

2013 Eastern Catskills NABA Butterfly Count

The seventh annual Eastern Catskills North American Butterfly Association (NABA) Fourth of July Butterfly Count was conducted this year on June 29, 2013. We finally experienced some very good weather for this survey, in the context of a very wet season leading up to count day, and a history of rain and/or cloudy conditions in all of the previous six count years.

Thirteen observers in six field parties identified a total of 41 adult butterfly species, consistent with our six-year average of 42 species/year and about in the middle of our previous range of 36-48 total species/count. Our total number of individuals (956) represented a new low count, well below the six-year average of 1,459 and well below our high count of 1,896 individuals recorded in 2009. The lack of butterfly abundance was not unexpected and was consistent with this year's general lack of significant numbers of individuals throughout all species and habitat types. The total number of individuals is also greatly influenced each year by the highly cyclical abundance of European Skippers, which were noticeably few in numbers during their entire flight period this year. Two additional unique immature species (Giant Swallowtail and Wild Indigo Duskywing) accounted for an overall total of 43 butterfly species.

Two new species were added to the overall count composite, representing first time records for this survey. A locally uncommon **Atlantis Fritillary** was briefly observed by Tom Crepet at the former IBM Recreation fields in the Town of Ulster, and three widely scattered **Hackberry Emperors** were encountered by Alan Beebe and I, imbibing nutrients along the gravel surface of Koler Road east of The Great Vly in the Town of Saugerties. New high counts were recorded for **Banded Hairstreak** (14, eclipsing our previous high count of 6) and **Baltimore Checkerspot** (39, eclipsing our previous high of 32). The addition of a new survey site with a large meadow greatly influenced the number of Baltimore Checkerspots, contributing 19 individuals, while 4 more individuals were first-ever records discovered in a small meadow previously mowed by NYS Parks at this time of the year.

Below is a condensed summary of the count results. Thanks to all of the field observers for their great effort. Next year's count is scheduled for the last Saturday of the month, **June 28, 2014**, with Sunday (29 June) reserved as the rain date. Please mark your calendars, I hope everyone can participate again next year.

Steve M. Chorvas - Compiler

Adult Butterflies: Black Swallowtail (8), Eastern Tiger Swallowtail (6), Spicebush Swallowtail (3), Cabbage White (291), Clouded Sulphur (89), Orange Sulphur (9), Banded Hairstreak (**14**), Gray Hairstreak (3), Eastern Tailed-Blue (23), Summer Azure (12), Great Spangled Fritillary (93), **Atlantis Fritillary** (1), Meadow Fritillary (10), Pearl Crescent (5), Baltimore Checkerspot (**39**), Question Mark (1), Eastern Comma (2), Mourning Cloak (8), American Lady (6), Red Admiral (3), Red-spotted Purple (1), Viceroy (2), **Hackberry Emperor** (**3**), Tawny Emperor (2), Northern Pearly-eye (3), Appalachian Brown (4), Little Wood-Satyr (52), Common Wood-Nymph (9), Silver-spotted Skipper (36), Hoary Edge (4), Northern Cloudywing (4), Least Skipper (82), European Skipper (23), Peck's Skipper (4), Tawny-edged Skipper (1), Northern Broken-Dash (7), Little Glassywing (42), Delaware Skipper (1), Hobomok Skipper (2), Zabulon Skipper (2), Dun Skipper (13), "*Witch*" sp. (26), *Skipper* sp. (7).

Immature Butterflies: Black Swallowtail (2 caterpillars (cats) and 4 pupae on Fennel), Giant Swallowtail (5 cats, 1 on Northern Prickly Ash, 4 on Rue), Eastern Tiger Swallowtail (1 cat on Ash sp.), Spicebush Swallowtail (8 cats on Spicebush), American Lady (11 cats on Pearly Everlasting), Hackberry Emperor (5 eggs on Hackberry), Tawny Emperor (26 eggs and 4 cats on Hackberry), Silver-spotted Skipper (2 cats on Black Locust), Hoary Edge (1 cat on Showy Tick-trefoil), Wild Indigo Duskywing (4 cats on Wild Indigo).

