



Washington Butterfly
Association

G'n^um*

The newsletter of Washington Butterfly Association

Volume 3, Number 3 July—September, 2002

*G'n^um is the official greeting of the Washington Butterfly Association. It is derived from the name of common Washington butterfly food plants, belonging to the genus *Eriogonum*.

WBA Meeting programs: Year 2002

WBA 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.

Note: There will be no meeting in **July** because of proximity to the WBA and NABA conferences.

August 7: Species and Subspecies: The "Whys" of Classification. Jon Pelham

September 4: Share the Wealth: Butterfly slides from several members. Bring your photos or slides to share with the group or have identified. Don't miss this one...it's always fun!

October 2: Introduction to Biogeography as it relates to butterflies. Jon Pelham

Beginners-Only Field Trip

You're invited to join a beginners-only group to try your hand at finding butterflies using a field guide and binoculars, practicing the lingo, and learning how to identify butterflies. You'll visit one of the best butterfly sites in King County, near Fall City for a relaxed learning adventure into the world of butterflies. The only requirement for participants is an interest in discovering what's out there!

The leader is Shirley Sekarajasingham, whose interest in butterflies (and other bugs, plants, reptiles, mammals, etc.) grew out of an active interest in birds. She has been watching butterflies around the world for ten years now. Shirley has returned to live in the Northwest after several years in Southeast Arizona, where she was the founding president of the Southeast Arizona Butterfly Association.

There will be two field trips—Sunday, July 7 and Saturday August 17. You are welcome to join either or both trips. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the downtown Redmond Park and Ride, 8178 - 161st Ave. NE. Bring your lunch (the trip will last until about 2 p.m.) binoculars (if you have them), and a butterfly field guide (if you can). Recommended guides are *Butterflies of Cascadia* by R. M. Pyle, or *Butterflies Through Binoculars: The West* by Jeffrey Glassberg.

If it rains or the sky is overcast the trips may be cancelled. Call Shirley at 425-821-4897 for details and to register. The trip will be limited to 10 participants. There will be a \$5.00 charge for each trip.

2002 WBA Field Trip Schedule

WHERE & WHEN TO MEET (Unless otherwise noted)

Western Washington trips will depart from the Ravenna Park & Ride at 7:00 a.m. unless expressly stated otherwise. This park & ride is located under the elevated I-5 freeway at Ravenna Blvd, (between NE 50th & NE 65th St) and is split in two parts; we meet in the north half.

Eastern Washington trips will also leave Ravenna at 7:00 am, but 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 about 3 blocks. The Park & Ride will be on your left, and we meet on the side nearest I-90.

SIGN UPS, FIELD TRIP PROTOCOLS

Members or non-members can sign up for field trips at any WBA monthly meeting. Members have priority if the trip becomes filled. People can also sign up by contacting the trip leader by telephone. If you need to cancel, please remember to contact the trip leader so another person can take your place, and so that the group does not wait unnecessarily for you at the park & ride.

All field trips are conducted by carpool; without the volunteer participation of drivers the trips are not possible. If you have a car which you are willing to drive, please have the gas tank full and ready to go. Passengers are expected to share in gasoline expenses. Please tend to any personal matters, such as getting breakfast, coffee or gasoline, before the departure time so others are not delayed.

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

The trip leader will collect a non-mandatory donation of \$5 per person (children free) for each field trip to help offset expenses of the organization.

DIFFICULTY

We use trip difficulty ratings to help participants better plan their trips. While most of our trips are suitable for nearly everyone, there are a few which are more rigorous and which require moderate physical fitness.

Difficulty 1 = Easy, mostly by car, minor walking along roads.

Difficulty 2 = Fairly limited amounts of walking, some slopes involved.

Difficulty 3 = Moderate difficulty, up to 1.5 miles walking with moderate slopes.

Difficulty 4 = Difficult. Hiking required, trails or terrain are steep in places.

Difficulty 5 = Very Difficult. Steep, extended hiking on trails or terrain.

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 occasions it may be necessary to

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

LEADERS

The field trip leaders can be contacted at the following phone numbers:

THE TRIPS

July 13 Chumstick Mountain, Difficulty 1

Leaders: Jon Pelham and Dave Nunnallee

Most of us have enjoyed trips to this exceptional area in Chelan County, northwest of Wenatchee. This is some of the best butterfly habitat in the state. With a wide range of elevations from Swakane Canyon to the mountain top, only weather can prevent us from having a fine trip. Well over 50 species of butterflies are possible here.

August 3 Twin Lakes, Whatcom County, Difficulty 1—3 (your choice)

Leader: Dave Nunnallee

Magnificent alpine mountain and lake scenery, together with a virtually unsampled butterfly fauna, promise to make this a thoroughly enjoyable trip of exploration and discovery. Relax near the lake shore, or walk trails through flowery alpine meadows, and help us "discover" this scenic area north of Mount Baker, near the Canadian border. We need four-wheel-drive vehicles with moderate clearance to navigate part of the road. If you can drive such a vehicle please consider volunteering.

