

Heard it through the Pipevine



July /
August
2007

Newsletter of the Austin Butterfly Forum • www.austinbutterflies.org

We have been slowly collecting material for a newsletter this year, but we can finally fill one. Perhaps most exciting is that the Red-Bordered Metalmark appears to be a new Travis County record. Phil Schappert and Dan Hardy provide our articles, as usual, but Mike Quinn reports some sad news: Phil is returning to Canada.

Club Meeting

Monday August 27, 7:00 pm

Zilker Botanical Garden Center

Val Bugh will present a talk and slide show titled "Floral Fauna" about the many critters to be found on flowers. Club member Val is a marvelous photographer with wide-ranging interest in and knowledge of the arthropod world.

Mexico Trip Canceled

Regrettably, due to a change in employment, Mike Overton is no longer available to coordinate and lead the Austin Butterfly Forum's Mexico Butterfly Trip thus leading to its cancellation. We regret any inconvenience and/or disappointment that this may have caused. Please see this month's calendar and future calendars for other opportunities to travel to Mexico.

Membership Reminder

Membership is now paid per calendar year with quarterly prorating after the first quarter. The cost is \$20 per household. If your membership has expired please don't forget to renew.



Red Spotted Purple, *Limenitis arthemis astyanax*, BCSA, 1/IV/2007 (P. Schappert)

Finding East Texas Forest Butterflies

by Phil Schappert

Stengl "Lost Pines" Biological Station

Big Creek Scenic Area (BCSA) in the Sam Houston National Forest (San Jacinto Co., south of Coldspring) is a great place to find and see East Texas Forest butterflies. This spring I have encountered and been able to photograph both Southern and Creole Pearly-Eyes (*Enodia portlandia* and *E. creola*), Gemmed Satyr (*Cyllopsis gemma*), Eastern Pine Elfin (*Callophrys niphon*), Red Spotted Purple (*Limenitis arthemis astyanax*), and both Zebra and Palamedes Swallowtails (*Papilio marcellus* and *P. palamedes*). I've probably missed finding Frosted Elfin (*Callophrys irus*) there this year...but there's always a next year (so far).

To explore this area from Austin, I suggest reversing the trip directions given in Ro Wauer's "Finding Butterflies in Texas" (site 36, pp. 138-140). Take 290 to Brenham and take the final exit (left) for Brenham (exit for Blue Belle Ice Cream) to get to FM 105. Follow 105 through Navasota to Anderson, and turn right on FM 149 to get to the western edge of Sam Houston NF. Turn left on FM 1375 to cross IH 45 and get to New Waverly. Ro recommends a couple of stops along FM 1375 (his areas F, G, and H) before you get to IH 45.

Jog left then right in New Waverly to get to FM 150 to Coldspring. Just before you get to Coldspring, turn right on FM 2025 (note that there's a fair bit of construction along both FM 150 and 2025 so there may be short waits at one-lane restrictions but they never amount to more than 5 minutes delay). From 2025 you can turn left on Red Road (CR 221, note that road is rough and not well maintained), or follow the signs for BCSA and wait to turn left at FM 2666 and then again at the south end of Red Road (CR 221). BCSA is on CR 217, a short right off of Red Road.

Big Creek Scenic Area has several trails, all of which are worth the hike and trip. I recommend taking the right at the trail head (map board) and going past the first trail marker to the area along Big Creek. You can then take the real short loop back to the "first trail marker" or follow the Pine loop, or eventually the White Oak loop. Both loops are excellent for botanizing and for forest butterflies.

One site not mentioned in Ro's book, and the area where I encountered Eastern Pine Elfins for three consecutive weeks (March 22nd, April 3rd, and April 11th), along with my best sightings of Zebra and Palamedes Swallowtails, is to the east of the BCSA parking area, north off of 217. Turn left when leaving the parking area and go to the first intersection. On the north side is a gated (closed) forest access road that is an easy and productive hike. Be careful going through the gate as red wasps (*Polistes carolina*?) have taken up residence in the ends of the gate pipes!

