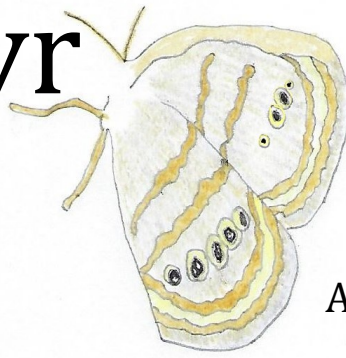


The Lonely Satyr

For Butterfly Enthusiasts of Northeast Indiana



August 1, 2022

Summer Flutters By

By Fred Wooley

This article originally appeared as a column for 2022 July KPCNews Outdoor Page "A Natural Touch." Thank you to KPCNews and Fred Wooley for the ability to reprint the article for educational purposes.

I work part time for Blue Heron Ministries, a northeast Indiana land trust and natural area restoration and resource management non-profit organization. My task last week had me in a beautiful wetland fen, one of our project areas where the natural community is being restored to its once high integrity and where native species again thrive.

We were collecting seeds from native species of grass-like sedges. With me and schooling me on the identification of this diverse group of plants was BHM Director, Nate Simons. As we moved through the waste-high vegetation, he stopped and exclaimed, "Look, a Baltimore checkerspot!"

I looked down at this medium-sized butterfly, jet black with striking white spots, both wings rimmed on the trailing edge with orange spots. It remained motionless; wings spread allowing me to capture a phone photo.

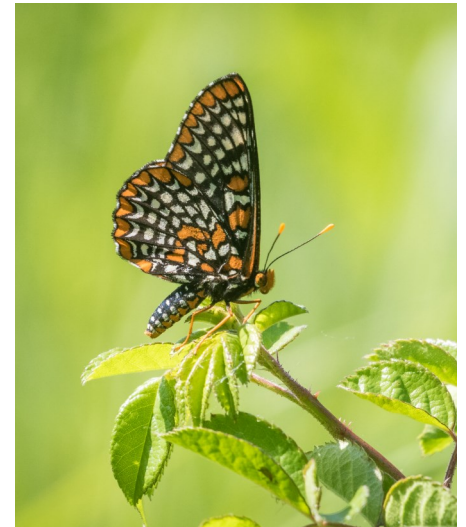
This is a state rare butterfly found only in high-quality wet meadows and fens. All butterflies have a larval stage before pupating and emerging as adults. Larvae eat plants and for some butterflies, certain plants are preferred. For the Baltimore checkerspot it is the white turtlehead plant. This plant too, is not common and is special to high-quality, wet environments, which explains why the Baltimore checkerspot is equally rare.

The white turtlehead flower resembles, well, a white turtle head. The plant's scientific name is *Chelone glabra*. Cheloniidae is also a family of sea turtles. The flowers occur in clusters toward the top, resembling a group of turtles together looking outward.

But back to butterflies. I mentioned the Baltimore checkerspot discovery to friend and retired curator at the Fort Wayne Children's Zoo, Mark Weldon, and he said, "Oh Fred, that's a good find! That is not a common butterfly, and they are only active a short time in early summer."

The adult Baltimore checkerspot lays its eggs on the host turtlehead plant. Larvae feed there and sometimes move to other plants, but the turtlehead plant is key. They overwinter as half-grown caterpillars, emerge the following year and form pupas, which then emerge as adults after a couple of weeks.

Adults feed on flower nectar of milkweeds, viburnum shrubs, and wild roses. And they, in turn, feed the eyes of anyone lucky enough to catch a glimpse of this beautiful butterfly sporting the vivid black cloak with striking white and orange spots.



Above: Baltimore Checkerspot

Photo credit: Doug Selzer

LaGrange Co., IN

6/14/22

Summer cont'd.

By Fred Wooley

Part of my summer also finds me and others in northeast Indiana doing volunteer butterfly surveys under the auspices of The Michigan Butterfly Network. It is a citizen science, methodical process of observing and recording the presence of butterfly species. The technique is to slowly walk the exact same route, observe and record all butterflies, taking note of habitat types, time, temperature, windspeed, sky cover, all conditions that affect butterfly presence and activity.