August 10 Kachess Ridge, Difficulty 4

Leader: Dave Nunnallee

We will drive on back logging roads to the 5000 foot ridgetop between Lake Kachess and Lake Cle Elum in Kittitas County, where the road ends in an old clearcut. Good trails, but very steep in places, will take us about 1.5 miles into the ridgetop virgin forest and to some scenic, hidden wet meadows. This area is virtually unexplored for butterflies. The habitat looks very good, so we should find some nice surprises while we explore this exciting and scenic new area.

September 7 Mount Townsend, Difficulty 4

Leaders: Jon Pelham and Dave Nunnallee

WBA has previously visited Mount Townsend on the northeast Olympic Peninsula, but this time we intend to hike a significant distance up the main mountain trail. This is a classic alpine Washington butterfly locality, with a number of subspecies that are found only in this area. The trail has been described as "unrelenting" in its climb up the mountain, but the butterflies, wildflowers and scenery should make it worthwhile. This area is just outside of the national park, so nets are permitted.

Confessions of a Beginning Butterflier: Dragonflies by Tom O'Connell

There's a three-step transition dance which I've noted many of us butterflyers step to. First, we were intrigued by birds and became birders. Second, we observed that butterflies have many of the same charms as birds and — slide and step — we found that we had become butterflyers. Third, while birding and butterflying in wetland

areas we noticed those amazingly colorful creatures called dragonflies. Could we possibly identify and list those quick-flying beauties as well? Could we become DRAGONFLIERS?

Since these musings of mine are called "confessions", let me here confess that I have decided to give dragonflying a try this summer.

Hold on there! Back up! This decision on my part does NOT imply disloyalty to butterflies. Not at all. It doesn't mean I'm going to stop trying in my beginner's fumbling way to identify butterflies and to add new ones to my life list. No, I'm simply responding to the phenomenon just mentioned. I have noticed on a number of occasions when I've been searching watery places for butterflies that I can't seem to locate any butterflies—or certainly not any NEW butterflies. But nearby I see lots of gorgeous dragonflies (or could they be DAMSELFLIES?) flitting happily over the water and along the shoreline. Well, they have seduced me.

So, I now have three helping guides that I have been furtively assembling. Furtively?? Well, yes, I confess that the butterflyer in me has felt just the slightest touch of guilt, but the experienced sinner in me is determined to overcome it. My three guides are: (1) Dennis Paulson's nifty booklet *Dragonflies of Washington*; (2) Sidney Dunkle's chock-full *A Field Guide to Dragonflies of North America*; and (3) an intriguing article by the same author in the Summer 2000 issue of American Butterflies entitled "The Many Joys of Dragonflying." (The fact that this article appeared in our very own magazine encouraged me in my secret plan.)

You might say that I ought to have waited at least until I could justifiably discard the adjective "beginning" before my title of "butterflyer." Shouldn't I perhaps have confined myself to the butterflies for a few more seasons?

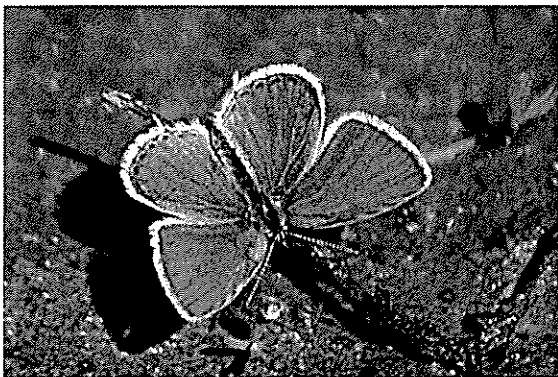
Well, my response is that after due deliberation my fellow WBA board members have given me permission to take this seemingly drastic step.

So there.

Western Tailed Blue - *Everes amyntula*

by Dave Nunnallee

Note: All photos are by David Nunnallee.



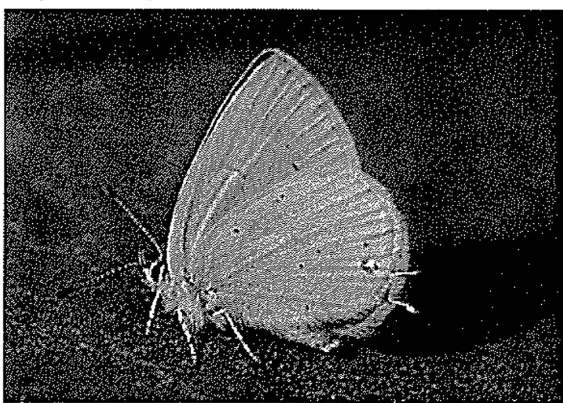
Adult-Dorsal View

Our species profile for this issue is the Western Tailed Blue, *Everes amyntula*. The Western Tailed Blue belongs to the family Lycaenidae, the large worldwide family of butterflies which includes all blues, coppers, hairstreaks and metalmarks. Lycaenids are typically small, nectar-feeding species, prone to mudding on sunny days. In the portion of the group which we call "blues" the dorsal wing coloration is typically blue in males and brown in females, while both sexes have a

whitish to grey ground color ventrally, punctuated with dark spots or lines and sometimes orange spots or bands. In Washington there are 42 species of Lycaenids, 16 of which are blues.

