



Photo by Mike O'Brien

On The Wing

Newsletter of the Tennessee Valley Chapter,
North American Butterfly Association

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PLANT SWAP!

**TUESDAY, APRIL 27, 7:00PM
OUTDOOR CHATTANOOGA,
NORTH CHATTANOOGA NEAR
COOLIDGE PARK**

Have you recently divided flowers in your garden and have some extras to share? Do you have more seedlings coming up than you need? Would you like to get some new plants for your garden? Would you like to get those new plants for free?

If you answered yes to any of the above questions, you should come to our first NABA plant swap, to be held Tuesday, April 27 at 7:00pm.

Your plants don't need to be butterfly hostplants, but if you have some of those as extras, please bring them. We are not picky. Any type of flower will do. If you don't have any plants to swap, come anyway. There should be plenty of plants for everyone to take home.

We are hoping for a good turnout. It might be a good idea to bring a couple of empty boxes to transport your new plants home in.

Lisa Lemza suggests it is a good idea to put two things on each pot that you bring:

- 1). **The name of the plant.** The common name or scientific name (if you know it).
- 2). **Your name.** (Hopefully, you know it).

Our regular meeting spot is Outdoor Chattanooga, near Coolidge Park in North Chattanooga. 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 in advance. They can and do give tickets at all times of the day for folks who do not pay. The good news is that parking is relatively inexpensive. Two hours parking is \$1.00.

BUTTERFLY FIELD TRIPS IN APRIL?

See page 3 for an April field trip opportunity.

**Saturday, April 3, 10:00-5:00
TENNESSEE RIVER GORGE COUNT
3RD ANNUAL SPRING BUTTERFLY COUNT
MEET: 10:00am at Bi-Lo parking lot on
Signal Mountain Road
Each participant must pay a \$3 NABA fee**

You do not need to know anything about butterfly identification to help with a NABA butterfly count! Interested learners are encouraged. Count butterflies all day, or for a couple of hours.

Volunteers are needed to take part in the first scheduled NABA count in 2010. We welcome **everyone** to participate, from beginner to veteran butterfly watcher. Dress for the weather and bring snacks and drinks if staying awhile. Wear some sunblock, as we hope it'll be sunny! Sturdy shoes, not flip-flops or sandals, will make it easier to walk through weeds or brush. Binoculars that focus closer than 10 feet come in handy, but are not required. You will be teamed with a veteran butterfly observer who is comfortable with butterfly identifications.

Last year nine counters found 24 species and 514 individuals. Highlights were Zebra Swallowtails, West Virginia Whites, Falcate Orangetips, Mourning Cloaks and Pepper and Salt Skippers.

PLEASE READ: This count will end at 5:00pm or earlier to allow those wishing to attend Marty Essen's presentation, **Around the World in 90 Minutes**, plenty of time to get to the 6:30 show at UTC. You are encouraged to attend this event, and bring friends! (See page 2 for details on this very exciting program coming to Chattanooga to kick off the 3rd annual BioBlitz.)

**FRIDAY, APRIL 30 & MAY 1, 2010
3RD ANNUAL BIOBLITZ
CHATTANOOGA NATURE CENTER
AND REFLECTION RIDING**

BioBlitz starts 3:00pm Friday, April 30 and continues to 3:00pm Saturday, May 1
Butterfly surveys will be conducted!
See page 3 for ways to help.

Around The Puddle

by Bill Haley

Time to get Blitzed....Again!

I love citizen science! I would never presume to call myself a scientist, yet each year I get to act like one. Over the years, I've provided valuable data on many different things in the natural world.

Since 1989, birds seem to have figured prominently. I have taken part in over 50 Christmas bird counts, many spring migration counts, and point counts of birds in a state forest. For 15 seasons, I spent 150-250 hours annually perched on a mountain monitoring migrating hawks, falcons and eagles. I've surveyed areas for three Breeding Bird Atlas projects in Tennessee, Alabama and Georgia.

Insects, especially butterflies, have been an interest of mine since the 4th grade, and butterfly counts have been a passion for the last 15 years. I've now taken part in over 70 NABA butterfly counts, coordinating and compiling most of those.

I have surveyed frogs and toads for an amphibian monitoring program. I've done plant surveys and wildflower surveys, and probably a few other things that don't come immediately to mind.

All these surveys were done in my spare time. Thousands of hours. I didn't get paid for a single one, but my life has been greatly enriched and my soul thrilled many times over. I'm extremely fortunate. I've experienced marvelous things and shared them with many good friends over the years.

What I am most proud of, however, is that each of these projects were not completed by a scientist. They are all the accomplishments of a dedicated citizen scientist.

The third annual BioBlitz is coming on April 30 and May 1. This is yet another opportunity for the citizen scientist! BioBlitz is a celebration of the incredible biodiversity of our area, part scientific endeavor, part contest. In one 24 hour period, an effort will be made to count as many different species of plants and animals as we can. BioBlitz starts at 3:00pm Friday, April 30 and ends at 3:00pm May 1. I'll once again be in charge of butterflies, but will be on the lookout for other insects as well. Join me Friday night when there will be blacklight setups near the Humphrey's House to see what night-flying things we can attract.

