



# On The Wing

Newsletter of the Tennessee Valley Chapter,  
North American Butterfly Association

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Editor: Bill Haley, wgh@tnaqua.org

## July Butterfly Counts

**Note:** There is a \$3 fee per participant on all NABA counts. This money goes to the North American Butterfly Association to help defray their publication costs.

### How should you prepare for a butterfly count?

Dress prepared to wade through tall grasses and possibly some briars. Long pants, NOT shorts, are a good idea. Veteran counters often tuck pants legs into socks to deter ticks, chiggers and poison ivy. Bug spray on the outside of your socks and lower parts of pants may be a good idea. Be sure to wear comfortable sturdy shoes, not sandals or crocs. Sunscreen and a hat will be needed - and be sure to bring snacks and plenty to drink - prepare to stay well-hydrated. Binoculars, preferably close-focusing, will help you note subtle field marks you might otherwise miss on butterflies you can't approach closely. You may spend the day or break away early if you choose.

### Sat., Aug. 13: *Fall Seasonal* Tennessee River Gorge, TN

Meet: 9:00am at the Food City parking lot on Signal Mountain Road. Leader: Bill Haley. Questions? Please contact Bill at: (423) 326-9248, wgh@tnaqua.org

### Thurs., Sept. 1: *Fall Seasonal* Soddy-Daisy, TN count

Meet: 9:00 at Daisy United Methodist Church, 9508 Dayton Pike, Soddy-Daisy, TN 37379. Leader: Bill Haley (see contact information above for info or directions.)

*The Soddy-Daisy fall count will be the final scheduled NABA count of 2017. When this count is completed, that will be a total of 9 counts that I've compiled in 4 states (TN, GA, AL, KY). The hot, dry weather over the summer has been challenging, but a number of Tennessee Valley NABA chapter members and guests stuck to it and documented butterfly distribution and abundance (or lack thereof) in far-flung count circles. I wish to thank everyone who helped with any of the 2016 counts.*

- Bill Haley

## Totals for the summer Stevenson, Alabama count

The Stevenson, Alabama 4th of July count was conducted on Saturday, July 9. Conditions were challenging, as it had obviously been very hot and dry in the count circle. Some species we usually expect to find just didn't show up on count day. This kept the final species total and number of individuals low. Compiler Bill Haley wishes to thank the people who showed up to count that day. Participants were Bill Haley, Dave Spicer and Harold Birch. They split into two parties for a combined 3 miles walked and 8 total party hours. Best finds were a very fresh "Olive" Juniper Hairstreak, 2 Swarthy Skippers and Eufala Skipper.

### Species and numbers:

Pipevine Swallowtail 2, Black Swallowtail 1, E. Tiger Sw. 11, Cloudless Sulphur 40, Little Yellow 4, Sleepy Orange 96, "Olive" Juniper Hairstreak 1, E. Tailed-Blue 3, Summer Azure 1, American Snout 2, Gulf Fritillary 3, Variegated Fritillary 11, Silvery Checkerspot 4, Pearl Crescent 16, American Lady 1, Red Admiral 2, Common Buckeye 23, Hackberry Emperor 9, Carolina Satyr 4, Silver-sp. Skipper 22, Hoary Edge 1, Horace's Duskywing 2, Common Checkered Skipper 1, Swarthy Skipper 2, Clouded Skipper 2, Least Skipper 7, Fiery Skipper 30, Sagem 16, Eufala Sk. 1.

Unidentified: dk. swallowtail 6.

Total: species 30, individuals 331.



## Around the Puddle

### Kentucky: *We did it!*

by Bill Haley

A dream of mine has finally come true! The first NABA butterfly count conducted in Kentucky in well over a decade is now in the books, and it was completed by members of the Tennessee Valley NABA chapter, most of whom live some 200 miles south of the count circle!

No data had been received from that state in years, so it was pure speculation on my part that a count was feasible. I actually chose the count circle based on its location, completely in Kentucky and near the very first exit off Interstate 75. The center is only 11 miles past the Tennessee border. It was complete guesswork as to where good butterfly areas might be within the circle. I'd seen small parts of it in the wintertime, but never during "butterfly season".

To be considered official by NABA, a first year count must have at least 4 counters and 6 hours of count effort.

