



On The Wing

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North American Butterfly Association

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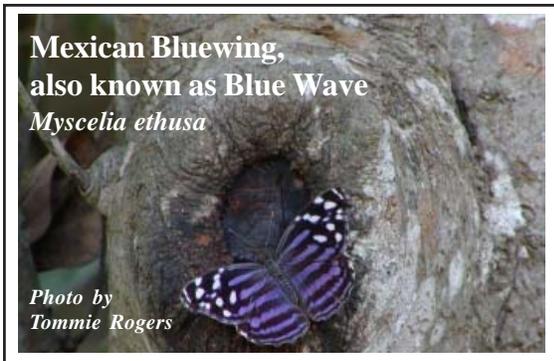
FEBRUARY CHAPTER MEETING TUESDAY, FEB. 23, 7:00PM OUTDOOR CHATTANOOGA, NORTH CHATTANOOGA NEAR COOLIDGE PARK

BUTTERFLY FARMING IN COSTA RICA

Bill Haley will present a slide presentation on his trip to Costa Rica in February 2004 to visit butterfly farmers. This was before the Tennessee Aquarium's Butterfly Garden exhibit opened. He and two other Aquarium staff members were privileged to visit several different Costa Rican butterfly farmers in areas ranging from very urban to almost unbroken rainforest. If you are curious about where the Aquarium's butterflies originate and how they are propagated, this is the program for you!

We will meet at Outdoor Chattanooga's facility in North Chattanooga, near Coolidge Park. From Frazier Avenue, turn towards Chattanooga Theater Center. Take the first right (River Road) and continue almost to where the Walnut Street Bridge goes over the roadway. Outdoor Chattanooga is on the left just before reaching the bridge. You'll see a Subway sandwich shop on your right, directly across the road from Outdoor Chattanooga.

PARKING: You can park for free along the street at this time of day, but if you park in any of the nearby parking lots, you'll need to pay. They can and do give out tickets at all times of the day for folks who do not pay in advance. The good news is that parking is relatively inexpensive.



First Tennessee Butterfly Record in 2010!
Ken Childs, who oversees the tn-butterflies listserve, reported seeing a Polygonia species - either a Question Mark or an Eastern Comma on a warm sunny day at his farm in West Tennessee. Both these species overwinter as adults. The date? **January 18, 2010**. Congratulations on the first butterfly sighting reported for Tennessee this year!

Remember Me?



A couple of months ago, I published this photo of a U.F.O., or maybe a better term would be a U.F.L. (Unidentified Flying Lepidopteran). Only a couple of people guessed its identity. It is the **Eastern Buck Moth**, *Hemileuca maia*.

As luck would have it, I recently received a newsletter from the Sonoran Arthropod Study Institute, SASI. On the front page was a great story about....Buck Moths! Following are some fascinating facts about these moths.

- They got their name because the adults emerge at the beginning of the deer rutting season in the fall of the year, when the adult bucks (deer) spar for mating rights.

- They are members of the Saturniid family, the so-called giant silkworm moths. In North America this family is represented by a number of impressive species, such as the Luna Moth and Cecropia.

-(cont. on pg. 2, Buck Moth)

Around The Puddle

by Bill Haley

The Gypsies Are Coming!

I recently saw a television show about the gypsy moth. I've heard for decades now about the depredations of gypsy moth caterpillars in more northern areas, but this is something we haven't had to worry about. They are not around here...yet!

I remember a trip we took to Hawk Mountain, Pennsylvania a few years ago. They had an invasion of gypsy moths that summer and whole swaths of deciduous trees had been completely defoliated by the ravenous caterpillars. Eggs are laid in clusters and the caterpillars suddenly appear in the thousands, maybe millions. The Hawk Mountain folks told me that oaks are one of their favorite snacks. Sometimes if an oak is eaten back several years in succession, it weakens the tree and it dies.

Guess what I learned from that show about gypsy moths? They are slowly but surely heading in our direction. One of these days, possibly not too far in the future, we may have a new Lepidopteran in town. And it may not be a good thing.

Oak is one of the major components of the deciduous forests in our area. The information in that program prompted me to look in a butterfly book to get an idea of how many species might be impacted by a gypsy moth invasion and a subsequent reduction of available oak leaves for butterfly caterpillars to eat.