On May 1, I have another commitment and will not be able to participate in BioBlitz. I need someone to continue the butterfly survey that day. Can **you** be the citizen scientist who will help?

AROUND THE WORLD IN 90 MINUTES COMES TO CHATTANOOGA!

SATURDAY, APRIL 3RD

2:00 AND 6:30PM SHOWS

BENWOOD AUDITORIUM, ON THE UTC CAMPUS

\$5 ADULTS, \$2.50 CHILDREN AGES 4-11

AGES 3 AND UNDER ARE FREE

On Saturday, April 3rd, award-winning author Marty Essen will present his high-energy digital slide show, *Around the World in 90 Minutes*. This event is presented by the Chattanooga Nature Center, Reflection Riding Arboretum and Botanical Garden, Tennessee Aquarium, UTC and Lookout Mountain Conservancy.

"This will be a great opportunity to learn more about the incredible diversity of life around the world from someone who has seen so much." Dr. Jean Lomino, CNC Executive Director said. "We hope participants will leave with a greater desire to protect our planet."

Marty's show features interesting facts, humorous stories, and the best of **thousands of photos** he took while traveling the world for his book, *Cool Creatures, Hot Planet: Exploring the Seven Continents*. It's the type of show where the audience has fun laughing at the stories, oohing and aahing at the photos, and then, when it's all done, they realize just how much they've learned. **Around the World in 90 Minutes** is great for **wildlife lovers from 7 to 107**.

Highlights include:

- Amazing animal facts
- Debunking animal myths
- Cuddly wallaroos and spiny walking sticks
- Charging elephants and howling wolves
- Deadly snakes and friendly penguins
- Bizarre creatures and endangered species
- Swimming with piranhas
- Kayaking in the rainforest
- Hiking with the Porcupine caribou migration
- Rafting with humpback whales
- Surviving a hippo attack in Zimbabwe

To learn more about Marty Essen and his book visit
<http://www.coolcreatureshotplanet.com/>

Attendees can pay at the door or reserve seating by calling (423) 821-1160, ext. 0. Books and photographs will be available for purchase.

"Marty's presentation is the kick-off for the 2010 BioBlitz, and it is intended to bring more attention to this significant undertaking," Lamino said. The 3rd annual BioBlitz will take place from 3:00pm Friday, April 30 to 3:00pm Saturday, May 1 on the grounds of Reflection Riding and the Chattanooga Nature Center.

THURS., APRIL 15: FIELD TRIP BLUE BLAZES TRAIL AREA ON MOCCASIN BEND

Meet: 10:00 at the Blue Blazes Trail parking area on Moccasin Bend. **Leader:** Bill Haley (423) 756-4106 (H), (423) 326-9248 (cell)

Join Bill at one of his favorite places to search for butterflies. Moccasin Bend has a number of good places to look for early spring species. We may caravan to other nearby spots, such as Baylor School, as well. Cancelled if heavy cloud cover, rain, or temperatures below 60 F. (You never know when "dogwood winter" will strike!). Wear comfortable walking shoes and sun protection if it is a sunny day...which is what we hope for! Close focus binoculars are a big help if you have them.

Directions:

From downtown Chattanooga:

- take Hwy. 27N to the Manufacturer's Rd. exit (first exit after crossing river);
- turn left onto Manufacturer's Rd.;
- take first left onto Hamm Rd.;
- when Hamm Rd. T's into Moccasin Bend Rd., turn left;
- Blue Blazes is on the right, after passing golf course. (First gravel road you come to.)

March Butterfly sightings:

March 8: Libby Wolfe reported a **Mourning Cloak** and an **American Snout** below Nickajack Dam on the New Hope side of the river.

March 8: David Spicer wrote, "It was such a gorgeous day that I took the afternoon off and looked around Starr Mountain in southeastern McMinn County. I found 8 to 10 **Mourning Cloaks** and 3 anglewings. Only one of the anglewings would still long enough to be identified, much less have pictures taken. It was an **Eastern Comma**."

March 19: Jeff Basham did some butterfly watching in Polk County. Jeff reported the day was sunny and 70 degrees. He found 6 species: **Mourning Cloak**, **Question Mark**, **Eastern Comma**, **Spring Azure** (several of each), one **Sleepy Orange** and one **Orange Sulphur**.

March 24: Bill Haley saw two **Spring Azures** in Meigs County and an **Orange Sulphur** in Hamilton County.

March 27: Bill Haley spotted a **Cabbage Butterfly** near his home in North Chattanooga.

March 31: Mike O'Brien reported seeing a **Tiger Swallowtail** and **Spring Azure** in Valley Head, Alabama.

April 1: Bill Haley was in his front yard when a butterfly shadow passed, so he looked up quickly. It was a **Mourning Cloak**, a new yard butterfly!

April 1: Mike O'Brien reported a **Falcate Orangetip** in Alabama. Our first Falcate report of the spring, and unusually late for this species!