For additional worthwhile sites, I suggest visiting Roy E. Larsen Sandyland Sanctuary (TNC preserve) near Silsbee (Hardin Co.), about 45 minutes east of BCSA. From BCSA continue on CR 217 to FM 150, then left (east) to Shepherd, jog left (north) at the stop to a right (east) on FM 223, continuing across and beyond US 59. Eventually you'll turn left on FM 787 through Rye and beyond to another left at FM 1293 to Kountze. At Kountze, turn right (south) on US 69, then left on TX 327. Watch for the UTC birding site sign at the entrance to the preserve.

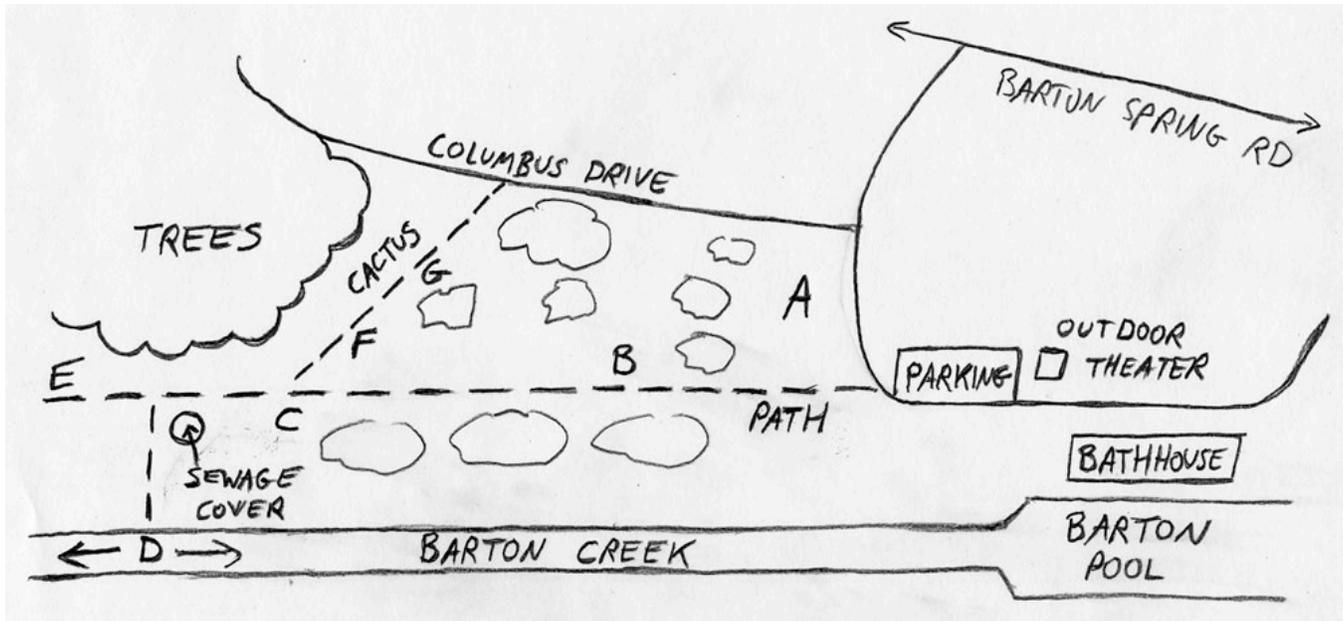
After leaving the Larsen Sandyland, why not visit the Sundew or better still, the Pitcher Plant Trail of Big Thicket National Preserve? Return to US 69 and follow it north to access both of these sites (Ro's site 38, areas C and D). I fully expect to encounter Georgia/Halicta Satyr (*Neonympha areolata/halicta*) at the Pitcher Plant Trail in the coming month. Note that none of these sites has an entrance fee! What more could a butterfly watcher ask for?