The process is not always easy as some butterflies are small, nondescript, and resemble each other. Identification is difficult as some have fast, hopping, bouncing flight patterns and they don't light and sit still!

Another good friend and now retired Indiana State Parks Chief Interpretive Naturalist, Mike Ellis, once opined on the basic name "butterfly." He claimed it a bit of a misnomer.

"There is really nothing "butter" about the insect," he noted. "Nor is it a fly. A better name would be "flutterby," which better describes what they do. They flutter by you!"

Great thought, I agreed, but it never caught on.

There are several species of very small brown butterflies that seemingly come out of nowhere and just flutter by you. Some birders call the sparrow group LBJ birds – "Little Brown Jobbies." I contend the same for this group of small brown butterflies.

I recently discovered and recorded three LBJ butterflies of the Satyr group, the northern pearly eye, the eyed brown, and the little wood satyr. Unlike the open wetland checkerspot, these LBJs prefer woodland habitats.

Some researchers use a butterfly net to catch and more closely observe them for identification. I have found it easier and less likely to injure a butterfly to use a camera. I carry a small point-and-shoot camera with a telescoping lens. When the target alights, if it does, I get a photo I can then enlarge and make my identification. I could never have identified the three small Satyrs without slowing them down for a better look.

Of course, sometimes, they just flutter by.

Fred Wooley is a naturalist, writer, and land preservation/restoration enthusiast. He lives on part of an old farm overlooking an extensive fen in northern Steuben County. He can be reached at fwooley@frontier.com.



Turtlehead

Credit: www.prairiemoon.com



Above: Northern Pearly-eye

Photo credit: Doug Selzer

Pigeon River FWA, IN

7/16/22

Fen Artwork for Sale

This information was provided by Ashley Cole-Wick, Conservation Associate with Michigan Natural Features Inventory.

Michigan Natural Features Inventory (MNFI) and Querkus Creative have teamed up to create a series of artwork highlighting the importance and biodiversity of prairie fens of Michigan. You can view the artwork and purchase it on the Querkus website <https://www.querkuscreative.com/products/prairie-fens>.

100% of proceeds will be donated to MNFI to support prairie fen research in Michigan.

Keep an eye out on our social media, where we are posting an educational series on prairie fen biodiversity and conservation.