I knew we'd be able to find butterflies, but the question was could I muster enough butterfly counters? It took faith that I could talk at least three other people into making the trip and helping me count. Since my wife Candy and I would be on vacation, heading to Indiana, I informed her she'd probably be doing her first butterfly count ever. That made two - only two counters to go.

I let a few locals know what I was planning and Tommie Rogers immediately e-mailed to say she was definitely on board. That made three.

Tommie thought to contact Jeff Basham, one of the best butterflyers in Tennessee, and he was very interested. Jeff talked to Carl and Beverly Swafford and they decided to join in too.

David Spicer, who originally hinted that I was crazy for dreaming up such a thing, finally decided to come up and bring his wife, Judee.

A post to the tn-butterflies listserve netted Tom Howe, of Knoxville, who I'd met several years back at a bioblitz at Seven Islands Wildlife Refuge. He wanted to help too.

Now I had eight counters. Two, Candy and Judee, would be going along on their first count ever. The rest of the team I consider some of the best and most knowledgeable butterfly people in the state of Tennessee! Four parties divied up the count circle and off we went to see what we could see. - (Read what we found in the next column.)

### Totals for the first annual Williamsburg, KY Count, Wednesday, July 27, 2016

Williamsburg, Kentucky sits very near the Daniel Boone National Forest. The Cumberland River goes right through it. The center of the count circle is only about a mile from exit 11 on I-75, and the circle is entirely within the state of Kentucky.

Blue skies greeted counters, but possible rain showers were forecast for later in the day and it was supposed to rain most of the next day. Temperatures ranged from 77 to 87 F, it was mostly sunny all day and the wind was very light. We lucked out. It did rain later that evening, when a terrible lightning storm came through around 8pm.

The counting parties were: 1). Bill Haley, Candy Haley & Tom Howe; 2). Carl & Beverly Swafford; 3) Tommie Rogers & Jeff Basham; 4). David & Judee Spicer.

When all was said and done, it proved be my most successful count of the year to date. We put in 31.5 hours of count effort, walked 9.5 total miles, found 54 species and 1388 individual butterflies. Are there butterflies in Kentucky? You'd better believe it - tons of butterflies!

#### Species and numbers:

Pipevine Swallowtail 3, Zebra Swallowtail 2, E. Tiger Swallowtail 132, Spicebush Sw. 32, Cabbage White 22, Clouded Sulphur 50, Orange Su. 20, Cloudless Su. 85, Little Yellow 4, Harvester 2, Gray Hairstreak 6, Red-banded Hairstreak 3, E. Tailed Blue 166, Summer Azure 12, Am. Snout 2, Gulf Fritillary 1, Variegated Fritillary 15, Diana Fr. 1, Great Spangled Fr. 6, Pearl Crescent 72, Question Mark 6, Eastern Comma 5, American Lady 1, Red Admiral 8, Common Buckeye 9, Red-sp. Purple 7, Viceroy 3, Hackberry Emperor 1, Southern Pearly-Eye 3, Northern Pearly-eye 3, Appalachian Brown 9, Gemmed Satyr 2, Carolina Satyr 17, Monarch 1, Silver-spotted Skipper 407, Hoary Edge 6, Southern Cloudywing 1, Northern Cloudywing 5, Horace's Duskywing 3, Wild Indigo Duskywing 67, Swarthy Skipper 4, Clouded Skipper 2, Least Skipper 2, Fiery Skipper 24, Peck's Skipper 5, Tawny-edged Skipper 5, Northern Broken-Dash 16, Little Glassywing 13, Sachem 86, Delaware Skipper 1, Zabulon Skipper 121, Dun Skipper 1, Lace-winged Skipper 1, Ocola Skipper 1, . Unidentified: 6 dark sw. species.

