



# *On The Wing*

*Newsletter of the Tennessee Valley Chapter,  
North American Butterfly Association*

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Welcome to the newly formed Tennessee Valley chapter of the North American Butterfly Association! Our very first meeting was held on Tuesday, April 22, 2008 in the Discovery Classroom at the Tennessee Aquarium. Fifteen people attended our inaugural meeting and we had a good time getting to know each other. While we come from many diverse backgrounds, one thing we have in common is a love of nature and especially one of the most beautiful creations Mother Nature has blessed us with, the butterflies.

Those in attendance were:

Jennifer Taylor - Rossville, GA  
David Spicer - Ooltewah, TN  
Carl & Beverly Swafford - Collegedale, TN  
Linda Whitten - Chattanooga, TN  
Glenda M. Hood - Signal Mountain, TN  
Marian Coulter - Cleveland, TN  
Vaughn Trentham - Cleveland, TN

Bill Haley - Chattanooga, TN  
Harold Birch - Soddy-Daisy, TN  
Lisa Lemzala - Chattanooga, TN  
Mary Randles - Chattanooga, TN  
Donna Shelman - Apison, TN  
Patti Whitson - Ooltewah, TN  
Tanya Jordan - Ooltewah, TN

Bill Haley, who works in the Tennessee Aquarium's Education Department, was in charge of the organizational meeting. He explained that the North American Butterfly Association (NABA) is a non-profit organization which was formed to promote public enjoyment and conservation of butterflies. Anyone is welcome to join.

Our new chapter has been assigned a rather large area. Anyone who joins NABA and lives within zip codes beginning with 374, 373 (except 37355-which is claimed by the Middle TN NABA chapter), 307, 357 or 359 will automatically become a member of our chapter. Interested parties who join NABA from outside this area and want to be part of our chapter may do so, but no set policy is currently in place.

At the time of our meeting, there were 17 people within our designated territory, but NABA requires a minimum of 25 for a chapter to be considered "official". Three more folks joined after the meeting, and we'd like to welcome new members Donna Shelman, Mary Randles and Glenda Hood. You put us a little closer to our goal of at least 25!

Bill said the formation of NABA can be likened to the old days of bird study, when a specimen had to be killed to identify it. In 1934 Roger Tory Peterson published his first bird guide, which showed pictures of the birds with arrows that pointed out identifying field marks. Suddenly, birds could be identified by the layperson using binoculars without having to harm the bird. It revolutionized bird study as it had been practiced and it became the pastime of bird watching.

People have long collected butterflies, killing them and mounting specimens for collections. The founder of NABA, Jeffrey Glassberg, wished to promote butterfly enjoyment in a non-consumptive manner. He wanted to promote the sport of butterfly watching, instead of butterfly collecting, and NABA was born. Shortly thereafter, Jeff published Butterflies Through Binoculars, The East, and it has become a very widely used butterfly field identification guide in the hobby.

Bill commented that he had grown up collecting butterflies and sees nothing wrong with collecting done in a responsible manner. As a matter of policy there will be no collecting allowed on any field trip or butterfly count sponsored by our chapter. However, butterfly nets may be used as an educational aid to capture a butterfly so it can be observed closely by everyone before being set free. Carl Swafford added that viewing a living butterfly in a jar at close range is a very good way to "get to know the bug", and he uses this technique regularly when teaching about butterflies.

A discussion was held of proposed activities for our chapter. Bill talked about NABA 4th of July butterfly counts and a sheet was distributed of all counts scheduled in this area this summer. Please contact him at (423) 785-4056 (W) or (423) 756-4106 (H) or e-mail him at wgh@tnaqua.org if you wish to join one or more count. There is a \$3 per person fee to NABA to offset publication and administrative costs.

We will also have informal butterfly watching field trips, which is probably the very best way to work on your butterfly spotting and identification skills. (First ones listed below!) Everyone is invited to attend these leisurely walks. We'll even occasionally study the butterfly's cousins, the moths. Bill announced plans to do at least one after-dark blacklighting field trip for moths and other night-flying insects later this summer.

David Spicer brought up the documentation of county records for Tennessee on the BAMONA (Butterflies and Moths of North American) website. Tennessee inclusions for this site are overseen by Stephen Stedman at Tennessee Tech in Cookeville, TN. Many Tennessee counties have very few records, so documentation of county records would be a very worthy goal for our chapter. Future field trips may be planned with this in mind.