Zebra Swallowtail, *Papilio marcellus*, Larsen Sandyland Sanctuary, 1/IV/2007 (P. Schappert)



Creole Pearly-Eye, *Enodia creola*, BCSA, 1/IV/2007 (P. Schappert)



Map of Barton Creek Greenbelt, starting at Barton Springs (D. Hardy)

Barton Creek Greenbelt Part I

Where to Find Butterflies in Austin by Dan Hardy

Location: Barton Creek Greenbelt Trail, starting at Barton Springs

How to get there: Enter Zilker Park from Barton Springs Road as if you are going to the swimming pool. Go past the bathhouse on your left, then past the outdoor theater and park at the end of parking lot. The trail starts here. There are restrooms at the bathhouse, and there is a good hamburger stand near the entrance to the pool.

Precautions: Lots of Poison ivy and some cactus.

Points of Interest: The map is labeled with points of interest A through G.

A The trailhead starts beside the parking lot. On the right is a large clearing that is periodically mowed, but it can have abundant flowers, and Frogfruit seems to bloom no matter how dry it is. It's a good place for Phaon Crescents, Dainty Sulphurs, Checkered Skippers, and various grass skippers, such as Southern Skipperlings. The Redbud Trees planted in the field can have Henry's Elfin caterpillars in early April. You will undoubtedly see female Pipevine Swallowtails searching the ground for their

elusive host plant, the Swan flower (*Aristolochia erecta*). This plant is exceptionally difficult to find, so follow the butterfly, and she will take you to one.

B Continue on the trail, avoiding bicyclists and dogs. There are open areas on the right with scattered mesquite for the next mile. The edge areas on both sides of the path are good. Fatal Metalmarks can be found near Old Man's Beard (*Clematis drummondii*), their host plant.

C The trail then enters a heavily wooded part of the path with a steep cliff on the right. Check the Kidneywood (*Eysenhardtia*) and Mistflower (*Eupatorium*) if they are blooming. Texas Powdered Skippers are often right at the edge of the trail. The only Austin records of a Turk's-Cap White-Skipper and Red-crescent Scrub-Hairstreaks were here. California (now Arizona) Sisters could fly by.

D Go about 200 feet past point C and there is a sewage manhole cover on the left side of the path. Just beyond is a gravel slope that takes you down to the stream bed of Barton Creek. When there's been a lot of rain, you can't get to it. But during much of the year this creek bed is dry and you should be able to walk upstream and downstream. This can be an excellent area. Viceroy's hang out near Willows. Silver-spotted Skippers are common. White-striped Longtails like to perch on the tops of weeds. Vesta Crescents are easy to find. Watch for the rare Silver-banded Hairstreak near the Balloonvines (*Cardiospermum*). Lacey's Scrub-Hairstreaks can turn up.

E If you go back up to the path you can continue walking upstream (optional) for about a mile to Campbell's Hole, a hangout and swimming area. I've had Zabulon Skippers in sunny spots on this walk. Just beyond Campbell's hole the creek bed is cut into many picturesque channels. Butterflies nectar on blooming Kidneywood on the other side.

F Return to point C where the open trail entered the woods. Cross the field to the left, towards Columbus Drive, and follow a vague path that skirts the edge between the field and trees. In April the blooming Hog-Plum (*Colubrina*) in this area can be fantastic for hairstreaks.

G Continue along this edge and the trail narrows and squeezes through a narrow area with a large cactus patch on the left. This area is good for Laviana White-Skippers. Check any Velvet-Leaf Mallow (*Abutilon*) in this area for the conspicuous folded shelters that the caterpillars make. Texas Powdered Skippers also use that plant. Vesta Crescents can be abundant in this area. Their foodplant, Hairy Tubetongue (*Siphonoglossa*), grows here. There are Soapberry trees (*Sapindus*) in this area and Soapberry Hairstreaks are flying in May. You can continue on this trail until it reaches Columbus Drive, and then follow Columbus Drive back to your car. Both sides of Columbus Drive often have flowers.

