitor a specific route. Choose to adopt a local, available route. RSVP to johnbrittenham@gmail.com.

Saturday, May 31

1:00 - 4:00pm

Butterfly Monitor Training (Outdoor Field Portion)

Pine Knob Park, Howe, IN

Apply Michigan Butterfly Network protocols and practice a monitoring route. Practice butterfly identification. Must attend indoor presentation first. RSVP to johnbrittenham@gmail.com.

(No endorsement or discrimination of specific events or vendors on this community calendar is intended or implied.)

Community Sightings

4/11/25

Eastern Comma (maybe a Question Mark?)

John Brittenham, by West Noble H.S., Noble Co., IN

4/22/25

Mourning Cloak

John Brittenham, by Hogback Lake, Steuben Co., IN

4/23/25

Cabbage White

Leslie Arnold, Pretty Lake, LaGrange Co., IN

4/24/25

Cabbage White

Dareen McClelland, Angola, IN



If you'd like your event information to be in June's newsletter, please turn it in by May 25. Local sightings are my favorite part of the newsletter, so please report what you're seeing. Don't be shy! Photos are great!

To subscribe and submit, contact:

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