

Washington Butterfly  
Association

# G'num\*

The newsletter of the Washington Butterfly Association

P.O. Box 31317 Seattle WA 98103

[www.naba.org/chapters/nabaws](http://www.naba.org/chapters/nabaws)

\*G'num is the official greeting of WABA. It is derived from the name of common Washington butterfly food plants, of the genus *Eriogonum*.

## WABA Meeting Programs

WABA meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month. They are held at the UW Center for Urban Horticulture (3501 NE 41st Street, Seattle) and begin at 7:00 p.m. The first fifteen minutes are used for social reception and viewing of displays.

### JULY:

No meeting in July.

### AUGUST 4:

“Share the Wealth”

Everyone can bring up to 20 butterfly slides or photos to show and/or have identified. Don't miss this one...it's always informal and fun!

### SEPTEMBER 1:

“Butterflies and Wildlife of Argentina”

Dave's and Jo's travels to South America. Dave's photos and commentaries are always outstanding!  
– *Dave Nunnallee*

## Volunteer Opportunities with WABA

Field Trip Assistants:

1. someone to be responsible for the sign up sheets at our meetings.
2. someone to call people prior to each field trip to find out if they are still planning to come and to find out who would be willing to drive.
3. someone to call those same people if the field trip is rescheduled because of bad weather, or cancelled.

If you can help with field trips, please contact Dave Nunnallee at (425) 392-2565.

Hospitality:

1. people to bring juices and snacks to a meeting.
2. someone to organize the people who volunteer for #1, to assign them a meeting, and to call to remind them that it is their turn.

If you can help with hospitality, please contact Jo Nunnallee at (425) 392-2565.

Booth Helpers:

1. someone to put together a WABA booth – a banner, a table, gather brochures, maybe order more brochures.
2. people willing to staff a booth for, probably 4 hour shifts. You would find out details later when we know more about the event.
3. someone willing to organize the staffing a booth. You would gather the names of people from #2. Then when an event materializes, you would call these people to give them the details and to find out if they are available.

If a booth interests you, please contact Idie Ulsh at (206) 364-4935.

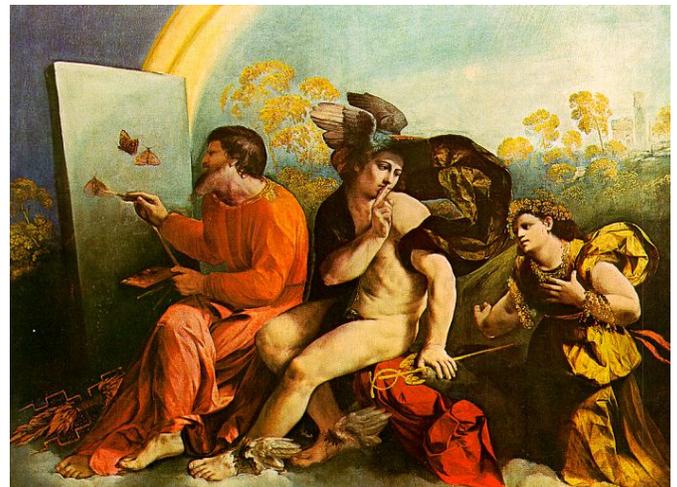
A while back I visited the splendid new Getty Museum in Los Angeles. I loved it except that there were no butterflies in the sumptuous gardens. As is often the case with institutional gardens like these, the gardeners insist on spraying. The result? No pests, but no butterflies either, so the gardens have an artificial ambience about them.

During my visit, the museum was featuring a relatively unknown Italian painter named Dosso Dossi, who lived from 1489 to 1542. One of the most prominently placed paintings by this brilliant artist was titled "Jupiter and Mercury", from 1529. It features a painter, perhaps Dossi himself, at work out of doors, guarded by the god Mercury from the god Jupiter who seems to want to interrupt the painter. The museum's description of the work makes much of the fact that the subject of the painter's work-in-progress is three beautiful butterflies flitting about against a clear blue sky. The description suggests that even the business of a god like Jupiter must wait for an artist who is working on something as special as gorgeous butterflies.