Follow Querkus Creative on Instagram - @querkuscreative

Follow MNFI on social media

Instagram - @mnfi.msue

Facebook - @MichiganNFI

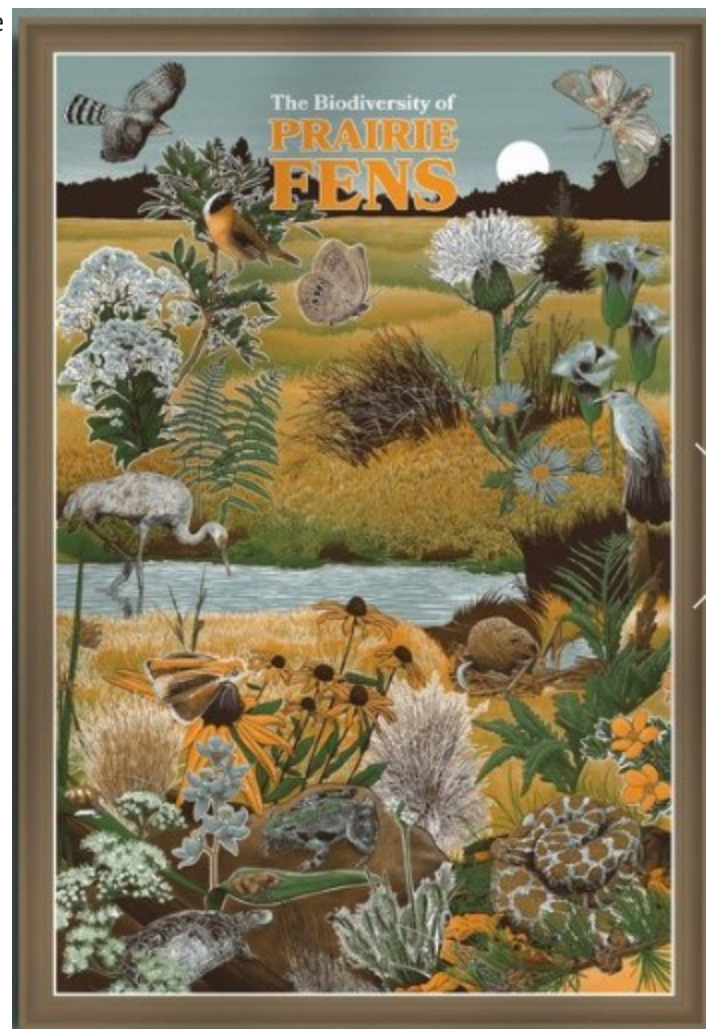
Twitter - @MichiganNFI



Items for sale include “Endangered Butterflies of Michigan Prairie Fens” - 8x10 Digital Prints (\$20 each). Butterflies featured are the Poweshiek Skipperling, Swamp Metalmark, and Mitchell’s Satyr!

Also for sale: “Friend of the Fen Sticker Pack” (\$15), “The Butterflies of Michigan Prairie Fens” T-shirt (\$30), and the “Prairie Fen Biodiversity” 24x36 Poster (\$70).

On the Querkus website you are able to zoom in on the artwork.



The thin left and right arrows you may notice on the Poweshiek Skipperling poster are from my screen shot, and do not actually appear on the print itself.

Ashley was not sure if they will do a reprint or not if they sell out. It could be a limited run. Please keep this in mind if you decide to support this cause.

Thanks, Leslie Arnold

Chain O' Lakes State Park Count Results

North American Butterfly Association (NABA) counts can become a hobby within a hobby! They are a fun way to meet fellow butterfly lovers and check off your bucket list.

The NABA Noble County Count was held on June 21. It was a steamy day! Thank you to all of the amazing participants, and especially the State Park Interpretive Staff, who fully supported this event.

Results from the NABA East LaGrange County Count and other nearby counts are still being tallied. They will appear in the September edition, alongside some awesome photos!

Region 14
Great Lakes (IN, MI, OH)
Jerome Wiedmann and Steven Mueller, Regional Editors

1. Noble Co., IN. Yr. 25, 41.3961°, -85.4246°, Center at Albion Courthouse. See 1996 report for habitats. Imminent threats to habitat: Gypsy moth infestation, sprayed. **21 June 2022;** 1200-1430 hrs; sun AM 76-100%, PM 76-100%; 88-96°F; wind 1-8 mi/hr. 13 observers in 3 parties. **Total party-hours 10; total party-miles on foot 6. Observers:** Leslie Arnold (4870 S 890 E, Wolcottville, IN, 46795; larnold@lagrangecounty.org), A. Buckley, B. Buckley, D. Buckley, L. Buckley, M. Buckley, C. Cornhill, J. Durback, S. Etheridge, T. Flemming, R. Gerber, B. Parvish, N. Williamson.
E. Tiger Swallowtail 1, Spicebush Sw. 1, Cabbage White 3, Orange Sulphur 1, E. Tailed-Blue 2, 'Summer' Spring Azure 1, Gr. Spangled Fritillary 1, Pearl Crescent 3, E. Comma 3, Mourning Cloak 2, Am. Lady 2, Painted La. 1, Red Admiral 1, Red-spotted Purple 1, Viceroy 1, Tawny Emperor 3, Silver-spotted Skipper 39, Least Sk.
2. Unidentified: Anglewing 1, Greater Fritillary 2, Sulphur 1, Skipper 1, Brushfoot 2. **Total** 23 species, 75 individuals.

Local Sightings



Above: Tawny Emperor
Photo credit: Leslie Arnold
Maple Wood Nature Center, LaGrange, IN
7/9/22



Above: Silver-bordered Fritillary
Photo credit: John Brittenham
Fen at Duff Lake, LaGrange Co., IN
7/1/22

Local Sightings cont'd.