BUTTERFLY WATCHERS AND INSECT PHOTOGRAPHERS NEEDED FOR 3RD ANNUAL BIOBLITZ FRIDAY, APRIL 30 & SATURDAY, MAY 1

Prior BioBlitz species totals have been between 700-1000 species of plants and animals, found within a 24 hour time period. We hope to do better this year! You are invited to help.

Bill Haley will be in charge of surveying insects at the upcoming BioBlitz. He will be walking the grounds of Reflection Riding beginning at 3:00pm on Friday, April 30. Although his focus will primarily be butterflies and dragonflies, all insects are fair game! Everyone is invited to help with his insect survey. We'll start from the Nature Center exactly at 3:00pm.

Bill's efforts will continue into the night, as he plans to have at least two blacklight setups near the Humphrey's House to attract night-flying insects. Many different insect species can be expected to come to the lights. This pursuit can be very interesting, and the public will be invited to attend this blacklighting event.

We need insect photographers to help with this evening effort! Blacklights will be up until around 10:30-11pm. James Adams, our moth expert, has a conflict and will not be able to join us for the blacklighting. Bill is far from a moth expert, so James has offered to identify moths from photos taken during the blacklighting. Photographs, a much more environmentally-friendly method, will be used instead of killing insect specimens for identification purposes. Bill is asking anyone in our chapter who has a good digital camera to please bring it so they can photograph insects for James to identify later.

On Saturday, May 1, Bill has a conflict and will not be at BioBlitz. **We need butterfly and insect people to comb the 330 acres of the Nature Center and Reflection Riding for anything with 6 legs!** Please let Bill know if you can help out. His e-mail address is wgh@tnaqua.org, or you can call his cell phone at (423) 326-9248. The BioBlitz will be offering public programming that day, and they may be looking for someone to lead a butterfly walk. Any takers? Once again, photographs of insects will be helpful, even if you can't identify them at the time of the sighting. Photographers are welcome! You can e-mail Bill your photos afterwards and he'll forward to people that can hopefully make identifications.

TWO NABA OPPORTUNITIES IN APRIL:

Set up a NABA booth at either the Tennessee Aquarium's Party for the Planet on Sat., April 24 from 11-3, or the BioBlitz, on Sat., May 1. Any volunteers?

BAD WINTER FOR MONARCHS!

The following story came from the Monarch Watch website, <http://monarchwatch.org>, on March 12, 2010.

There has been a disaster of extraordinary proportions in the heart of the monarch overwintering area. Unprecedented rainfall from 31 January-4 February led to flooding and landslides that resulted in the loss of many lives and the near destruction of the towns of Anganguero and Ocampo, the two municipalities that serve as hubs for those visiting the monarch colonies at Sierra Chincua and El Rosario. The community of El Rosario was also hit hard with a major landslide that buried more than a dozen residents and destroyed bridges and homes. The consequences of this disaster will be felt for years by some and by a lifetime for others. Anganguero will never be the same the one we remember before the flooding.

The monarch colonies were also strongly impacted by the rainfall but the monarch population will recover - how long this recovery will take is a question that can't be answered at this time.

We have posted a series of articles about the storms in Mexico, the status of the monarch population, etc., via our blog.

<http://monarchwatch.org/blog/category/mexico/>

A few quick facts:

- A series of storms in January and February have taken a toll on monarch populations. Final estimate of the mortality suffered by the monarchs is not yet in, but it is clear that over 50% of the overwintering population died as a result of the harsh winter conditions.
- Because of the severe mortality suffered by the monarchs in Mexico, the number of monarchs returning to breeding areas this spring will be fewer than at any time since the colonies became known to science in 1975. These numbers are so low that they are certain to impact the number of monarchs that return to Mexico next fall.

BRING BACK THE MONARCH CAMPAIGN:

In response to the mortality suffered in Mexico, Monarch Watch will be launching a "Bring Back the Monarch" campaign by encouraging a nationwide expansion of the Monarch Waystation Program and the planting of milkweed on private and public lands. This effort will be sponsored in part by the Monarch Joint Venture, a new nationwide program whose mission is to foster monarch conservation. We will post more information about these efforts in the coming months. You can learn more about the Monarch Waystation conservation initiatives at:

<http://monarchwatch.org/waystations>.

New Tennessee Valley NABA Website!

David Spicer has been working hard to put together a website for our chapter. You can find it at:

<http://naba.org/chapters/nabatv/>

Dave writes, "It still needs a lot of work, but take a look and let me know how it can be improved. If you have a photo gallery you would like others to see, send me the URL for it and I will add it to the Photos page."

We still need lots of help writing about places to go to see butterflies. I've put several on the Places to Go page as an attempt to get this started. Please send me a write-up about places you know about."

Dave's e-mail address is: dspicer@chattanooga.net.

SPRING BUTTERFLIES



Sleepy Orange
(early spring form)
Eurema nicippe

Photo by Jeff Basham



Spring Azure
Celastrina ladon

Photo by Jeff Basham

Jeff Basham 2010