Having glanced first at the painting itself, I turned back (as any WABA member would do) to see if I could identify the three butterflies. Hello! They weren't butterflies at all! They were some other kind of moth. As usual, the antennae were a dead giveaway. This was probably not the error of the painter Dosso Dossi, I thought; he may well have thought that these moths were worth Mercury's protection as much as butterflies would have been. No, more likely it was the museum staff person who

chose to stress the unique beauty of the butterflies as the reason for one god's rebuffing the other.

As I hope any WABA member would have done, I determined at once to set the matter right. I went immediately to the museum's main desk. There I told my story to an official-looking young lady. Looking gravely at me, she asked if I would be willing to detail the particulars of the alleged error on an official looking piece of paper which she held out to me. I, of course, indicated that I would be please to do so. She assured me that the matter would promptly receive the attention of the appropriate museum officer. I filed the report and left the museum. Unfortunately, I had to leave for Seattle later that day so I wasn't able to follow up on my selfless effort. But I left L.A. with a feeling of inordinate self-satisfaction. Being an amateur lepidopterist has more uses than one might expect.



"Jupiter, Mercury and Virtue" by Dosso Dossi

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Three guys are debating about which of their languages is the most pleasing to the ear.

The Spaniard says, "Consider the word for 'butterfly'. In Spanish, it is 'Mariposa', a beautiful sounding word."

The French man says, "True, but Papillon, the French word for butterfly, is even more beautiful."

"What's wrong with Schmetterling," asks the German?

The sun finally came out. The first *Clodius Parnassians* of the year burst out of the vegetation on all sides. Pale Tiger Swallowtails, Western Meadow Fritillaries, and Margined Whites cruised the roadside. An early Lorquin's Admiral appeared out of thin air, and a late Spring Azure rose up the slope into Ocean Spray. Suddenly a bronzy little skipper materialized flittered past my feet, and I determined to find it.

A remarkable, sunny April had seen eight species of butterflies in our Gray's River garden, unprecedented so early, but May came cloudy and cool. The first bright day of June, you couldn't keep me in. I was crossing northern Pacific County via the remarkably isolated village of Brooklyn. As the delinquent sun warmed the morning, I paused at a seepy roadcut beneath a recovering clearcut, where the impatient butterflies were making up for lost time. But where was that skipper?

For many butterflyers, documenting distribution makes up a major part of our fun. When you spot a creature beyond its previously known range, you add a new quantum of natural history knowledge. Acquiring range data also makes for stimulating sport. Each datum of occurrence is a record. Finding new county records is something of a big deal among those who care, and a new state record is a really big deal. But this is not just about personal achievement; new finds come from chance at least as often as acumen. It is about participation in the great and worthy enterprise of documenting our butterfly fauna in time and space. What could be more important, if we care about conservation? You cannot conserve something if you don't know where it occurs.

I practice a kind of butterfly science called biogeography—the study of organisms' whereabouts. Learning why a species occurs here and not there, then doing something about it, forms a cornerstone of conservation biology. In the early '70s, I studied with John Heath, originator of the Biological Records Centre's butterfly recording scheme at the Monks Wood Experimental Station in England. The detailed dot-maps that grew out of this project (involving thousands of amateur recorders) led to the restoration of several declining species. A recent paper in the prestigious journal *Science*, based on thirty years of

BRC butterfly data, concluded that we are now well embarked on the world's sixth great extinction event, as demonstrated by the British butterfly trends.

So you see how important records can be. But records must be accurate to be useful, and inaccurate records are worse than none. This is because the basic unit of biogeography is the dot on the map. If our faith in the reliability of dots is shaken by the reporting of bad records, the whole system falls apart -- for if any one dot is unreliable, how can you trust all the others? For this reason, Lepidoptera recorders have set the bar high for acceptable records, and rightly so: a soft standard leads to bad maps, which give a distorted sense of any given species' distribution—meaning lost opportunities for critical protection.

This is why conservationists and scientists so vigorously oppose the practice of butterfly transfers and releases for weddings and other events. When people toss butterflies around the countryside willy-nilly, recorders have no way of knowing whether a particular record is reliable or not. The first San Juan Island Monarchs were recorded last year, but we have no way of knowing whether they were natural or introduced by a misguided wedding party or a well-intentioned school class. If we cannot trust Monarch records, how can we understand their migration, and how to conserve it? Likewise, the release of thousands of Painted Ladies by schools has ruined our understanding of that species' complex movements. A worthy future project for WBA would be to work with Washington teachers to provide locally originating butterflies for classroom use.