What I discovered is a bit scary when you get to the hairstreaks. Great Purple feeds on mistletoe and oak is a major host of that plant. Other hairstreaks, such as Oak, Banded, Hickory and White M, use oaks as part of their diet.

Skippers in this area that use oak are the Sleepy Duskywing, Juvenal's Duskywing and Horace's Duskywing.

Luckily, most other local butterflies feed on things other than oaks. Some might be affected if there was a die-off of oaks in the future, due to changes of habitat. Interestingly, I've found that after the Eastern Pine Beetle decimated our pines a few years back, the resulting open habitats created have benefitted butterflies because of an increase of low plants and nectar sources.

Does this mean I'm hoping the oaks will die if the Gypsy Moth invades? No way! Both our deciduous forests and I would miss them tremendously. Hopefully it'll be a few years before Gypsy Moths get here, but I'll be watching to see what happens.

Buck Moth (cont. from pg. 1):

- When many of the other giant silkworm moths have already emerged, mated, laid eggs and died, the Buck Moth is just making it's appearance. It is day-flying, so is often observed flying swiftly past on warm autumn days. *It is remarkable that Mike O'Brien got such a great in-flight shot, (pg. 1) as they fly relatively fast.*

- Adults emerge from September to November and into December in the deep south.

- There are a number of Buck Moths that range from Canada, through the U.S.A. and down into Mexico. The one commonly seen in Tennessee is the Eastern Buck Moth, *Hemileuca maia*.

- The Eastern Buck Moth ranges from Maine to Florida and west to Wisconsin and Texas.

- Females lay eggs in tight rings around twigs. According to the article, each egg cluster resembles a jar of olives. Oak, willow and poplar are among preferred food plants.

- The caterpillars hatch the following spring, feeding together at first. As they grow, they disperse.

- The larvae are covered with stinging poisonous spines. A casual brush results in the breaking off of these spines into the skin. A burning rash as a result can last for hours or days, often blistering and sometimes accompanied by nausea.

- By early summer, caterpillars are full-grown and begin to wander. The eventually spin a loose cocoon and pupate in the leaf litter or just underground in loose soil. Three or four months later they emerge.

- The adults, like all Saturniids, do not feed. They have no mouthparts or proboscis.



Buck Moth caterpillar

TENNESSEE HAS NEW WATCHABLE WILDLIFE SITE

I recently received an e-mail from Scott Somershoe, our Tennessee State Ornithologist, about a new website that would be of interest to all folks who get outdoors and enjoy any type of wildlife watching. I think butterfly lovers can be of service in adding information on butterfly watching locations, counts, etc.

The website, Tennessee's Watchable Wildlife, www.tnwatchablewildlife.org was developed by the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA), in partnership with the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Foundation. The new site features a wide range of information on wildlife, (mostly birds at this point), and wildlife watching opportunities in Tennessee. There are descriptions of over 170 places to watch wildlife in Tennessee, with information about habitats, detailed directions and interactive maps. Since many of the habitats that support good bird watching also are good for butterflies, you may want to check out some of these locations.



TWO CONTESTS OF INTEREST TO BUTTERFLY PHOTOGRAPHERS

I often tell people that we have some great butterfly photographers in this area. You regularly see their photos in each issue of *On The Wing*. I think it would be wonderful if someone from our chapter took a grand prize in either of these two contests!

8th Annual NABA Photo Contest

Winners of each of two categories, adults and immatures, will receive \$150 and the first runners-up will receive \$50. Winning entries will be published in the Fall 2010 issue of *American Butterflies*. Photographs of adults must be free-flying, unrestrained butterflies taken in the field, in Canada, the United States or Mexico.

Photographs of immatures must be of eggs, caterpillars or chrysalids taken in the field, or at a location (e.g. one's house or laboratory) within 20 miles of where they were obtained.

Submissions must be received by May 1, 2010, and should be in the form of digital images, sent as high resolution jpeg files on a CD formatted for a PC. Please include photographer's name in the file name. **Files sent via e-mail will not be considered.** Please limit your submissions to three images.

Entries must be accompanied by a signed statement giving NABA the one-time permission to copy and publish the photographs in *American Butterflies*, both in print and digital form, and vouching that the photographs, if taken of adults, were taken in the field, of free-flying, unmanipulated butterflies. If of immatures, the photographer's statement must vouch that the immatures were either photographed in the wild; or within 20 miles of where found and if removed from the wild that they were reared through to adults (or attempted to rear through to adults) and released where they were found.

