Spring Butterfly Counts!

Spring is finally here and that means it is time to begin our annual butterfly counts. Listed below are counts scheduled in April and early May. If you are new to butterflies, you’ll be teamed with experienced folks. Counts take place within a 15 mile diameter circle. Mark your calendars and plan to help out with some counts this year. Remember that there is a $3 NABA fee per counter.

**HOW TO PREPARE FOR A COUNT:** Dress for the weather. A wide-brimmed hat and sunblock are good on sunny days. Some folks wear lightweight long-sleeved shirts to keep the sun off. Long pants keep your legs from getting scratched up and they can be tucked into socks to help protect from chiggers, ticks and poison ivy. Bug spray might help too. Comfortable close-toed shoes (not sandals or crocs) are a good idea, as we may be wading through muddy areas, tall grasses, poison ivy and briars. Bring close focusing binoculars if you have them. Sometimes butterflies won’t let you approach closely, and it is helpful to have binoculars to see them well and make identifications. You may wish to bring a butterfly field guide.

**Food and Water:** Bring a cooler with snacks/sandwiches that can be eaten as we travel from one area to another. (Often we don’t stop and take a lunch break.) Staying hydrated is very important! Bring plenty of water or other drinks. One bottle of water is not enough for a full day in the field! Bring several. If you don’t bring enough to drink, you’ll wish you did.

**Transportation:** You can drive your own vehicle, especially if you plan to leave mid-day. You may also ride with other counters if you wish. This is recommended, as some of our stops do not have room for more than 3-4 cars to park.

**Thursday, April 5:**

**Tennessee River Gorge, TN**

Meet: 11:00am, Food City parking lot on Signal Mountain Road. Leader: Bill Haley  
phone: (423) 326-9248, e-mail: wgh@tnaqua.org  
On spring counts we are starting later to give it time to warm up a bit. Meet on the left side of the parking lot, nearest Signal Mountain Road as you enter. We’ll hope to find early spring species, such as Falcate Orangetip, West Virginia White and Pepper and Salt Skipper. All these species are single-brooded and are only around for about a month each year.

**Saturday, April 14:**

**Lookout Mountain, GA**

Meet: 11:00, International Towing and Recovery Museum on Broad Street. Take Broad Street south towards Lookout Mountain. Museum is on right.  
Leader: Bill Haley (see contact info above).  
This is possibly the earliest we’ve ever done a spring count in this count circle, which means we may get new species. Join us to see what is flying this early!

*The next spring count is included here so you can get it on your calendar.*

**Friday, May 4:**

**Soddy-Daisy, TN**

Meet: 10:00, Daisy United Methodist Church, 9508 Old Dayton Pike, Soddy-Daisy. From Chattanooga, take Hwy. 27 North and get off at the Harrison Lane exit, turn left and when Harrison Lane T’s into Dayton Pike, turn right. Church is at top of next hill. Will we succeed in finding the Gorgone Checkerspot? This is the historical peak of the Gorgone’s flight season. Hopefully we’ll find it and many more species!
Pollinator Lovers Unite!

If you missed the Plant Natives 2018! What’s the Buzz? seminar, hosted by Wild Ones of Chattanooga, at UTC on Saturday, March 17, you missed some great presentations by Heather Holms, Phyllis Stiles and Carol Reese (my favorite of the day), a chance to speak to folks from many conservation organizations (including Tennessee Valley NABA), and buy books or perhaps some choice native shrubs and wildflowers. I did all of those things! Much thanks to fellow Tennessee Valley NABA members Mike O’Brien, Susan Schott and Nancy Williams for helping man our NABA table. Another perk of the day was sitting right beside Rita and Phil Venable, from Franklin, TN. Rita is the author of the field guide Butterflies of Tennessee. She is an old friend and it had been awhile since I’d last seen her. She founded the first NABA chapter in Tennessee, the Middle Tennessee chapter, and was a big inspiration when I began our local chapter. Sadly, the Middle TN chapter has disbanded. It’s only us now folks!

2018 BUTTERFLY COUNT SCHEDULE

Thurs., April 5: TN River Gorge, TN (spring)
Sat., April 14: Lookout Mtn., GA (spring)
Fri., May 4: Soddy-Daisy, TN (spring)
Sat., June 2: TN River Gorge, TN (summer)
Sat., June 9: Soddy-Daisy, TN (summer)
Sat., June 16: Williamsburg, KY (summer)
Sat., June 30: Lookout Mtn., GA (summer)
Thurs., July 12: Stevenson, AL (summer)
Sat., Aug. 4: TN River Gorge, TN (fall)
Thurs., Aug. 16: Soddy-Daisy, TN (fall)
Sat., Aug. 25: Lookout Mountain, GA (fall)

Some of the dates (especially late summer) could change. If a change must be made, you’ll be alerted in this newsletter well in advance.

Join Us!

North American Butterfly Association

The North American Butterfly Association, NABA, was started in 1994 to popularize the study of butterflies through observation and identification through use of field marks rather than collecting.

The Tennessee Valley NABA chapter was formed in 2008. The chapter’s territory is centered around southeastern Tennessee, but also encompasses areas of northwestern Georgia and north-eastern Alabama. Anyone who joins the national organization within a zip code area beginning with 374, 373, 307, 357 or 359 will automatically become a member of the chapter.

It is also possible for people living outside our zip code areas to become members of the Tennessee Valley chapter. When you join or renew your NABA membership, specify that you’d like to be affiliated with the Tennessee Valley NABA chapter.

Joining online is easy. Go to their website at http://www.naba.org and click on Membership. Individual $35, Family $45, Institution/Library $60. There also other sponsorship levels if interested.

Members receive quarterly publications from NABA, “American Butterflies” and “Butterfly Gardener”, as well as monthly “On the Wing” newsletters (March-Nov.) from the local Tennessee Valley NABA chapter.
Bee City, U.S.A.
Lookout Mountain, Tennessee and Georgia

Sunday, May 20
Pollinator Festival on Lookout Mountain

1:00-4:00

Tennessee Valley NABA will be representing the butterflies at the Bee City U.S.A. festival on May 20. It will be held at the Lookout Mountain School, 321 N. Bragg Ave., Lookout Mtn., TN 37350.
A lot of nice butterflies have already turned up in March. You’ll note that blooming redbud is a favorite early nectar source. It is also the host plant of Henry’s Elfin. Both Mike O’Brien and Libby Wolfe sent in photos of this small and elusive species on redbud blooms. While looking for elfins at Enterprise South, Libby also found Juniper and White-M Hairstreaks. We always scratch our heads trying to identify early spring duskywings. Dave Spicer sent in this one. Juvenal’s, Horace’s, Wild Indigo? What do YOU think?