Historically, an acceptable record required a voucher specimen deposited in a recognized collection. This remains the most reliable way to verify data. Recorders reject many sight records for the simple reason that we all make tentative calls and even outright guesses on our sightings. Hopefulness can easily inspire an unwarranted state of certainty: we see what we want to see, be it Bigfoot or butterfly. A wrong call does no harm on a personal day list, but if it lands in the formal data files, our understanding and response to population trends can be seriously impaired. Without a voucher, no one can go back

and check the record after the fact. But with the rise of butterfly watching, many spotters have neither the means nor the desire to collect specimens. And while collecting very seldom damages insect populations, listed species and small populations call for restraint. It would be sad to miss out on the bonanza of new data from watchers as they outnumber catchers; but it would be disastrous to flood the data base with uncertain and sometimes mistaken data points. How to cope with this paradox?

Fortunately, alternatives exist. A good photograph can often take the place of the voucher specimen. Catch-and-release is another option, giving a definitive look without hurting the insect. As for sight records, the same rules apply for butterflies as for rare birds: acceptance requires a very good look, detailed notes for examination, and usually a second observer. But don't expect sight records, or even photographs, to take the place of vouchers for difficult groups such as Euphilotes blues, certain skippers, or the most inscrutable checkerspots.

So who vets and keeps the records? Since the 1960s, Jon Shepard, Jon Pelham, John Hinchliff and I have

been gathering records generated over the past century-plus. These led to Hinchliff's excellent atlases of Oregon and Washington butterflies and to the maps in *The Butterflies of Cascadia*. Today, Ann Potter coordinates the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's digital database. Everyone with supportable data is encouraged to submit records annually to Ann. A proper record includes the date, the observer/collector/photographer, whereabouts of the voucher or photographs and notes, and the precise locality with township, range, and section or lat/long coordinates. Using your record, another person should be able to return to the very same place.

At last I saw it: an Arctic Skipper, instantly recognizable by its ornate gold and silver orbs, nectaring on a freshly bloomed thistle. Though I was just a third of a mile from Gray's Harbor County, it was a Pacific County record. A little way over the line, I netted a big Silver-spotted Skipper, another county record, and happily released the fresh female heavy with eggs. The day continued hot as I skipped from habitat to habitat, bagging lots of records and many unforgettable visions. What fun!

## Member Noticeline

Member Noticeline: This is an "opt in" service for WBA members in which announcements, butterfly related articles, and other WBA information will be sent to you via e-mail. We are very careful to not overuse this method but some very interesting and timely information has been sent.

Just send your e-mail address to: [wbutterflyassoc@earthlink.net](mailto:wbutterflyassoc@earthlink.net) and in the subject slot put: [WBA Noticeline](#). You may "opt out" at any time by sending a message to that effect to this same address.

## September Picnic

Save the date: Saturday, September 25. At 5pm, at Stove 1 at Madrona Park, WABA members, family, and friends will get together for our annual picnic.

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The butterfly is a flying flower; the flower, a tethered butterfly.  
--Ecouchard Le Brun

Margined White – *Pieris marginalis*

Our species profile for this issue is the Margined White, *Pieris marginalis*.



The Margined White belongs to the family Pieridae, which includes the Whites, Marbles, Orangetips and Sulphurs, a worldwide group of butterflies often represented abundantly. Whites often have white wings dorsally punctuated with black markings, while ventrally many species have green or brown markings, particularly on the hindwings. Pierids are mostly medium-sized butterflies which come readily to nectar sources but which also spend a large portion of their time on the wing. Because of their tendency to be constantly moving, many pierids are often difficult to photograph even though they may be very common.

All of our whites overwinter in the chrysalis stage, except for the Pine White in which the egg hibernates. Likewise, all of our species except the Pine White utilize plants of the mustard family as their larval host plants.



The systematics of several of the whites in our region have recently been revised. Our *Pieris marginalis* was previously included in the European species *Pieris napi*, which we called the Mustard White. Currently *P. napi* is regarded as being restricted to the old world, and our North American form has been split into three species, with *P. marginalis* being the only one to occur in Washington State; the others occur further north in British Columbia. The English name "Mustard White" is still applied to a North American species which does not occur here.



