

The Nectar News

Official Newsletter of the
Southeast Michigan Butterfly Association



Mission Statement:
It is our mission to share our knowledge to educate people about Lepidoptera and their habitats, to instill and foster a passion for nature in others, and to establish and preserve the environment for butterflies, skippers, and moths.

Board Members for 2024:

President:

Brenda Sattler

Vice President:

Mark Bourn

Treasurer:

Mark Bourn

Secretary:

Diana McCormick

Communications

Director:

Lisa Northey

Membership Committee

Chair:

Cheryl Furlong

SEMBA Email:

sembabutterfly@yahoo.com

SEMBA Website:

<https://www.sembabutterfly.org>

SPRING EDITION

*Updates, Announcements,
Events, Featured Article:*

Update: In February, Brenda made her annual trip to Macheros, Mexico to observe the Monarchs in their overwinter home.

She noted that the Monarch numbers were a little low this year which was further confirmed by Monarch Joint Venture. They announced that “the presence of the eastern monarch butterfly population in Mexico’s oyamel fir forests this past winter was 59.3% less than the previous year, according to the most recent survey released by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Mexico. Monarch butterflies occupied 0.9 hectares, 1.31 less than the 2.21 hectares in the 2022-2023 overwintering season.” “The Western Monarch count also uncovered a decline in populations. In 2021 and 2022, the monarch community was happily surprised by an increase in western monarch populations compared to the 2020 overwintering season, when only 1,914 were counted. However, the 2023-2024 western overwintering numbers demonstrated a decline. Over 400 volunteers surveyed 256 overwintering sites this winter, tallying a total of 233,394

monarch butterflies across the western overwintering sites.” Follow the link below for more information and how you can help the Monarchs. [Eastern Monarch Butterfly Population Falls to Less than One Hectare in the 2023-2024 Overwintering Season](#)

Community Outreach:



Southeastern Michigan Beekeepers Association

Our SEMBA members, Mark Bourn and Cheryl Furlong, participated in the other SEMBA’s “Hall of Knowledge” event on March 16th. There were 425 participants at their spring conference. Mark and Cheryl spoke to several of the participants and many of them were not aware there was another SEMBA organization which is dedicated to butterflies. It gave us the opportunity to share about our organization along with information about butterfly



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gardening, importance of native plants and the butterfly house at Barson's.

If there are SEMBA members interested in volunteering for one of these types of events in the future, please contact Mark or Cheryl at sembabutterfly@yahoo.com

Volunteer Opportunities:

Once again Mott Children's Hospital in Ann Arbor is looking for volunteers to help with the spring clean-up and full season maintenance of the Children's Garden.

The volunteer team at the Mott Garden work April -Sept usually 4 hours a week. They need to do 20 hours a year for their Master Gardener certification.

They have all been onboarded and screened thru Michigan Medicine Volunteer office.

Because Childrens hospitals are high security, this is a very formal process that includes health screening, a background check, etc.

This is a special placement volunteer position, and you will need to commit to working the full season and be pre-approved before applying to become a volunteer.

If you are interested, please contact Susan Fisher at sfisher@umich.edu.

New Members: We have added several new members to the group so far this year. Please welcome: **Rebecca Thomason, Peggy Dankert, Bill Beauregard, Katy Weiks, and Linda Shinn**

Membership Dues: Time to renew your membership. Dues are \$15 per person. If a family member wants to join, their membership is \$7.50. This family discount can be used for up to four additional family members. Dues can be paid at the monthly meeting or mailed to:

SEMBA
P.O. Box 851301
Westland, MI 48185

We are always looking to add new members, so if you know someone who might be interested, please talk to them about our organization and what we do. Bring a friend to a meeting. Guest attendance is only \$3.00. Meetings are the third Thursday of each month.

Also, a great big thank you to those of you who have brought goodies to the meetings to share! They are greatly appreciated!

Did you Know! That SEMBA will certify your garden as a native butterfly garden? You can choose from a paper certificate with your name on it or a yard sign, or both!



Please use the link below <https://www.sembabutterfly.org/calendars> to access the requirements and certification application.

Events Around Town

April 6th



The Ohio Lepidopterists Butterfly Workshop, Ohio. The workshop will include two sessions. One session will include extensive identification training covering every butterfly likely to be seen in Ohio. A concurrent session will include topics such as plants that butterflies depend on, life cycles and gardening to attract butterflies. Details about the workshop were emailed out to the members on 3/2. Check your email!



