

## **Ranger Steve's Nature Niche Enjoyable Butterfly Count Summaries**

Four West Michigan Butterfly Association (WMBA) count summaries for 2020 are posted in Table 1. Community members participated with WMBA members. Counts are part of a North American Butterfly Association (NABA) continent wide program. Michigan has 17 plus or minus counts annually. For various reasons not all counts occur each year. As Michigan's editor, I examine count results and the data are published by NABA annually.

Each NABA butterfly count is organized differently. For WMBA we travel in one group to help each other with searching and identification. Some counts divide survey groups to work small sections of their count area to provide greater site coverage. Locally we like the single group. It helps new people learn species and habitat associations and provides WMBA members opportunity to socialize and help each other learn.

**Table 1** shows that both species and individual numbers vary among count circles. Reasons for variance include dates for counts and habitat suitability. As the season progresses, different species end flight periods and new ones begin. Highly important is habitat size and plant composition. We try to visit a good representation of habitats in each count circle. Count circles have a 7.5-mile radius from a selected center point that remains constant from year to year. Rogue River and Muskegon counts have been surveyed for more than 30 years.

Fifty-six species were observed on our combined four counts. That is about 1/3 of all Michigan species. At the bottom of Table 1, notice the species and numbers for each count. Included are the immature butterfly life cycle stages found as egg, larva, or chrysalis.

To learn butterflies and associate them with habitat, consider joining the WMBA and participating in the 2021 local counts. Details are posted elsewhere on our website. We thank Fred VanOeveran for maintaining our website. Club members are friendly and helpful. If interested in other Michigan or national counts contact me for information.

Contact me if you are interested in acquiring the book Michigan Butterflies and Skippers by Mo Nielsen. I have some of the last remaining copies. They will be available at our counts.

State Game Areas (SGA) or Newygo Connt in Manistee National Forest (NF)	Allegan SGA	Muskegon SGA	Rogue River SGA	Newygo in Manistee NF
	Totals	Totals	Totals	Totals
Total Party Miles on foot	4.0	3.0	4.5	4.0
Dates 2020	3 Jul	11 Jul	15 Jul	17 Jul
<b>Papilionidae</b>				
Eastern Tiger Swallowtail	1	3		
Canadian Tiger Swallowtail				2
Black Swallowtail			2	
Spicebush Swallowtail		1	1	1
Giant Swallowtail				1
<b>Pieridae</b>				
Cabbage White	33	4	1	2
Mustard White	1			
Clouded Sulphur	31	8	4	1
Orange Sulphur		1		
<b>Lycaenidae</b>				
American Copper	6	6	3	18
Bronze Copper	3			
Purplish Copper	2			
Coral Hairstreak	16	1	10	58
Edward's Hairstreak	184	8	9	5
Banded Hairstreak	3			6
Striped Hairstreak	1	1		
Gray Hairtreak				5
Eastern Tailed Blue	8			1
Summer Azure	1		2	
Karner Blue	14			91
<b>Nymphalidae</b>				
Great Spangled Fritillary	5	2	4	3
Aphrodite Fritillary	6		2	2
Silver-bordered Fritillary			4	
Pearl Crescent		4	75	7
Baltimore Checkerspot		6	8	
Gray Comma		1		
Question Mark			1	
Mourning Cloak	4	2	1	3
Red Admiral	8	3	1	
Common Buckeye	1			
American Lady				1
Painted Lady		1		
Red-spotted Purple	5	1	6	7
Viceroy			2	

<b>State Game Areas (SGA) or Newaygo Connt in Manistee National Forest (NF)</b>	<b>Allegan SGA</b>	<b>Muskegon SGA</b>	<b>Rogue River SGA</b>	<b>Newaygo in Manistee NF</b>
Tawny Emperor	2			
Northern Pearly Eye			5	2
Appalachian Brown	12		50	7
Eyed Brown		2		1
Little Wood Satyr	6			
Common Wood Nymph	10	7	75	24
Monarch	12	57	9	22
<b>Hesperiidae</b>				
Silver-spotted Skipper	18		2	
Southern Cloudywing	1			
Northern Cloudywing	1			
Common Sootywing	1	3	1	
European Skipper	14		1	
Least Skipper		1		
Tawny-edged Skipper				2
Northern Broken Dash	13	13	16	16
Little Glassywing	9	3	6	1
Long Dash			5	
Delaware Skipper	8	3	3	
Mulberry Wing	2			1
Broad-winged Skipper	1	1		
Dion Skipper	3	1		
Dun Skipper	20	8	38	42
<b>Total Individuals</b>	<b>466</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>332</b>
<b>Number of Species</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Early Life Stages</b>				
Tiger Swallowtail larva on Ash			1	
Red-spotted Purple on cherry	1			
Viceroy larva on aspen			2	
Viceroy larva on willow	1		6	
Viceroy egg on willow			2	
Viceroy egg on poplar			2	
Baltimore Checkerspot larva			2	
Baltimore Checkerspot pupa			1	
Monarch egg on milkweed			2	
Monarch larva on milkweed		1	5	6
<b>Total early stages</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>6</b>