The Margined White occurs from the southwestern Yukon and the Rocky Mountains of Alberta, south through British Columbia, Washington and Oregon to California along the coast and along the Rocky Mountains to Mexico. The species has been reported throughout Washington State except for the central Columbia basin, Klickitat County and the San Juan Islands.

The Margined White is multiple-brooded in Washington, with the final brood hibernating as a pupa. Adults emerge early in the early spring, and have been reported on the wing throughout a long flight period from early March through mid October. Eggs are laid on a number of mustard (crucifer) food plants, including cresses and *Arabis*, and larvae can be reared easily on garden cabbage. Like all Pierid eggs those of *P. marginalis* are initially pale yellow becoming orange, spindle-shaped, attached at one pointed end,

and sculptured with longitudinal grooves & ridges. Watercress is one of *P. napi*'s favorite food plants, and adults can be seen hovering around and ovipositing on this aquatic plant even though surrounded by flowing water. The eggs hatch in about 5 days, and the well-camouflaged green larvae grow and mature quickly, pupating into green chrysalides which also mature quickly. The second brood adult butterflies emerge within about 30 days after the eggs were laid.



male

The ventral surfaces of the wings of the first (spring) brood are marked with distinct gray borders along the

veins, against a white (male) or yellow (female) ground color. Subsequent broods lack these contrasting gray markings, with the ventral wings almost pure white or yellowish.



female

Margined Whites are common in Washington and can frequently be found along any woodland path or roadside. They often fly together with the imported Cabbage White, *Pieris rapae*, from which they are distinguished by *P. rapae*'s sooty wingtips. Also, the Cabbage White lacks gray vein edges on the ventral hindwing, making the spring brood of *P. marginalis* easy to separate.

## Blues ID Songs

by Martha Robinson

[Editor's Note: Get out your favorite field guide so that you will have photographs as you follow Martha's songs.]

### Acmon Blue:

Ol' *Plebejus Acmon* was *proud*  
Of his *dorsal* broad *orange* band *loud*,  
His *black* spots were *seen*  
To have *sparkle* and *sheen*,  
But his *forewings* were *not* so *endowed*!

### Square Spotted Blue:

Euphi*lot*es bat*to*ides was *straight*!  
His *cousin*, *Acmon*, second-*rate*. . .  
*Acmon* had his *dots*,  
But *Euphy* had *lots*  
Of the *finest*-made *squares* in the *state*!

### Dotted Blue:

Bat*to*ides had a *twin* they call *Enoptes*,  
They *never* asked, "Did *Mom* and Dad *adopt* us?"  
They *looked* so much the *same*  
That they *made* it quite a *game*,  
"To *dis**tinguish* us, you've *got* to *micro**scop* us!"

### Silvery Blue:

Glauco*psyche lygd*amus sang, *too*,  
Of his *dots* all lined *up* like a *pew*,  
Each *had* its white *ring*  
To *which* it would *cling*  
On the *wings* of Ol' *Silvery Blue*!

### Arctic Blue:

Agriades glandon, our high *roller*,  
He *loved* mountains *and* places *polar*!  
His *cream*-colored halos  
And *median* spots  
Made *nice* warm white *patches* from *various* dots.

### Arrowhead Blue:

Glauco*psyche piasus* still *brags*  
Of his *arrowheads*' *zigs* and their *zags*,  
But the *others* do *cringe*  
At his *checkered* old *fringe*,  
Flitting *'bout* in such *tatters* and *rags*!

### Melissa Blue:

Melissa loved *orange* the *best*,  
She *started* and *she* wouldn't *rest*  
    'Till her *border* was *wound*  
    On her *wings* all *around*,  
And she *said*, "I am *very* well *dressed*!"

### Northern Blue:

Her *sister* thought *orange* too *bold*,  
"That *color*'s too *bright* to be *hold*!"  
    The *orange* with her *blue*  
    Is of *subtler* *hue*,  
Idas *likes* to blend *in* I am *told*.

### Western Tailed Blue:

Everes *amynula* *stewed*,  
"Just *look* for my *tail* you dumb *dude*!"  
    And *yes* there it *was*,  
    With its *Western* blue *fuzz*,  
And *that* was the *end* of their *feud*!

### Eastern Tailed Blue:

Everes *comyntas* said, "*No!*  
Come *here* and don't *look* at my *foe*!  
    I *have* a tail, *too*,  
    And *spots* not so *few*,  
We *Easterners* *put* on a *show*!"