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April 8th



Monarch Joint Venture (MJV) is happy to announce that it is joining forces with [The Monarch Butterfly Eclipse Project](#).

The total solar eclipse happening on April 8th, 2024, presents a unique opportunity to raise awareness and support for the conservation of monarch butterflies. The interesting fact of this eclipse's path is that it mirrors the major migration route of the monarch butterfly!

By purchasing ISO certified solar eclipse glasses 20% of the gross sales will go directly to MJV. These funds will contribute to initiatives aimed at protecting monarchs and their migration. Click the link above to order your glasses.

April 13th – October 12th



3B's Garden Clean-up Every Saturday from 10:00am-1:00pm
Corrado Park, Westland
Weather Permitting

April 27th



Mark Bourn will be representing SEMBA. The event features over 20 Eco-Friendly Organizations and Vendors – Romulus Athletic Center. Hours are 9:00am – 1:00pm

May 14th



Brenda Sattler will be speaking at 7:00pm - *Wild Ones Wayne County, Dearborn, The Environmental Interpretive Center, U of M*

June 29th



3B's Community Appreciation Event -11:00am – 1:00pm
Corrado Park, Westland Please
RSVP to link below
www.cityofwestland.com

Feature Article:

Get to know one of our founders, Brenda Sattler.

I did a sit-down interview with Brenda and below is a little bit about her life as a butterfly expert.

How did you get started on your butterfly journey?

“I always loved nature when I was little, butterflies everything. Then, I got married, went to college, had kids and all that and then I got thinking, boy, I wish I could see the butterflies that I used to see as a child. So, in 2000 I started doing all this research online, and I thought I knew the plants that I needed to have to attract them. So, I had this list of all these seeds I was going to get and start planting them and I went to Frank's nursery. I ran into this lady that was like two years younger than my dad, named Lois. Lois comes up to me and, I didn't know her, and she says, “oh what are you going to do?” I said “I'm going to plant a butterfly garden. I'm going to get all these seeds.” She said, “can I look at your list?” I said “yes,” so she started crossing off all these things and only left a couple and I said “Okay, what do I need?” So, she's mentioning swamp milkweed and pearly everlasting all these plants I've never heard of. I ask, “where do I get those from,” she said “in the spring, I live in Plymouth, I'll give you my address, you come over to my house and I'll dig up some of my



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plants and give them to you.”

So in the spring, I went over there and she dug up some of her plants and she gave me some books that were informational for this area. So, she said, “you can read these books and when you're done, just give them back to me.” And so, she just kind of took me under her wing and she gave me my first two monarch caterpillars. Then she gave me two American Ladies.

During this time, I'm studying these books that were informational for this area and I was learning what plants I had to plant to get the butterflies in my yard. So, I just started planting all these host plants and I start seeing butterflies lay the eggs and turn into caterpillars and so, that's how it all began.”

Why did you decide to write your first book?

“Well, my degree is in Electronic Engineering Technology, so I'm a techie. Facts are very important to me. While I'm doing this for 10 years, I'm taking photographs of every egg, then as caterpillars, and as they are getting bigger. I'm just doing everything. I'm journaling how many days it takes in every stage. I want all the information, just all these facts. Then one day I saw this caterpillar on my Common Rue, and I didn't know what it was. By now I had a whole bunch of good caterpillar books and butterfly books and I'm looking through them to see what

this caterpillar could be and none of them had a picture of it. My books only showed pictures of when it's big and ready to make its chrysalis not when it's little and dark brown with a cream saddle. Turned out it was a Black Swallowtail caterpillar.

So I thought, geez, if I don't know this, maybe there's other people that don't know this too. Maybe I should write a book. So, I was going to go to college and learn how to do Adobe InDesign. I thought, I can teach myself that so I taught myself Adobe InDesign, Publisher, Illustrator, and all the things so I could put my own book together. I went online and there was a publishing company in Chelsea, and they had the steps of what you had to do to write a book. So, I got my ISBN barcode symbol that goes on the back cover that tells how much your book costs. I created my own ISBN. I taught myself everything about publishing. I had everything all ready, I created the book and then I needed a publishing company.

And there were several that I could just send it to over the internet, but I didn't want to do that. I wanted to actually see the material they were using, everything. So, I drove to Chelsea. They were just going to glue my binding and I said, “no, this is going to be a reference book I want it stitched and glued, and I want thicker paper” and so I have them print my first book. I had them do one hard copy of my

original book just for me.

