

Nectar News



Official Newsletter of the
Southeast Michigan Butterfly Association

September 2014

Gossamer Wings

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.

Gossamer Wings (Lycaenidae)

A diverse family of butterflies that includes *coppers*, *harvesters*, *blues*, *hairstreaks*, and *metal marks*. The adults are small and often brilliantly colored.

Coppers are small, and sexually dimorphic butterflies (differences between males/females). The upper wing surfaces of most species are ornately colored with metallic reddish orange or purple. Many eastern species are associated with bogs, wet meadows,

marshes. Adults typically scurry close to ground with a quick flight.

Harvester is the only butterfly with carnivorous larvae (they devour woolly aphids)!

Blues are generally bright blue on the wings above. The females may be brown or dark gray. Adults have a moderately quick and erratic flight. At rest they hold their wings together over the back.

Metalmarks are characterized by metallic flecks of color or even overall metallic looking wings. They have eyes entirely separated from the antennal bases. Adults have a low, scurrying flight. They characteristically perch with their wings outstretched.

Hairstreaks tend to be larger than the blues. Wings below are often intricately patterned and have colorful eye spots adjacent to 1 or 2 small, distinct, hair-like tails on each hind-wing. Adults have erratic flight.

Board Members for 2014

- **President:** Carolyn Sohoza
- **Vice President:** Brendon Weil
- **Secretary:** Diana McCormick
- **Treasurer:** Carolyn Sohoza
- **Communications Director:** Monica McCormick
- **Event Committee Chair:** Becky Paulson
- **Habitat Committee Chair:** Kathy Bey and Karen Jewell
- **Past President—**Brenda Dziejcz
- **Membership Committee Chair:** Karen Jewell

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Butterfly Gardening

By Bob Cairns

We are interested in attracting butterflies to our yard for two reasons, to admire their beauty as they flutter around, and to entice them to lay eggs on our plants so that butterflies are created.

You can certainly attract some butterflies to your yard if you have a nice collection of flowers, but if you really want to create a butterfly haven you must lure the butterfly to lay eggs on your plants!

Each type of female adult butterfly is attracted to a specific type of plant on which to lay her eggs. If you want to attract that species of butterfly to your yard, you must have that plant. For example, one of the most common butterflies in Michigan is the Monarch, a beautiful black and orange creature that will only lay her eggs on plants of the milkweed family. Milkweed is a native plant that can be found everywhere. However, milkweed plants for your garden should be purchased from a reputable nursery or obtained from a knowledgeable person, such as one of the butterfly people here. They should not be dug up in a roadside ditch.

Follow good design principle and plant an odd-numbered clump of milkweed plants in your yard (3, 5, 7). The larger the

clump the better because Monarchs are near-sighted creatures who will find it easier to find larger clumps of milkweed color. The Monarchs will find your milkweed plants and lay their eggs on them.

The eggs will hatch into caterpillars. Each caterpillar will grow in size until it is ready to transform into a butterfly. It builds a special enclosure, called a chrysalis, in which the transformation takes place. The chrysalis looks like a cocoon. A moth makes a cocoon, a butterfly makes a chrysalis. After a few days a butterfly will emerge from the chrysalis.

This all occurs if the eggs, caterpillars, and chrysalises are not consumed by the many predators that like to eat them for lunch. It is estimated that only 1% of the eggs make it to butterflies—that is fewer than one out of a 100 eggs survives.

It is important to understand that starting right after their birth the Monarch caterpillar will consume the milkweed plant on which they were born. Milkweed is called the “host plant for the Monarch butterfly”. It is the only plant on which Monarch eggs are laid and the only plant which is consumed by the Monarch caterpillar as they grow.

Once the butterfly emerges from its chrysalis it will fly around looking for flowers in

bloom from which it will take nectar as food. There are many types of common flowers from which butterflies will take food. These are called “nectar plants”. A good butterfly garden contains both hosts plants and nectar plants.

That summarizes the basic elements of butterfly gardening. Of course, there are lots more things to learn if you want to get serious about attracting and raising lots of butterflies.

For example, you can find out which plants are the host plants for other species of butterflies and plant those in your yard. Brenda Dziedzic, our fearless leader, has a handout that lists the most common butterfly species and the host plants they use.

One of the additional things you can do is increase the eggs’ chances of survival by collecting them from your plants and raising them in simple containers in your house. This act, raising a butterfly from egg to adult and releasing it into the wild, was for me a very emotional experience. When my firstborn butterfly left my finger tips and flew away I began to understand the meaning of post-partum depression.

Most of the additional information about attracting and raising butterflies can be found in a book such as Brenda’s *Learn About Butterflies In the Garden!*

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Monarch Watch

Monarch Waystation

Certification Requirements:

Monarch Watch is a nonprofit educational outreach program based at the University of Kansas that focuses on the Monarch butterfly, its habitat, and its spectacular fall migration. If you would like to certify your monarch habitat and help support Monarch Watch's conservation efforts, there is a \$16 non-refundable application fee. Sign is \$17. Application and sign bundle is \$33 purchased all at once. Requirements:

Size– No minimum area requirement, however a truly effective Monarch Waystation will be at least 100 square feet. The total area may be split among several sites at your location.