**Total: species 54, individuals 1388.**



*The only Gulf Fritillary found on the count, seen in a pink clover field at our very first stop.*

Photo by  
Bill Haley

**Totals for the Lookout Mtn., GA Count, July 21, 2016**

A projected high temperature of 98 F with a possible heat index of 105 F were predicted by the weatherman on count day. Despite those dire predictions, several folks braved the intense heat. Counters were David Spicer, Tommie Rogers, Amy Zarzecki, Jazmond Zarzecki, (2 days shy of her 6th birthday), and Bill Haley. They split into three counting parties, and combined for 14 hours of count effort and 3 miles walked. Two Juniper Hairstreaks were seen, one by Bill, Amy, and Jazmond and the other one by Tommie Rogers. As Bill, Amy and Jazmond watched the Juniper Hairstreak on a mourning glory bloom, a strange thing happened. A very large bumblebee landed right on top of the little butterfly, which was actually knocked down into the long, narrow throat of the flower. When the bee left, the poor hairstreak couldn't force its way back out past the stamens and anther of the flower, so it was trapped. Bill finally tore the flower and set the Juniper Hairstreak free. Another highlight for them was a Goatweed Leafwing and four Goatweed Leafwing caterpillars. After Amy and Jazmond called it a day a Gemmed Satyr and Common Wood Nymph were found by Bill late in the day on Lookout Mountain, shortly before it began to rain. Among other species, Dave Spicer contributed a Confused Cloudywing.

**Species and numbers:**

Pipevine Swallowtail 1, E. Tiger Sw. 24, Spicebush Sw. 29, Cabbage White 1, Cloudless Su. 9, Sleepy Orange 1, "Olive" Juniper Hairstreak 2, Gray Hairstreak 2, E. Tailed Blue 11, Summer Azure 24, Am. Snout 13, Gulf Fritillary 5, Variegated Fritillary 4, Great Spangled Fr. 2, Pearl Crescent 17, Am. Lady 3, Common Buckeye 17, Red-sp. Purple 1, Goatweed Leafwing 1, Hackberry Emperor 2, Carolina Satyr 1, Gemmed Satyr 1, Common Wood Nymph 1, Silver-sp. Skipper 63, Hoary Edge 9, S. Cloudywing 5, N. Cloudywing 4, Confused Cloudywing 1, Horace's Duskywing 4, Clouded Skipper 1, Fiery Skipper 6, Sachem 20, Zabulon Skipper 2, Dun Sk. 1, Ocola Skipper 1. Unidentified: 7 dark sw. species

**Total: species 35, individuals 292.**

Jazmond Zarzecki, two days away from her sixth birthday, accompanied her mother, Amy, on the Lookout Mountain count, their first count ever. They drove all the way from Sevierville, TN because "Jazmond loves butterflies". She's admiring a Common Buckeye.



**Hackberry Emperor**  
*Asterocampa celtis*  
on Harold  
Birch's finger,  
Stevenson  
count

Photo by  
Bill Haley

Sometimes the butterflies come to you!



