

The Antenna

News and Information from the Butterfly Monitoring Network

Volume 4, Issue 1, Winter 2003

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Table of Contents

Onsite Overview: Burlington Prairie.....	2
Take Time to Read.....	2
Indoor Workshop 2003	3
Registration is Required!	3
Directions:.....	3
13th Annual BMN Workshop Agenda	3
Network News From Mel Manner	4
Monitoring Season Extended!.....	4
McHenry Community College helps the Silver Bordered Fritillary.....	5
BMN Website Up and Running!!!.....	5
New Permit Process with Consequences Everyone Should Know.....	5
Deadline for Data Submissions - October 15th.....	6
What if I can't monitor?	6
Promotions for Doug and Mel	6
BMN Supporting Agencies.....	6
Name Changes	6

Onsite Overview: Burlington Prairie

Burlington Prairie is a site with some special requirements; the wetland route can be tough and the monitoring season long. Mel Manner started monitoring there in 1994 and has since recruited two other people, her husband Rick Manner, and Liz Cardenas. They monitor as late as the third week in September, specifically to keep track of the Purplish Copper (*Lycaena helloides*). This small (1.5" wingspan) butterfly is named for the iridescent purple cast on the upper side of the brown forewings on the male. It is considered an uncommon species.

Burlington is an important site to maintain and monitor because it supports the largest known population of Purplish Coppers in Illinois. As Rick put it, "A high count of Purplish Coppers in a bad year at this site is still higher than a high count in a good year anywhere else." Doug Taron suspects that the large population is due to the near monoculture of the larval hostplant, *Polygonum amphibium*.

The best high count they have had was 282 of the butterflies! Rick noted that in that year, 1997, there had been a spring burn which covered most of the preserve. Some had feared that this would dramatically decrease the coppers. The following year, though, also had a tremendous high count of 174. This information may help ease concerns some groups have about the affect of burns on insect populations.

Currently, the Purplish Copper population is quite low with a high count of only 23 in 2002. It is expected that this is a natural swing in coppers and that the numbers will start to climb again within the next few years.

Located in Northwest Kane, Burlington Prairie is under active management of the Kane County Forest Preserve District and is an Illinois Nature Preserve. Jackie Coffey served as Steward for many years, and has recently turned the job over to Mary Jo Murphy, a long-time Burlington Prairie volunteer.

Take Time to Read...

A Field Guide to Wildflowers of Northeastern and North-central North America *Roger Tory Peterson and Margaret McKenny*
Illustrations by Roger Tory Peterson
Houghton Mifflin Company, 1968
\$19.00 ISBN 0-395-91172-9

Petersons Field Guide to Wildflowers in the softcover 4" x 7" x 1" size is a manageable addition to your field pack. The guide is conveniently arranged in six sections according to flower color for quick reference. 84 flower family classifications' are explained in a section in the front of the book. Symbols indicating the flower family are near the text that identifies the plant. Illustrations face the text in the form of color plates or black and white line drawings. The alphabetized index has a combination of Latin and common plant names which includes Native North American species as well as alien plant species that have established themselves in our region.

Being able to identify regional plants may be helpful in locating populations of butterflies on your site. The use of a wildflower guide to cross reference the host plants that are mentioned in

butterfly or caterpillar guidebooks is also -an excellent way to increase your chances of spotting larva, and watching for their development into butterflies.

Contributed by Judi Ann Dore

Indoor Workshop 2003

The 13th annual indoor training workshop is on March 1st. As usual we'll be at the Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum, so you might want to make a day of it and explore the Butterfly Haven. We're expecting a huge turnout again, weather permitting, so it should be an exciting day.

Susan Borkin, Director of Public Programs & Curator at the Milwaukee Public Museum will be our honored guest speaker. She, and most of our attendees, were unable to make it last year due to the snow storm. Her talk on the conservation of several Wisconsin butterfly species promises to be very interesting. She has done quite a bit with the swamp metalmark.

The training sessions will be a little different this year. The Orientation will cover what it is to be a monitor and how to monitor. All people new to the network should plan to attend. The Website talk will unveil our new BMN Website and go over how to enter data via the Database Site. The Anatomy and Taxonomy talk will cover the characteristics of butterfly families. These characteristics are very useful in identifying an unknown butterfly. The latter two sessions are open to everyone.