Please include detailed information about when and where the photographs were taken, as well as camera, lens, flash, film and setting information - to the extent known. Please include a telephone number and/or e-mail address where you can be reached.

Send Entries to: NABA Photo Contest, 4 Delaware Rd., Morristown, NJ 07960.

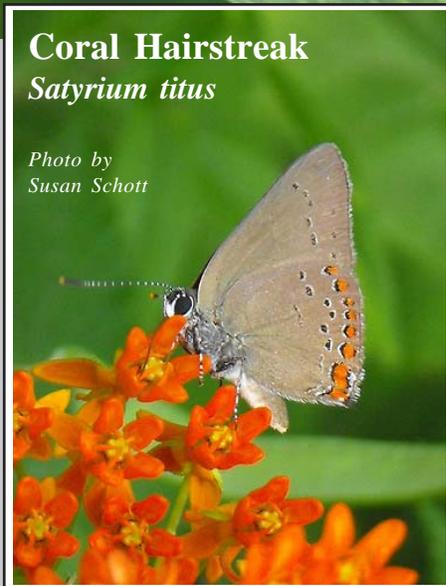
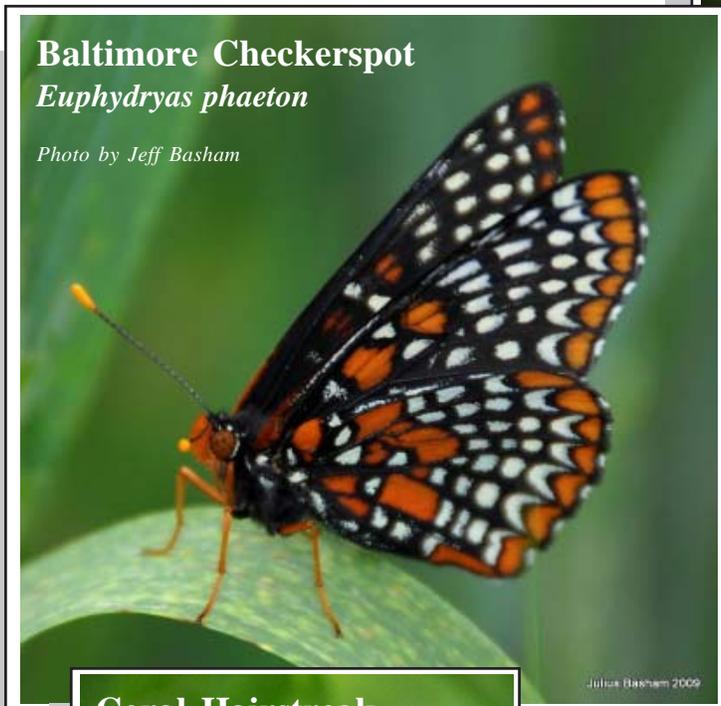
National Wildlife Federation 40th Annual Photo Contest

*More than \$30,000 in cash prizes!
Two \$5000 Grand Prizes!
Pro, Amateur and Youth Divisions
Submit up to 25 photos in 7 categories*

National Wildlife is now accepting entries to their 40th annual contest. Cash prizes totaling more than \$30,000 - including two \$5000 grand prizes - will be awarded to the winners in three divisions, Professional, Amateur and Youth. Winning photographs will be published online and a selection will appear in the December 2010 issue of *National Wildlife*.

In exchange for your \$20 entry fee, you can submit as many as 25 photographs in the seven categories listed below. you also will receive a one-year membership to the National Wildlife Federation, including six issues of *National Wildlife* and a 10% discount on all NWF catalog merchandise. Deadline is July 6. Categories: **Mammals, Birds, Other Wildlife, Backyard Habitats, Connecting People and Nature, Landscapes and Plant Life, Global Warming.** Visit the 2010 contest page at NationalWildlifeFederation@nwf.org for entry details.

Butterfly Glamour Shots!



This page contains a very small sampling of the beautiful butterfly photography contributed by various NABA members. There was not room to include everyone who has sent photos my way. I really appreciate being able to reproduce your wonderful images in this newsletter. Thank you!

- Bill Haley, Editor