I don't know how many years after the book came out a friend of mine, she's also an author, Carol Pasternak, she wrote the book “How to Raise Monarch Butterflies.” Carol lives in Toronto and she was working with Firefly Books publishing company and she took my book and showed it to Lionel, he's the owner and the president of Firefly. She showed Lionel my book and I'm down in Texas at my daughters, it's Christmas time and I get a phone call. “Hi this is Lionel and I'm the owner of Firefly Publishing Company and I just saw your book and I want to publish it.” Oh, I'm like Yeah, he says “yeah, I really like it.” He asked me how many I had sold. And I don't know I said, “like five thousand or something.”

He says, “that's really a lot for a self-published book, I'll send you a contract, you can look over it and see if you want to work with our publishing company.” So, I couldn't believe he actually called me and wanted to publish my book!

So anyways. I worked with their design team. I worked with their editor because in my book there were parts that I knew what I meant but my editor would say, “what do you mean by this?” So, I'd have to reword things a little bit and so the design team and the publishing company were great to



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work with, so they published my book.

Last March my second edition from them came out. I thought maybe Lionel might just want to, because I had a whole bunch of moths, he might want to just separate my moths into one book, but he just wanted to make my book bigger. I put in the Tawny Emperor, and I also put the Malachite in it. I think those were the only two butterflies in there, the rest were moths. So, my first book was "Raising Butterflies in the Garden" and then they changed the new book to "Raising Butterflies and Moths in the Garden". I found a picture of Lois and they put it in my second edition.

So, I'm hoping this year that I can study some new species and then it's up to the publishing company what they want to do with it. Last year I wasn't able to find any new species, which really bummed me. I'm going to try even harder to study some new species and we'll see what happens."

How did your relationship with Barson's begin? "They were the first nursery to have me speak at their place, I think it was in 2004. I think they were the first nursery.

I was speaking out all over the place, but I was buying plants from Barons for my butterfly garden and stuff, but I had no idea that I wanted to build a butterfly house. I was at church in Sunday school,

and I met this lady, and she had this magazine and she said, "oh look, I thought you might like this", and she opened it up and said, "just look at this butterfly house, isn't it nice?" I looked at it and it was like at that time God had given her that book to bring to me to show me and speak to me. I knew then I needed to make a butterfly house and I need to teach people about the native species here instead of all these tropical ones, they need to learn about the natives so they can plant the plants to help our species out. I went to one place, and I said "let me build a butterfly house on your property and I will send all the people at my talks here to buy plants" and they said "no." So, since Barson's was the first nursery to have me speak, I went to them and they said "sure!"

They knocked down a fence and Chad got rid of half of his backyard and their daughter, she ripped up her garden she had. Joe said, "okay, this is how much room you can have" and So, I said, "okay, now where do I get the greenhouse" and he told me to go down to Ohio to a greenhouse supply company, Grayhawk's Greenhouse Supplies.

So I drove down there and I had drawn it out, I made the paths big enough for wheelchair access, I said, "this is my design, this is what I want you to build."

I think it's 31 by 60 and I can't

remember if it was 14 or 16 feet tall, and they came and put it up. I had all these volunteers help me put it all together.

God wanted me to do that. It's my testimony. Before I opened up the butterfly house, I had my Pastor come, church members, and friends, and I dedicated it to God. I told Him to use me in any way He wanted, and He did. He brought people to me that didn't even know me, and they told me issues they were going through and asked me to pray for them. I prayed for them, and I've seen their lives change around. A girl that was going to commit suicide, a wife that had been beaten by her husband for years.

These people just came to me and told me these things and I would pray for them, and they'd come back later and tell me how their life had changed. So, I knew that that's why God made everything happen so easy for me because He wanted to use me."

How long did it take to build the actual greenhouse? "I just started getting memories a couple days ago on Facebook when they were putting it in. It was I think they started building it in February. I wanted it to open in June, so they had it all done by then. I didn't have the pavers the first year, the second year they put the pavers in. All together for everything, with the Greenhouse, plants, the pavers, and signage it was like \$50,000. I



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thought how cheap, I don't have to buy property, I don't have pay taxes or insurance. I get free electricity, free water, and I get to educate people for \$50,000."

What is your favorite butterfly to raise?