### Spring Azure:

Celastrina *argiolus* the *Great*,  
Thought *G. piasus* second *rate*!  
    That *white* band he *wore*  
    Made *him* look such a *bore*  
That she *never* wore *such* a *mistake*!

She *changed* her clothes *all* through the *day*,  
Off' *starting* with *vague* spots on *grey*!  
    Or *discal* dark *scales*  
    Or *summertime* *pales*,  
Or *dark* marginal *bands* just for *play*!

Some *say* Celestrina was *obsessed*,  
She *wouldn't* wear *less* than the *best*!  
    Her *crescents* she would *sew*  
    A *hindwing* ventral *row*,  
*Hoping* we would *all* be *impressed*!

They *called* her Spring *Azure* for *fun*.  
Her *pleasure* was *second* to *none*.  
    She *showed* up in *Spring*,  
    The *first* on the *wing*,  
And *brought* with her *bright* rays of *sun*!

### Brephidium pseudofea:

(*Brephidium isoptthalma* may be  
substituted according to your taste!)

Pygmy's mom did try  
To teach him how to fly,  
    Down by the marsh  
    She wasn't harsh,  
He just couldn't go very high!

She fed him Sal-i-cornia,  
Though not from Cal-i-fornia!  
They stayed in the East,  
And named the Little Beast,  
Brephidium pseudofea!

His jacket was brown on the outside,  
His sister wore reddish with pride,  
    Their linings grey-brown,  
    Dark fringe all around,  
Did nothing to strengthen their glide!

They looked so plain and so small,  
Their mom couldn't see them at all!  
    So bold hindwing spots,  
    White striations across,  
Their wings she did promptly install!

### Plebejus icarioides:

Plebejus *icarioides* had *one*  
Of the *finest* names *under* the sun,  
    *Icarioides*. . . Boisduval . . .  
    Flow *nicely* down the *hall*. . .  
And mellifluously off the *tip* of your *tongue*!

Life *could* have been *happy* and *fine*!  
If *not* for the *dread* Lupine *wine*!  
    "I *had* such a *name*,  
    and *glory* and *fame*. . .  
But *now* the name, *Common*, is *mine*!"

My *coat* is the *shabbiest* by *far*,  
Of *all* of my *friends* at the *bar*,  
    With *discal* spot, *faded*,  
    Median *haloes* o'er-stated  
My *forewing* spots *look* far too *large*!

## 2004 Field Trips

	<b>Destination</b>
July 10	Reecer Creek Canyon "Big Day", Kittitas County. Members of the Washington Native Plant Society will join us on this trip.
July 16-18	WABA Annual Conference, Omak, Okanogan County
August 14	Dragonflies with Dennis Paulson, location to be announced later.
August 28	Snoqualmie Pass area, Kittitas County

### **HOW TO SIGN UP:**

Anyone can sign up for field trips at any WABA monthly meeting. You can also sign up by contacting Dave Nunnallee at (425) 392-2565.

### **CANCELLATIONS:**

If you need to cancel, please remember to contact Dave as soon as you can so the group does not wait for you at the park & ride.

### **SCHEDULING & WEATHER:**

Weather is always a major factor for planning butterfly trips in Washington, particularly March through June. The key to dealing with weather is flexibility; our leaders reserve the right to make last-minute itinerary changes in order to provide you with the best possible butterfly experience.

On occasion it may be necessary to cancel or postpone an outing if the weather does not permit a viable alternative. The flow of the season is also important, and it may be necessary to adjust some trips to earlier or later dates to best match the seasonal weather patterns. WABA will make every effort to keep you informed of any changes.

### **WHERE & WHEN TO MEET:**

Trips will depart from the Ravenna Park & Ride at 7:00 a.m. unless expressly stated otherwise. The park & ride is located under I-5 at Ravenna Blvd between NE 50th & NE 65th St. We meet in the north half of the park & ride.

On request will also stop at the Issaquah Park & Ride at 7:30 a.m. To reach the Issaquah Park & Ride, take I-90 east to Issaquah, exit to the south via Exit 16, and go 3 blocks. The Park & Ride is on the left.

If you live in another part of the state, contact Dave to make arrangements to meet the field trip group.

### **FIELD TRIP PROTOCOLS:**

All field trips are conducted by carpool. Without the volunteer participation of drivers, the trips are not possible.