Cheryl Chapman reported:

Monarch

7/6/22

Long Beach, IN

Mary Durand reported:

Great Spangled Fritillary

6/25/22

Pigeon River FWA, IN

American Lady

7/11/22

near Reed Cemetery, LaGrange Co., IN

Janel Rogers reported:

2 Red Admirals

Spicebush Swallowtail

Eastern Tiger Swallowtail

2 Monarchs

6 Viceroys

Lots of Pearl Crescents & skippers

7/19/22

Merry Lea Environmental Center,

Wolf Lake, IN

Roger Wenger reported:

Giant Swallowtail

7/23/22

Red-spotted Purple

7/25/22

LaGrange Co., IN

Steven Etheridge reported:

Black Swallowtail

Pearl Crescent

Eastern-tailed Blue

Red Admiral

Red-spotted Purple

Eastern Tiger Swallowtail

Giant Swallowtail

Monarch

American Copper

Silver-spotted Skippers

7/22

Jefferson Twnshp., Noble Co., IN



Above: Question Mark

Photo credit: McGahan Family

Wawaka, IN

7/22/22



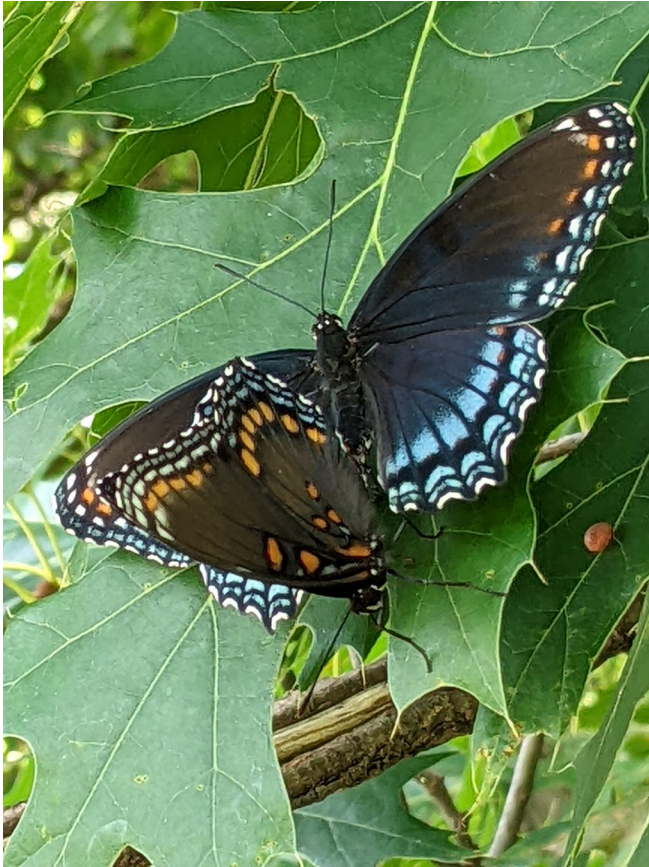
Above: American Snout

Photo credit: Doug Selzer

Pigeon River FWA, IN

6/21/22

Local Sightings cont'd.



Above: Red-spotted Purples mating
Photo credit: Mary Durand
Pine Knob Park, LaGrange Co., IN
7/19/22



Above: Meadow Fritillary
Photo credit: Steven Etheridge
Jefferson Twnshp., Noble Co., IN
July

Community Calendar

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

Monarch Mania Weekend

Friday, August 5 & Saturday, August 6

Chain O' Lakes State Park, Albion, IN

Call 260-636-2654 or email ccornhill@dnr.in.gov for more information.

Prairie Wild Flowers

Sunday, August 21, 3:00-4:00 p.m.

Metea County Park, 8401 Union Chapel Rd.,
Fort Wayne, IN 46845

Learn to identify August prairie wildflowers. Free to Monarch volunteers; \$2 to all others over age 6. Pre-registration required by 8/17. Call 260-449-3778.



Monarch Tagging

Tuesdays in September, 1:00-3:00p.m.

Emma Pitcher Prairie, Kalamazoo Nature Center, MI

Details posted after Aug. 15 at:

<https://naturecenter.org/michiganbutterfly/>

or call 269-381-1574

If you'd like your event information to be in September's newsletter, please turn it in by August 24. 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:

Naturalist Leslie A. Arnold

larnold@lagrangecounty.org

Maple Wood Nature Center at
(260) 463-4022

0505 W 700 S, Wolcottville, IN,
46795