Registration is Required!

To register, call Mel Manner at 847-464-4426 or e-mail her at ibmn@sbcglobal.net. Please give the name of each person attending, a phone number, and specify if he or she will be attending the orientation session.

Directions:

The Nature Museum is at 2430 North Cannon Drive. The main entrance is on the east side of the museum. The parking lot is directly across from the main entrance, on the east side of Cannon Drive, north of Fullerton Avenue and the Lincoln Park Zoo. The parking fee is \$1/hour. (The workshop is free.)

Additional parking is available at the Lincoln Park Zoo for \$9/day. Limited free street parking is *also* available. Check in with Museum Registration immediately inside the main entrance and tell them you're here for the Butterfly Monitoring Network. They will direct you from there to our meeting on the 3rd floor.

13th Annual BMN Workshop Agenda

- 9:30 Sign-in
- 10:00 Opening Announcements and Awards
- 10:30 Guest Speaker - Susan Borkin, Director of Public Programs & Curator,
Milwaukee Public Museum - Topic: Conservation of WI Species
- 11 :30 Lunch Break - Bring a sack lunch!
- 12:15 Training Sessions (See descriptions above.)

New Monitor Orientation - Mel Manner

BMN Website and Database Site Orientation - Jim Peterson

1 :15 Anatomy and Taxonomy - Doug Taron

2:15 Wrap-Up

2:30 End

Network News From Mel Manner

Ways to Improve Your Data

Some people are recording Summer Azures separately from Spring Azures. Some field guides separate these into two distinct species. However, there is an ongoing debate in the scientific world about azure species. In fact, some say spring azures could be divided into several distinct species throughout Illinois. Until this debate is resolved, the BMN will treat the Spring and Summer Azure as the Spring Azure. This is how it should be reported.

Similarly, some monitors are still reporting the clouded and orange sulphurs separately. The clouded is also called the common sulphur, and the orange is also called the alfalfa sulphur. These two species hybridize extensively in Illinois. It is impossible to tell them apart in the field. Genetic testing would be required. Even so, many are hybrids, 1 part clouded, 1 part orange. Therefore, these sulphurs are to be treated as one species and reported as such on the field form. Notice the line already lists "Colias eurytheme/philodice". All other sulphur species are to be kept separate, and listed by themselves on the field form.

Dark-form Tiger Swallowtails are also being separated out from regular Tiger Swallowtails. These are the same species, and should be kept together and reported as such. The dark-form version is simply a morph of the regular yellow. The yellow parts are changed to a dark brown or black. The stripes can still be seen in the right light. This is similar to black leopards, which are still spotted like regular leopards.

Several people started their routes early or ended their routes late this year. The only hours allowed for monitoring are strictly 10 AM to 3:30 PM. If you get to your 'Site early, wait until 10:00 to start. Since you know how long your route takes, do not start so late that you cannot finish by 3:30 PM. For example, if you have a 1 hour route, do not start monitoring after 2:30 PM.

Make sure to fill out ALL information at the top of each field form. Most commonly left off are transect habitat descriptions, closely followed by ending time. This information is vital for analysis of your data.

Space out your monitoring days. If you monitor six times in a row, you collect limited data on only the current species flying. If you space your days out, you will collect data on more species and see peaks in populations.

Monitoring Season Extended!

Many monitors have routinely done extra routes to extend their season. Doug Taron and Mel Manner have decided to make it formal for all sites. While the old period maximized the number of species seen, we believe that we may pick up some additional important information by having people start a little earlier and continue a little longer. So the new season is now from

June 1st to August 7th with a minimum of 6 visits required, 4 of them completed before July 20th. This gives you 9 1/2 weeks for monitoring six times. As always, you are free to go out extra times before, during, and after that time period, as long as you complete the required six.

McHenry Community College helps the Silver Bordered Fritillary

BMN monitors and McHenry Community College biology instructors, Janice Young and Marla Garrison, have received a second grant that outlines a strategy for reintroducing the Silver Bordered Fritillary to Glacial Park in cooperation with the McHenry County Conservation District. Last year, a grant allowed them to create the very successful MCC Living Butterfly Exhibit. The exhibit was part of a larger project funded by McHenry County Conservation Foundation. Another aspect of this project was to recruit monitors for McHenry County and Lake County, which was quite successful.