There were a couple of master gardeners in our midst and many people around the room plant to attract butterflies and hummingbirds. Carl Swafford suggested that it would be fun to have butterfly garden tours for willing gardeners to show off the fruits of their labors and the insects they attract. It was added that this will also be a popular program topic.

Butterfly photography is also an interest shared by several folks and we'll look forward to tips on how to do it well in future programs, and on field trips.

Regular meetings will be scheduled on the 4th Tuesday of each month at the Tennessee Aquarium. As you can see, this is going to be fun! Plan to join us for as many activities as possible.

Special mention goes to the delicious brownies with peanut butter chips, compliments of Julia Gregory. They were thoroughly enjoyed by everyone. Julia, Jennifer Taylor and Bill Haley are co-founders of this chapter. Due to other commitments, Julia was unable to be there for our first meeting....but at least she sent some goodies!

## **MONTHLY CALENDAR:**

### **TUES., MAY 27: MONTHLY MEETING**

**7:00PM, Tennessee Aquarium, River Journey building, Discovery Classroom**

Please enter through the gift shop entrance. As you face the building, this entrance is to your left.

### **FIELD TRIPS:**

**Sunday, May 4, 2:00-5:00pm. Blue Blazes Trail area, Moccasin Bend**

**Meet at Blue Blazes Trail parking area. Leader: Bill Haley (423) 785-4056**

**DIRECTIONS:** From I-24, take Hwy. 27 North, cross the Tennessee River on Olgiati Bridge, take first exit after crossing river (Manufacturer's Road), turn left and go approx. 1/2 mile. Turn left on Hamm Rd., which will T into Moccasin Bend Rd. Turn left on Moccasin Bend Rd. You'll pass golf course on right. Blue Blazes Trail parking is the next gravel road past the golf course. From Red Bank or Soddy-Daisy, take Hwy. 27S, take Manufacturer's Rd. exit, turn right and follow directions above. Wear sneakers or boots (*NOT* sandals or flip-flops), a hat and dress for the weather. Bring binoculars if you have them. Sunblock and bug spray might be a good idea too. CANCELLED IF RAINING.

**Saturday, May 24: 10:30AM. Prentice Cooper State Forest**

**Meet in the Bi-Lo parking lot (away from the store) on Signal Mountain Road and we'll caravan to Prentice Cooper. Leader: Bill Haley (423) 785-4056.**

**DIRECTIONS:** From I-24, take Hwy. 27 North to the Signal Mountain Road exit, turn right on Signal Mountain Road. You'll pass the new WalMart and Bi-Lo is around a curve on the left. Please call Bill if you have further questions. Hopefully, the Diana Fritillary will be flying at this time. On last year's Tennessee River Gorge count, we set an all-time continental high count for this species. We may also see hairstreaks (several possibilities), roadside skippers, Common Wood Nymphs and pearly-eye species. This will be a good tune-up for upcoming 4th of July Butterfly Counts! See field trip above for what to bring.

### **NAME THIS NEWSLETTER CONTEST!**

Any suggestions for a snappy name for our chapter's newsletter? (Bill made up "On The Wing" just because he had to call it SOMETHING!) E-mail Bill at [WGH@tnaqua.org](mailto:WGH@tnaqua.org), Julia Gregory at [jmg@tnaqua.org](mailto:jmg@tnaqua.org), or Jennifer Taylor at [jet@tnaqua.org](mailto:jet@tnaqua.org). We'll vote at the next meeting. Who knows, maybe your idea will be the winner!

### **KEEP RECORDS OF YOUR BUTTERFLY SIGHTINGS:**

Members are invited to submit sightings to be published here in this newsletter. A couple appear below:

**WED., APRIL 9:** Tanya Jordan and Bill Haley found 2 Henry's Elfins near redbuds, their larval hostplant, at the old Blythe Ferry landing area in Meigs County.

**SAT., APRIL 27:** Bill Haley spotted a Pipevine Swallowtail, the first he's seen this year, ovipositing (laying eggs) on the dutchman's pipevine in his backyard. He's had this vine several years and every year it has hosted at least one brood of caterpillars. There are usually 15-25 caterpillars in each brood and they are hearty eaters!