I owe a lot to Chris Durden, who showed me some of these trails. If you run into Chris out there, tell him I said, "Hi."

Help the City of Austin become Certified Community Wildlife Habitat

Attend a NWR workshop series Thursdays and Saturdays in September to become a Habitat Steward and help Austin become the first city to be certified as Community Wildlife Habitat.

Registration deadline: August 28, 2007

Training Fee: \$40

Contact Jane Tillman at 794-0058

For more info see <http://tinyurl.com/2sq9wl>

Thank You!

On July 28th, **Roxie Rochat**, **Mary Quinn**, and **Mike Quinn** worked on the butterfly trail at Zilker with **Scott Young**. Thanks for volunteering!

NABA Butterfly Count 2007

by Dan Hardy

The Austin 4th of July butterfly count had an all-time record number of species (63), all-time numbers of observers (25), and all-time high individual adult butterflies count (820).

We were lucky to have a day without rain, which has been rare lately in Austin. We've already had a year's worth of rain in the first 6 months, and the lush vegetation showed it.

We saw nothing terribly rare, just most of the regulars. Highlights were: 6 Great Purple Hairstreaks; the first Zebra that I'd had seen in Austin this year (they arrived in Zilker Garden about a week ago); 20-30 emperors at the bananas at the botanical garden, as well as 100+ elsewhere; huge numbers of Bordered Patches, with numerous caterpillar on Ragweed and one female laying a mound of eggs as we watched; good studies of Red-spotted Purples laying eggs on Cherry and of an early instar caterpillar; Viceroy's at three different sites; and six White-striped Longtails, a skipper that was very rare until about 3 years ago.

Misses: Eastern Tiger Swallowtail, Least Skipper, Rawson's Metalmark, Ceraunus Blue, Large Orange Sulphur, more satyrs

I used to think that 60 species was possible in Austin. Now I wonder about 70!

Date: 30 June 2007

Observers: Lauren Bauer, Valerie Bugh, Robert Corbin, Manley Cullers, Dan Hardy, Mary Holland, Marianna Hobbs, Tim Hissam, John Kelly, Kathy McCormack, Derek Muschalek, David Millard, Lowe Johnston, L. Johnson, Mike Quinn, Mary Helen Quinn, Roxie Rochat, Jean Martin, Laura Southwick, Marvin Lewis, Jeff Taylor, Blake Vickers, Miriam Vaughn, Gary Waggerman, and Scott Young.

Adults (63 species, 820 individuals):

Pipevine Swallowtail (28)
Black Swallowtail (10)
Giant Swallowtail (9)
Spicebush Swallowtail (2)
Cloudless Sulphur (3)
Lyside Sulphur (4)
Little Yellow (20)
Sleepy Orange (30)

Dainty Sulphur (6)
 Southern Dogface (3)
 Checkered White (1)
 Great Purple Hairstreak (6)
 Juniper Hairstreak (6)
 Dusky-blue Groundstreak (6)
 Gray Hairstreak (25)
 Mallow Scrub Hairstreak (1)
 Marine Blue (1)
 Reakirt's Blue (16)
 Fatal Metalmark (5)
 Calephelis species (1)
 Snout Butterfly (1)
 Gulf Fritillary (15)
 Zebra Heliconian (1)
 Variegated Fritillary (7)
 Bordered Patch (64)
 Phaon Crescent (22)
 Pearl Crescent (16)
 Vesta Crescent (24)
 Texan Crescent (50)
 Silvery Checkerspot (1)
 Theona Checkerspot (1)
 Question Mark (30)
 American Lady (2)
 Painted Lady (2)
 Red Admiral (3)
 Common Buckeye (44)
 Red-spotted Purple (4)
 Viceroy (5)
 Tropical Leafwing (2)
 Goatweed Leafwing (3)
 Hackberry Emperor (20)
 Tawny Emperor (40)
 Emperor species (150)
 Satyr species, non-Common Wood Nymph (2)
 Common Wood Nymph (1)
 Queen (2)
 Laviana White-Skipper (1)
 Silver-spotted Skipper (7)
 White-striped Longtail (6)
 Northern Cloudywing (3)
 Texas Powdered Skipper (4)
 Horace's Duskywing (25)
 Funeral Duskywing (6)
 Common Checkered-Skipper (5)
 Desert Checkered-Skipper (1)
 Scallopwing species (1)
 Clouded Skipper (5)
 Orange Skipperling (1)
 Southern Skipperling (16)