Janice and Marla continue to successfully breed and rear, year-round, their own supply of Buckeyes for the public butterfly exhibit. This spring they will be rearing and breeding several additional species of butterflies in their laboratory, including Silver Bordered Fritillaries for the reintroduction project. We look forward to hearing about their results in future newsletters.

BMN Website Up and Running!!!

The new BMN website is up and running thanks in a large part to Cuba Marsh monitor Jim Peterson. He did most of the work with some feedback from BMN McHenry County Coordinator Marla Garrison, BMN Administrator Mel Manner, and his brother, Tom Peterson, monitor at Dick Young Forest Preserve (formerly Nelson Lake). Jim has done a spectacular job getting the website up and running in time for the March Indoor Workshop, where he will be presenting a session on the website and the database site. See Workshop Announcement on Page 2. You can print off copies of the Guidelines and the Field Form directly from the site. There are links to other butterfly information sites, and instructions for filling out the field forms, along with previous issues of The Antenna, the BMN newsletter. A list of all monitoring sites is under construction. Other items of interest will be added as created. The website is currently part of Jim's homepage, until Mel Manner resolves some hosting site options. The current URL is:

<http://home.earthlink.net/~jimandpatches/ibmn.html>

New Permit Process with Consequences Everyone Should Know

Permitting has been quite a headache before now. Mel Manner has worked very hard with Kelly Neal of the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission to improve the process for INPC permits for monitoring Illinois Nature Preserves. The process is now much easier, but there are some consequences that all monitors need to be aware of. We now have a strict deadline for turning in data. See below. The data is sent in with permit renewal requests. If you do not hand in your data, you will be in violation of your permit, and renewal will be denied. You will not be allowed to monitor or remain in the network without the proper permit. Other landowners requiring permits are Cook, DuPage, Lake, and Will County Forest Preserve Districts. If you are in doubt as to whether you have the proper permits, contact Mel Manner at ibmn@sbcglobal.net or 847-464-4426. Remember, no permit means no monitoring.

Deadline for Data Submissions - October 15th

Most people met last year's deadline of September 30th. Thank you! This made Mel's job so much easier. Doug Taron has pushed the deadline to Oct. 15th to allow people a little more time. This is now the annual deadline.

What if I can't monitor?

Everyone's life becomes complicated at one time or another. If you fall ill, twist an ankle, or have a change in circumstances that prevents you from monitoring, let Mel Manner know immediately. We had several monitors substituting for other monitors in 2002, and it worked out quite well. If you contact Mel, she can help you try to find someone nearby who can take your route until you are able.

Promotions for Doug and Mel

Since Doug Taron and Mel Manner selected their own titles, they have voted to give themselves promotions as well. It is hoped that the new titles will make their network functions a little clearer. Doug is now the BMN Director and handles the BMN database and protocol issues. Mel is now the BMN Administrator and handles the day-to-day running of the network. She is usually the first person to contact when you have a question. They also voted themselves an increase of twice their current salaries. Unfortunately for them, twice zero is still zero!

BMN Supporting Agencies

Doug Taron and Mel Manner would once again like to thank the supporters, without which the BMN could not exist. The Nature Conservancy of Illinois has been there since the beginning and continues to help by funding this newsletter. The Audubon Society Chicago Field Office helps out through their Habitat Project. All BMN monitors should be getting the Habitat Herald. They have also provided funding for publications and workshops and have given Mel a helping hand with just about anything she has requested. Brookfield Zoo has provided funds for workshop handouts, and McHenry Community College stepped up in a big way by not only hosting our Database Site, but providing someone to create the site as well. Lastly, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources has again awarded the BMN a grant for \$845 through their Small Project Program. This grant will pay for part of the Annual Workshop expenses, including our speaker fee, as well as some printing of BMN publications which will be announced in the May issue of The Antenna.

Name Changes

Mel Manner inadvertently forgot to change the current names of the satyrs on the last version of the Field Form. The proper names are *Megisto cyme/a* for the Little Wood Satyr, *Enodia anthedon* for the Northern Pearly Eye, and *Satyrodes eurydice* for the Eyed Brown. The Wood Nymph is still called *Cercyonis* "pegala". A corrected version of the Field Form will be sent out in the May issue of The Antenna and is available on the BMN Website.