



The Antenna

News and Information from the Butterfly Monitoring Network

Onsite Overview: Nachusa Grasslands

Nachusa Grasslands, the name itself evokes a sense of vastness, offering us a glimpse of what Illinois landscape once was, bountiful, beautiful and big.

Throughout Nachusa there are a diverse range of natural communities that survived because they were considered unfarmable due to sandstone juts and rocky soil. Some types of surviving communities discovered include dry prairie, tall grass prairie, bur oak savanna, sand savanna, fen, sedge meadow and streamside marsh.

The Nature Conservancy purchased the basic building blocks of the preserve in 1986, minutes before it was to be parceled and sold as 5 acre home sites. With the acquisition and restoration of adjacent farm fields a total of 1,200 protected acres makes Nachusa one of Illinois largest preserves.

Much of the restoration of the preserve is done by volunteers such as Jan Grainger. Jan works as a Steward in one of the units that the grasslands are divided into. She is also currently the only Butterfly Monitor at Nachusa, but hopes to see more people take routes in the area.

Jan recently wrote an article about her monitoring experiences for the Nachusa Grasslands Newsletter "Prairie Smoke". "I must say its hard to get a perfect day for monitoring-little or no wind, cloudless skies and warm temperatures are required. The day I saw the Regal Fritillary for the first time was ideal but much more than warm (95 degrees!). This magnificent butterfly is unmistakable with its vivid orange forewings contrasting with black hindwings. It requires a relatively large high-quality prairie remnant because its primary host plant is the bird's foot violet. Another beautiful fritillary which is dependent on the violets of the prairie is the lovely Aphrodite. This species is aptly named for the goddess of beauty and love. While walking my route last summer, I was very pleased by the abundance of this species in the main unit."

We can all look forward to sharing some of Jans pleasure in the beauty and the bigness of this significant grassland at our Outdoor Workshop in July.

Judi Ann Dore With Thanks to Jan Grainger

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Credits

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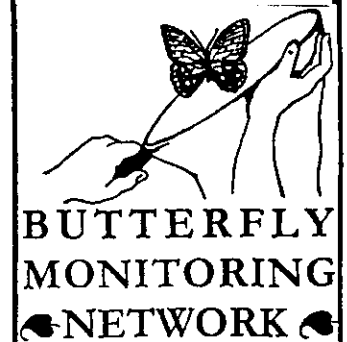
Network News and Announcements

Mel Manner

Time To Monitor

The new season is upon us. Many people have already reported seeing Red Admirals and American painted ladies. It looks like a bumper year for both species. Remember that you must monitor a minimum of 4 times between June 15th and July 31st. You are always free to monitor more times during that period or before and after as long as you do your 4 minimum routes. Make sure to completely fill out a field form for each visit to your site.

Have a good season!



Network News and Announcements Cont.

Calendar supports BMN

Professional Nature Photographer and BMN monitor Carol Freeman is donating part of the proceeds from each and every butterfly calendar sold this year. The calendar is called "On Gossamer Wings" and features a butterfly or caterpillar each month as well as smaller inserts and quotes. Not only are her photos quite beautiful, but her calendars are very well made with excellent print quality and construction. The donated proceeds will go towards funding the annual BMN workshops and mailings. To order, use the inserted order form in this newsletter. If you have any ideas for ways to sell the calendar, please call Carol at 847-328-8508.

Summary Sheets

The annual summary sheets from 2000 are on pages 5 - 7. Please look over the information for your site to make sure it's correct. If your site does not appear, we did not receive your data! The first page summarizes each site and how many routes were run. Pages 6 and 7 report the high counts of each species and how many sites it's found on. The term "high count" means the highest number of butterflies of that species seen on one route. For example, if I saw 3 monarchs on day one, 7 on day two, and 6 on day three, my high count would be 7 on day two. This sort of information helps monitors know where they can go to maximize their chances of spotting certain butterflies to learn those species. Remember! Do not net butterflies on someone else's site. You are only permitted for your site, unless you are accompanied by the site monitor.