Southern Broken-Dash (3)
 Fiery Skipper (7)
 Sachem (2)
 Dun Skipper (26)
 Celia's Roadside-Skipper (2)
 Eufala Skipper (4)

Immatures (10 species, 334 individuals):

Pipevine Swallowtail caterpillars (1)
 Giant Swallowtail caterpillars (3)
 Spicebush Swallowtail caterpillars (3)
 Bordered Patch caterpillars (285)
 Silvery Checkerspot caterpillars (30)
 Question Mark caterpillars (4)
 Red-spotted Purple caterpillars (1)
 Tropical Leafwing caterpillars (2)
 Northern Cloudywing caterpillars (3)
 Clouded Skipper caterpillars (2)

New County Record



Red-Bordered Metalmark (C. Schorlemmer)

On August 19th, **Carl Schorlemmer** saw a **Red-Bordered Metalmark** on Coral Vine in his yard in North Austin. Unable to get a good photo of it on the vine, he coaxed it onto his finger.

This appears to be a new record for Travis County. Per USGS, the next closest county records are Comal (New Braunfels), then Uvalde, Bee, & Live Oak Counties. The butterfly ranges south to Costa Rica.

The butterfly's host is Spiny Hackberry (*Celtis pallida*) or Granjeno. Austin is on the northern edge of this plant's range.

Phil Schappert Returns to Canada

It was with great surprise and sadness that many of us read Phil Schappert's August 17 announcement on the TX-Butterfly listserv. He and his wife Pat would be leaving Central Texas for their homeland. Pat has accepted a position at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada beginning October 1st.

Phil and Pat will truly be missed. Phil has generously and frequently entertained the Austin Butterfly Forum with wonderful programs on butterflies, even filling in last-minute for cancelled presentations as well as writing for our newsletter, as he has done for this issue. And he has always been good fun.

Besides helping the Forum, teaching at UT and managing the Stengl "Lost Pines" Biology Station north of Smithville, Phil gave of himself to the greater lepidopteran community for ten years by volunteering to be the editor of the News of the Lepidopterists' Society, a sometimes thankless job. I first made contact with Phil when he solicited photographs of butterflies "doing things" (as I recall) for his 2000 book, "A World for Butterflies: Their Lives, Behaviour and Future." Later, Phil paid me a great compliment by asking me to review a manuscript of his 2004 book, "Monarch Butterflies: saving the king of the new world".

Besides great memories, Phil will leave a lasting Texas legacy in the form of two yet to be published field guides on the butterflies and wildflowers of "east and south-central" Texas. Phil, be sure and drop us all a line sometime! We will miss you.

— Mike Quinn, speaking for everyone in the Austin Butterfly Forum

P.S. Check out Phil's column for the Smithville Times at <http://www.sbs.utexas.edu/philjs/stengl/LPNN>

Entomological Calendar

Mike Quinn brings you a more extensive calendar of entomological events, focusing on events of possible interest to us bug-lovin folks here in central Texas. For an even more complete listing, see the calendar on his web site at www.texasento.net/events.htm.

AUGUST '07

Mon 27

Austin Butterfly Forum Meeting – Zilker Botanical Garden Center, 7 - 9pm

Val Bugh will present a talk and slide show titled "**Floral Fauna.**" See box on first page.

SEPTEMBER '07

Sat 1

Mexico Independence Day NABA Butterfly Count – Monterrey, Nuevo Leon, Mex.