Participants, Field Parties and Field Party Effort:

Central Area – Charles Woodruff Jayne Dean, Donna Seymour (09:00 – 18:00 / 8.0 hrs. / 3 miles)

Northern Area (1-8) – Steve Chorvas, Alan Beebe (08:40 – 19:30 / 10.50 hrs. / 3.5 miles)

Northern Area (9-13) – Frank Murphy, Deb Ferguson (10:00 – 17:25 / 4.75 hrs. / 4.5 miles)

Dutchess Area – Barry Haydasz, Maha Katnani, Ray Mansell (09:00 – 15:00 / 6.0 hrs. / 3 miles)

Southern Area (1-10) – Mark DeDea, Joe Bridges (09:45 – 17:45 / 8.0 hrs. / 5.0 miles)

Southern Area (11) – Thomas Crepet (10:00 – 15:00 / 5.0 hrs. / 1.0 mile)

Observers: 13 **Field Parties:** 6 **Party-hours:** 42.25 **Party-miles:** 20.0 **Weather:** AM Sunshine: 76-100 %
PM Sunshine: 76-100 % **Temperature:** 76 - 85°F **Wind:** SSW 0-5 mph, with occasional gusts to 14 mph.



Tawny Emperor feeding on frog legs, Great Vly WMA. Photo: Steve M. Chorvas



Delaware Skipper– Mt. Airy Utility Cut South. Photo: Steve M. Chorvas



Baltimore Checkerspot – Schaler Farm. Photo: Steve M. Chorvas

Seventh Annual Eastern Catskills NABA Fourth of July Butterfly Count June 29, 2013		Central	Winston Farm	EBNP	Phillips Rd	Glasco PL	Woodstock	Northern	Dave Elliott PL N	Dave Elliott PL S	Dave Elliott Meadow	West Camp Field	Great Vly WMA	Kolar Rd	Mt. Airy/Hommel PL	Malden Gardens	Northern	Lauren Tice Fields	Bristol Beach SP	High Woods MUA	Saug. Lighthouse	Falling Waters	Dutchess	Poet's Walk	Montgomery Place	Southern	Jockey Hill fields	Tibetan Center	Onteora Lake	Zena School	Kingston Res. #1	Fehr Fields	Ulster Landing Park	UCRRA (Rt 32)	Ulster Landfill	Orlando St Fields	Southern	IBM Rec. Fields					
Total	Species	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	
4	Northern Cloudywing						1	1									2	1				1	1	1																			
82	Least Skipper	14	8	5	1		46	5	4	15	20		2				3		2			1	7	6	1	12	4					7						1					
23	European Skipper	5	4		1		2			2													4	4			10	3				3		2	2				2	2			
4	Peck's Skipper	1		1			1			1																2	1			1													
1	Tawny-edged Skipper						1			1																																	
7	Northern Broken-Dash						2			2																																	
42	Little Glassywing	3	1	2			33	2		16	15												5	5																2	2		
1	Delaware Skipper						1								1																												
2	Hobomok Skipper						2			1	1																																
2	Zabulon Skipper	1		1																			1	1																			
13	Dun Skipper	8	1	5	2		5	1		4																																	
26	"Witch" sp.						10	2		6	2																16	4						3	7	2							
7	Skipper sp.																										7	3							4								
956	Total Individuals	137	59	53	12	7	6	278	82	27	66	54	18	12	17	2	66	11	18	6	5	26	139	117	22	280	48	2	3	22	6	57	54	15	8	65	56	56					
41	Total Species	27					32										12						21			18														13			

Immature Butterfly Species	Egg(s)	Caterpillar(s)	Pupa(s)	On (plant/surface)	Location
Black Swallowtail		2	4	Fennel	Northern – Malden Gardens
Giant Swallowtail		5		Northern Prickly Ash (1), Rue (4)	Northern – Malden Gardens
Eastern Tiger Swallowtail		1		Ash sp.	Northern – Malden Gardens
Spicebush Swallowtail		8		Spicebush	Northern – Malden Gardens (6), D. Elliott Meadow (2)
American Lady		11		Pearly Everlasting	Northern – Malden Gardens (6), D. Elliott Meadow (5)
Hackberry Emperor	5			Hackberry	Northern – Koler Road
Tawny Emperor	26	4		Hackberry	Northern – Koler Road
Silver-spotted Skipper		2		Black Locust	Northern – Mt. Airy Powerline
Hoary Edge		1		Showy Tick-trefoil	Northern – Dave Elliott Powerline North
Wild Indigo Duskywing		4		Wild Indigo	Northern – Dave Elliott Powerline North

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Notes: New location added to survey area: access obtained to Fehr Industrial meadow, accounting for 19 Baltimore Checkerspots. First count records: Atlantis Fritillary and Hackberry Emperor. New High Counts for Banded Hairstreak and Baltimore Checkerspot.