Exposure– At least 6 hours of sun a day.

Plants, Drainage, and Soil Type are other interesting considerations for the Waystation.

More information at:

Monarchwatch.org

Monarch Conservation

Hundreds of millions of monarch butterflies migrate from the USA and Canada each fall to the mountainous regions in central Mexico. They wait out the winter until conditions favor a return flight in the spring. This monarch migration is threatened by habitat loss at overwintering grounds in Mexico and other breeding areas.

Brenda Dzedzic has been selected as one of the Monarch Conservation Specialist by Professor Chip Taylor, from MonarchWatch! Brenda was at the University of Kansas this weekend before our September general meeting.

She raised over \$2,100 for Monarch Watch through donations and the purchase of monarch caterpillars. One little girl named Ruby raised \$ 51.58 from her lemonade stand! She is only 8 years old. Chip is taking this story to Washington D.C. along with the information and his research to try to help the monarchs and conserve the land that is needed to continue their migration.

**Recently it has been discovered that people have been illegally logging right in the core protected area of the biosphere reserve in Mexico. One of the trees that was covered in thousands of monarchs last season right at the heart of*



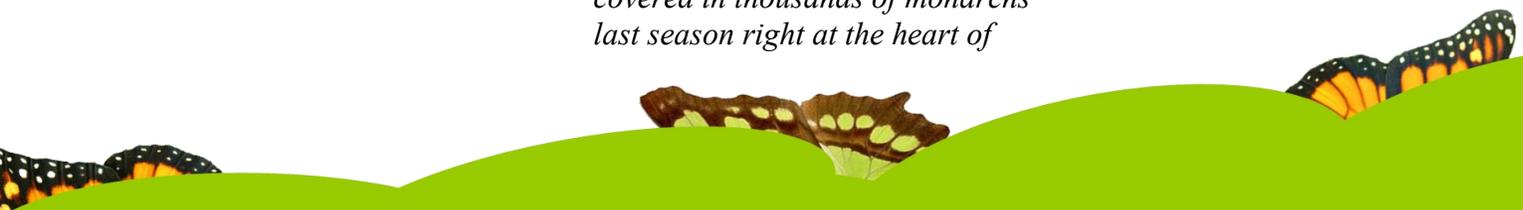
Reminders

the colony was lying on the ground reduced to wood chips. Several other nearby trees had been downed too. (Ellen Sharp)

- **SEMBA calendar** for 2015 will be available at October's general meeting for \$12, money raised will go toward the Grant fund for organizations wanting to build butterfly gardens! The winners of our first photography contest will be included in the calendar!
- New to 2014 is the **SEMBA Rearing, Sighting and Nectar plant survey**. Look for more information at the beginning of each meeting, as well as via ongoing email distributions, website announcements and Facebook posts. We look forward to your participation. If you have questions, please contact Brendon Weil at bweil04@yahoo.com
- **Survey site:** https://umichumhs.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_3ItcdkxhayDAWln

Contact Us:

New Email: Coming soon!
www.sembabutterfly.org
[Facebook.com/sembabutterfly](https://www.facebook.com/sembabutterfly)
 Mail to:
 SEMBA
 PO Box 851301
 Westland, MI 48185



SEMBA Membership is \$15 per person and \$7.50 additional family members.

Mailing Address Label

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Website: www.semabutterfly.org



Calendar of Upcoming Events

June 2014

18th, Meeting 7:00 p.m. Nankin Mills
Native Plant Sale, with Chad Hughson from Hidden Savannah.

July 2014

16th, Meeting 7:00 p.m. Nankin Mills
“Outdoor Photography” with Cindy Oleszkowicz, Professional Photographer and Brendon Weil, SEMBA Vice-President, will build upon last year’s presentation about butterfly and nature photography. This will be a workshop forum. We will spend some time outside— bring your camera!

August 2014

20th, Meeting, 7:00 p.m. Nankin Mills
“Movie Night” Come join us for an educational movie about butterflies! We’ll supply the popcorn and drinks.

September 2014

SEMBA Elections

17th, Meeting, 7:00p.m. Nankin Mills
“Overwintering” with Brenda Dziedzic, Author and Co -founder will discuss the Do’s and Don’ts for garden maintenance and overwintering your butterflies.

October 2014

Share Survey Results Photo Contest Results

15th, Meeting, 7:00 p.m. Nankin Mills
“Year End Wrap- Up Celebration”. Come celebrate another successful year of butterflying with a meal and conversation with fellow butterfly enthusiasts. We will continue our tea cup raffle to raise money for the Grant Fund. Mexican themed food in honor of the Monarch’s Fall Migration!