"See, I don't have favorites anymore. I used to, years ago, of course, a Monarch and the Spicebush Swallowtail is cool. I'm really getting into moths because moth caterpillars can be so interesting. So probably the coolest moth caterpillar I've ever raised is the Hickory Horn Devil, and when it's an adult, it's called the Regal Moth.

What would you like to attract to your garden that you haven't been able to?

Well, if everybody turned off all their porch lights around here, I used to be able to get a lot more moths at night, but if people are going to do that, they need the yellow bulbs because those UV rays do not attract the moths. But I would like to get, because I did last year, I finally, finally got a Zebra Swallowtail on the top of my Pawpaw laying eggs so I raised one Zebra Swallowtail. But I wouldn't mind getting the Regal Moth on my moth sheet at night.

Now I'm just trying to study more moths because I've probably had almost every butterfly in the area already here. So, I'd just like to

study new species and hopefully this year, I can."

Now the Zebra, they have been out of this area for a while, haven't they?

They had been seen in Ann Arbor and in Milan. My optometrist also teaches people. He goes into schools and teaches kids about moths and things. He lives in Canton, and a couple years ago, he had a Zebra in his yard so, I know that occasionally Zebras have been in this area, but years ago, they were everywhere, then everybody started cutting their Pawpaw trees down. Barsons has been buying tons of them and people are starting to buy them and planting them in their yard."

What advice would you give to someone just starting out raising butterflies?

"I would say, definitely don't use any pesticides. If they want to start, probably the easiest ones would be the Monarch and the Black Swallowtail. So, they could plant some fennel and plant some milkweed. You're almost guaranteed to have them in your yard. They could start with those two. That's what I would tell people just start out small. Then probably from there I would say the American Lady if they got Pearly Everlasting or Pussy Toes.

If you plant it, they will come, they do. Because in this area, when I moved in here in 2000, it was just all grass and some shrubs out front. None of this was here. And occasionally a Cabbage White would flutter through. Years ago, I had over 30 different species of butterflies in my yard, and I wasn't even counting moths back then.

Where are some of the places you have done research? "Well, I did some research with the Manistee National Forest because they wanted to reestablish and restore the habitat for the Karner Blue. Then in 2010, I did some research with University of Florida, we flew into Quito, Ecuador and we were in eastern and western Ecuador cataloging as many species as possible. I was doing butterflies, they were doing butterflies and moths, and one professor was doing beetles, and of course I've been going to Mexico since 2009. I'm one of the Monarch Watch conservation specialists. I've also spoken in Ohio and Texas, and Florida. Mainly Michigan."

Finally, what are the long-term goals for SEMBA, where do you see SEMBA in the future?

"My hopes are that we will reach more and more people who will plant gardens for our pollinators. The ecosystem needs as much help as it can get."





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Calendar of Events

January 18, 2024

At Crosswalk Community Church, 7:00pm
*“Macheros Mexico and Overwintering
Monarchs” by Brenda Sattler*

February 15, 2024

At Crosswalk Community Church, 7:00pm
“Butterflies, Ants, and Aphids” Brenda Sattler

March 21, 2024

At Crosswalk Community Church, 7:00pm
*Speaker – John DeLisle. – “Growing for
Wildlife” CERP Principal Ecologist, from
Natural Community Services, LLC*

April 18, 2024

At Crosswalk Community Church, 7:00pm
*Speaker Cheryl English – Pollinator
Preservation Strategies”*

May 16, 2024

At Crosswalk Community Church, 7:00pm
Moth Mating Cage Workshop

June 20, 2024

At Crosswalk Community Church, 7:00pm
Q and A with Brenda

July 13, 2024 – Saturday

*Brenda’s Open Garden Walk – Westland 1-4pm
Elmer Grimm, Garden Walk 10am – 4pm*

July 20, 2024 – Saturday

*John Blair’s Open Garden Walk – Brooklyn
Bugtopia, Westland*

July 27, 2024 – Saturday

*3 B’s Nature Garden, Detroit Audubon/SEMBA
Event 1pm, Corrado Park, 8500 Flamingo Blvd,
Westland*

August 15, 2024

At Crosswalk Community Church, 7:00pm

September 19, 2024

At Crosswalk Community Church, 7:00pm
“Winter Clean Up”, by Brenda Sattler

October 17, 2024

At Crosswalk Community Church, 7:00pm
Tea Cup Raffle and Pot Luck