If you have a car that you are willing to drive, please have the gas tank full and ready to go. **Remember that passengers are expected to share gasoline expenses.**

All WABA-sponsored field trips are fully insured through our parent organization, NABA.

Please tend to any personal matters, such as getting breakfast, coffee or gasoline, before the departure time so others are not delayed.

The trip leader will collect a voluntary donation of \$5 per person (children under 12 are free) for each field trip to help offset expenses of the organization.

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**Why couldn't the butterfly come to the dance?**

**It was a moth ball!**

## Fifth Annual Conference

### Okanogan County, Where Diversity Has Wings



WABA's Fifth Annual Conference will be held July 16-18, 2004 in Omak, Washington.

Join us as we focus on the butterflies of Okanogan County, the county with the most species in our state. Our field trips will move from valley to mountain habitats, so we'll see species from a variety of life zones.

July in the Okanogan should be a great place to enjoy the bounty of mid-summer butterflies. Come along and see for yourself!

For a registration form and suggestions on housing, please go to the website:  
<http://www.naba.org/chapters/nabaws/conference.htm>

Or call Carolyn Heberlein, 206-633-2313, to get a registration form mailed to you.

### Conference Schedule

<b>Friday, July 16</b>	
7 – 8:15pm	Registration & light buffet at the Courtyard Café, 28 North Main, Omak Washington
8:15 – 9:30pm	Welcome Program.
<b>Saturday, July 17</b>	
	Breakfast on your own
8:30 – 9am	Meet in parking lot of the Rodeway Inn, 122 North Main, Omak for all-day field trip.
9am – 5pm	All-day field trip.
6pm	Buffet dinner in the Courtyard Café
7:30pm	Short business meeting, including election of officers
7:45pm	Keynote Address “Glaciation and Speciation” by Jon Pelham.
<b>Sunday, July 18</b>	
	Breakfast on your own
8:30 – 9am	Meet in parking lot of the Rodeway Inn for half-day field trip
9am – 1pm	Half-day field trip.
3pm	Leave for home

For answers to your questions about the conference, please contact Joyce Bergen, 509-996-7808 or [magpie@mymethow.com](mailto:magpie@mymethow.com). Please register before July 7 to avoid the late fee. Thank you.

### WABA Mission Statement

**The Washington Butterfly Association is devoted to scientific understanding and enjoyment of butterflies and their ecology through conservation and education.**

## Officers/Board Members

Richard Youel	President	(206) 282-3758	mmyarch@earthlink.net
Mary Maxwell-Young	Vice President	(206) 522-2116	mcmymy@u.washington.edu
Gwen Warren	Secretary	(425) 454-9677	jrgwarren@msn.com
Marty Hanson	Treasurer	(425) 392-2458	larmarhan@msn.com
Idie Ulsh	Programs	(206) 364-4935	idieu@earthlink.net
Roberta Roberts	Membership	(206) 932-1976	robertaroberts@quidnunc.net
Jon Pelham	Science Advisor	(425) 697-6654	jppelham@cs.com
Marjorie Kittel	Publicity		mlknfp@yahoo.com
Tom O'Connell	Writer/Reporter	(206) 860-9569	
Jo Nunnallee	Hospitality	(425) 392-2565	davidn@nwlink.com
Carolyn Heberlein	Newsletter/Website	(206) 633-2313	diosa@nwlink.com

NonBoard Position: Bob Hardwick is WABA Research Coordinator, organizing WABA field projects. His phone number is (253) 858-6727.

## Membership Application

### Washington Butterfly Association

The Washington State Chapter of the  
North American Butterfly Association (NABA)

Yes! I want to join WABA/NABA and receive *American Butterflies*, *Butterfly Garden News* and *WABA Newsletter*, as well as other member privileges.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Special Interest (circle): Listing, Gardening, Observation, Photography, Conservation, and Other \_\_\_\_\_

Dues enclosed (circle): Regular \$30 (\$60 outside U.S., Canada, Mexico)

Family \$40 (\$80 outside U.S., Canada, Mexico)

Payment must be in U.S. dollars.

**Mail application form to: NABA, 4 Delaware Rd., Morristown, NJ 07960**

Further information: [wabutterflyassoc@earthlink.net](mailto:wabutterflyassoc@earthlink.net) or call Idie Ulsh at (206) 364-4935.