**Silvery Checkerspot**  
*Chlosyne nycteis*  
Stevenson count



**Variegated Fritillary**  
*Euptoieta claudia*

Silvery  
Checkerspot  
and Variegated  
Fritillary  
photos by  
David Spicer

Photo at left by  
Bill Haley

Gray Hairstreak  
*Strymon malinus*

Lookout Mountain count

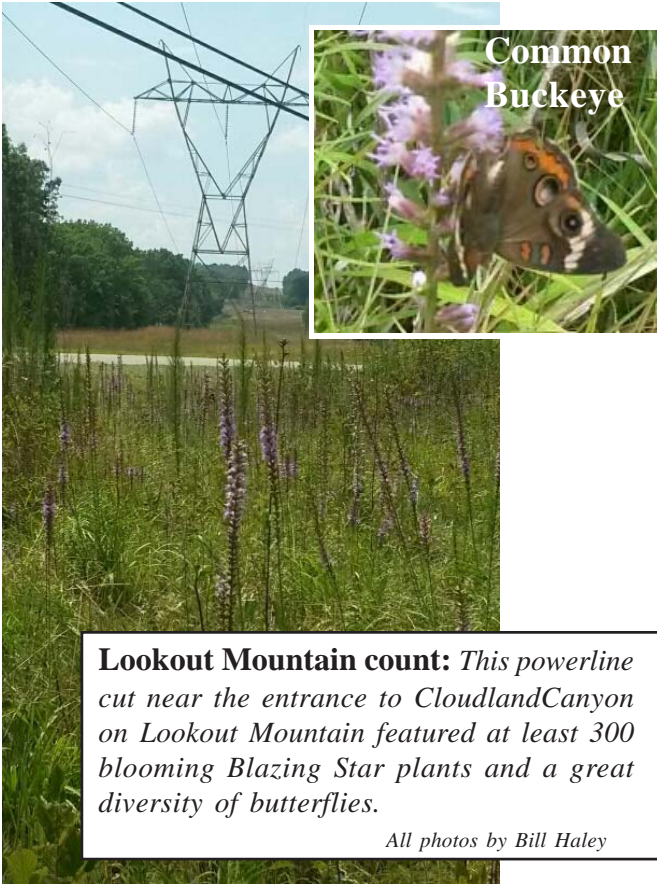
Photo by Tommie Rogers



“Olive” Juniper Hairstreak  
*Callophrys gryneus gryneus*

Lookout Mtn. count  
Photo by Tommie Rogers

Tommie Rogers ©



Common Buckeye

**Lookout Mountain count:** This powerline cut near the entrance to CloudlandCanyon on Lookout Mountain featured at least 300 blooming Blazing Star plants and a great diversity of butterflies.

All photos by Bill Haley

Confused Cloudywing  
*Thorybes bathyllus*

Lookout Mountain count

Photo by David Spicer

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Spicebush Swallowtail

Fiery Skipper

Pipevine Swallowtail

Eastern Tiger Swallowtail



### Photos from Williamsburg, Kentucky

**You've got to go where the butterflies are!**

Bill Haley decided to get off the roadside and venture into the woods to check out this tiny woodland seep. He and Tom discovered five **Appalachian Browns** at this locale. Here Tom Howe exposes the area.



*The Appalachian Browns found on the Williamsburg count were only one of many nice surprises! Bill captured this image with his cell phone.*



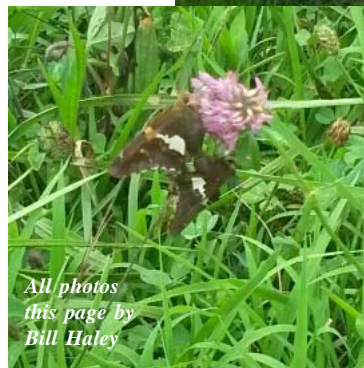
Lots of Common Milkweed was still in bloom in Williamsburg, and in this shot an Eastern Tiger Swallowtail nectars on the flowers. The milkweed's bloom season in Chattanooga had been over for several weeks.



Candy Haley, on her first ever butterfly count, was good at spotting butterflies, like the mated pair of Silver-spotted Skippers below.



Jeff Basham and David Spicer compare photos. Everyone got together at 4pm to compare notes and compile a list of species found. More photos from this count will be featured next month.



*All photos this page by Bill Haley*

There were very few stops made during the day that we didn't see at least a few Silver-spotted Skippers. It was the most abundant species - 407 counted.

**Little Glassywing**  
*Pompeius verna*



**Northern Broken-Dash**  
*Wallengrenia egeremet*



To have a healthy total, every count needs skipper species - the more the better. Even experienced butterflyers have to ponder over some to come up with correct identifications. The Williamsburg count had plenty and we had a very good day, finding 20 species of skippers! Tommie Rogers sent in these two nice photos. As you can see on this page, there was still lots of pink clover blooming up there. In my rush to get this newsletter out, most people have not had time to send me their best shots. Many more great photos from this count will be featured in the September newsletter.

**Red-banded Hairstreak**  
*Calycopis cecrops*



Bill Haley found this Red-banded Hairstreak at his very last stop of the day. As he was taking the picture, another Red-banded flew up and landed less than a foot away!

**Peck's Skipper**  
*Polites packius*



David Spicer photographed this beautiful Peck's Skipper, a species we rarely find around Chattanooga.

**Tawny-edged Skipper**  
*Polites themistocles*



Photo by  
David Spicer

It is easy to see the key field mark of the Tawny-edged Skipper in this shot. Orange forewing contrasted with a plain tannish-brown hindwing.

**Zabulon Skipper**  
*Poanes zabulon*



Photo by  
David Spicer

Zabulon Skipper was the 2nd most common skipper species on the count in Williamsburg, with an amazing 121 found. All appeared to be freshly emerged. This female shows the distinctive white bordered hindwing and nice purple highlights.