Thanks for all the help!

Several people have helped Mel get many of the new monitors set up with routes on new sites. Cindy Hedges of the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County and DuPage BMN monitor Judy Grey have been extremely helpful. We now have almost all of the sites in DuPage covered! BMN monitor Tom Peterson is helping in Kane County; BMN monitor John Marlin has been helping in lower Cook County for several years now; and BMN monitors Gail Snowdon, Gary Cole, and John McKee have been helping in Central Illinois. Through their efforts, we are continuing to expand and get a wider variety of sites and habitats monitored.

Questions for Advanced Monitors

We have been working very hard on developing a good training system for new monitors. Doug has also been designing talks for intermediate monitors to learn the more difficult butterfly identifications. But we don't want to forget about our advanced monitors.

- We would like suggestions for topics of interest to you that could be featured during our Indoor Workshops.
- Monitor John Ayres has already suggested having a series of walks throughout the summer at different sites with the more unusual species. Each walk would be lead by the monitor for that site at the peak time for the best butterflying.
- Any other suggestions for how the network can be more helpful to you would be appreciated. Send them to Mel Manner at manner@foxvalley.net or 41 W039 Bowes Bend Dr, Elgin IL 60123.

Network News Cont.

Brookfield Zoo will be opening a butterfly exhibit this summer from June 20th to September 16th. This 84 ft x 36 ft exhibit will be an outdoor netted garden with a winding path, babbling water, and a variety of plants for butterfly gardens. Many North American butterflies and moths will be free-flying throughout. The exhibit is being installed by Spineless Wonders, a group from Minnesota that specializes in invertebrate displays. Members of the Butterfly Monitoring Network, Amy Bodwell and Carol Saunders, are involved with interpretation for the exhibit. There will be an informational handout, including information about the BMN. If you have any questions, contact Amy at 708-485-0263 x422 or ambodwel@brookfieldzoo.org.

Field Museum Looking for Butterfly Volunteers

Volunteer interpreters are needed for "Living Colors: A Butterfly Garden" at The Field Museum (5/25 to 9/3). Enchanting outdoor garden with an array of colorful butterflies, moths and plants. Sat. training dates April 21, May 12, June 30, 9am-4pm. You do not have to attend all three dates. Highschool teens welcome and can earn service learning hours. Applications and information at www.fieldmuseum.org/info/volunteer. Contact 312-665-722-7277.



Butterfly Lore Contributed by Julie Sacco

In Hindu mythology the story goes that as Brahma watched the change of caterpillars he was filled with deep calm and convinced to achieve perfection through rebirth.

In the middle ages the monk Albertus Magnus thought caterpillars laid eggs and weren't related to butterflies. He called butterflies "winged worms of different colors".

Plinius thought caterpillars developed when dew-drops fell on a tree's leaves in spring.

Johann Wolfgang Goethe, a German poet, called butterflies "products of air and light". He was very impressed by the change from pupa to butterfly.

Thanks to Forest Preserve Districts

Two recruitment workshops were held this year with the help of the local forest preserve districts. The April workshop, organized by BMN monitor Gail Snowdon and the staff of the Champaign County FPD, drew about 8 people. So far, 4 new sites have been set up for monitoring. In addition to the successful workshop, the FPD donated the room fees, and the Director of Natural Resources, Roger Kirkwood, even personally donated a delicious lunch for all of us.

The June workshop, organized by Mel Manner and Renee Gauchat of the FPD of Will County, drew almost 20 people. Mel is still working to get everyone set up with routes, but she expects between 5 and 10 new routes to be established. Renee provided lots of food and also arranged for Mel and BMN monitor Tom Peterson to lead a field trip after lunch at nearby Hickory Creek Barrens. The trip was so successful that 6 different people asked to monitor there! Renee and Mel are already planning another workshop for next year.

Outdoor Workshop - Nachusa Grasslands - July 7th - 11 AM
Registration required!!! See details, page 2.

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from the



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**Summer
Issue**