This is NABA's butterfly count in Mexico. See Alida Madero-Enkerlin (alida.madero@gmail.com) or Dan Hardy (dh787@yahoo.com) for more information. You may also visit the web site for the Chipinque area at www.chipinque.org.mx.

14 - 16

Nature Quest – Uvalde, Texas

Field trips, seminars, and workshops acquainting people with the Hill Country of Uvalde County, Texas. Contact 800-210-0380 or info@thcrr.com, or see Mike's web site for a link.

Mon 24 Austin Butterfly Forum Meeting – Zilker Botanical Garden Center, 7 - 9pm

Joe Lapp will present a program titled, "Spiders on Video," exploring the world of spiders. See what spiders do not only during the day, but also late at night with night vision.

Sat 29 Austin Butterfly Forum Field Trip – Hornsby Bend, 8:30am - 1:00pm

Dan Hardy is leading a butterfly field trip to Hornsby Bend, Platt Lane. Meet at 8:30 in the parking lot of the Hornsby Bend Administrative Offices at the entrance. See map: <http://www.hornsbybend.org/sitemap.html>. We will probably drive to the Platt Lane path and then walk from there. Be prepared for mosquitoes, chiggers, thorns, and sun.

OCTOBER '07

13 - 14 Monarch Tagging – Balcones Canyonlands NWR, Austin

We'll be tagging Monarchs as part of the National Wildlife Refuge Week at Balcones Canyonlands NWR, Doeskin Ranch on RR 1174. Spider Joe will also be leading family-oriented spider walks on Saturday Oct. 13 at 11:00am and 2:30pm. Contact rob_iski@fws.gov or 512-339-9432 ext. 42. See Mike's www.texasento.net/events for a link.

13 - 14 Fall Plant and Gardening Festival – LBJ Wildflower Center

A plant sale at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center. www.wildflower.org/plantsale

18 -21 NPSOT-NPAT Joint Symposium – Georgetown, TX

A symposium on efforts to identify, restore, conserve and celebrate the Blackland and Grand Prairies and grasslands of the Edwards Plateau. See www.npsot.org/symposium2007

18 - 21 Texas Butterfly Festival – Mission, TX

Yearly festival in the Rio Grande Valley. See www.texasbutterfly.com. Contact at 800-580-2700 or mission@missionchamber.com. No pre- or post-fest trips to Mexico this year.

Fri 19 Step into My Web with Spiders – LBJ Wildflower Center, 6 - 9pm

This is a joint venture of the Wildflower Center, Dave Moellendorf (Austin Arachnological Services), and Spider Joe (spiderjoe.com). From 6 - 9 pm, \$1 per person. We will have multiple arachnid events, including presentations, arachnids on exhibit, and spider walks. This is a family event. See <http://www.wildflower.org/nature/>

Mon 22 Austin Butterfly Forum Meeting – Zilker Botanical Garden Center, 7 - 9pm

Shawn Ashbaugh will talk on "Raising and Photographing Butterflies." Shawn is club member who has taken some amazing photos of butterflies emerging from their chrysalides.

31 - Nov 4 El Cielo Butterfly Festival 2007– Cd. Mante, Tampaulipas, Mexico

Contact Sonio Ortiz at sortiz@teledinamica.com.mx or 011(5281)8378-5926. See also www.elcielofestival.com

Austin Butterfly Forum, Inc.
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Austin Butterfly Forum Membership Form

Become a member or renew your membership.

Your membership helps support our club activities, but members also receive bimonthly newsletters with upcoming events and informative articles, butterfly plants that we often give away, and discounts on books, T-shirts and more.

Name:	Daytime phone:
Street:	Evening phone:
City: State: Zip:	Email:

Membership is \$20 annually per household, due each January and prorated thereafter.

Make check payable to the Austin Butterfly Forum and send to:

ABF c/o Doris Hill, 1605 Broadmoor Drive, Austin, TX 78723