The Western Tailed Blue is a common species in Washington, especially in meadows and along roads or other clearings in forested areas. Look for this pretty blue butterfly when the spring wildflowers are in fresh bloom, but remember that the tails are easily broken and often missing. Watch for this species in mixed aggregations of blues at mudding areas, or seeking nectar at flowers.

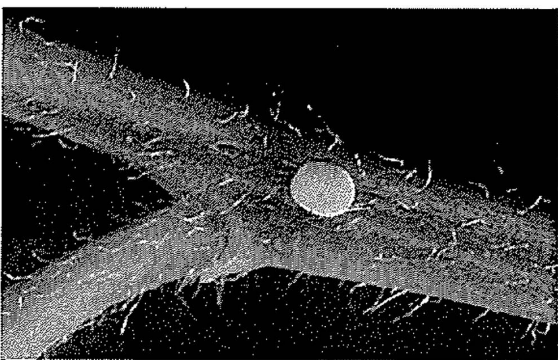
The Western Tailed Blue occurs throughout much of Alaska, and south through western Canada and the western USA, extending slightly into Mexico. The species does not extend very far east of the Rocky Mountains in the US, but in Canada its range sweeps much further east to the Great Lakes.



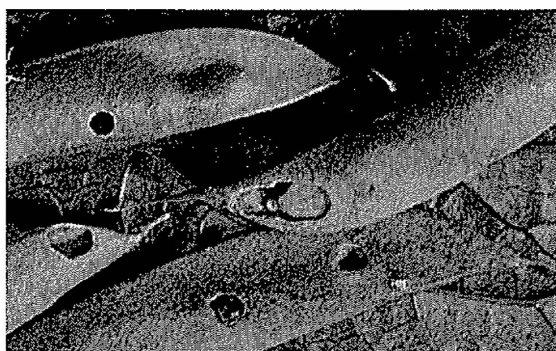
Adult-Ventral View

The Western Tailed Blue first emerges in Washington in late March or early April and can be found through mid-July at higher elevations. The species is regarded as single-brooded this far north, but outlier sightings into late September strongly suggest that a small portion of the population may be double-brooded. The species overwinters as a mature larva or chrysalis, although reports in the literature are somewhat contradictory.

The eggs are small, white or light green, of typical Lycaenid shape (like a squished tennis ball), and are laid singly at the base of flowers where pea pods will soon grow. In this area the favored food plants are Vicia



Egg



Larvae on Lathyrus pods

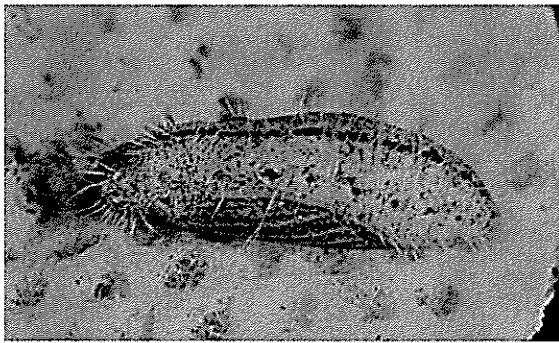
(vetch) and Lathyrus (wild sweet pea). When the larvae hatch they bore into the pea pods, eating both the pod and the internal peas. Contrary to reports in the literature, they do not always seal their entry holes, and in fact may sometimes be found feeding on the exterior of the pea pod.

The larvae are pale green with short white hairs and a two-tone white and brown ventrolateral line. At maturity the larva turns brown and enters diapause, its

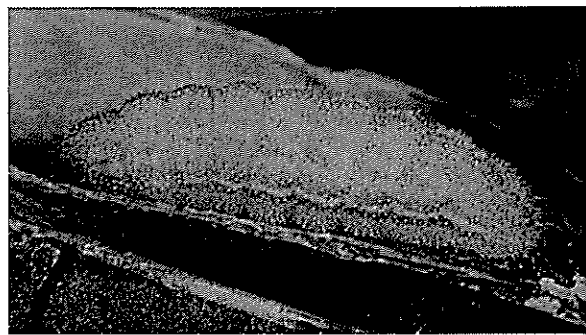
hibernation stage. It is unclear whether the larva always pupates the following spring, or if it sometimes does so in the fall, but it is likely that both strategies are used on occasion.

The eggs of the Western Tailed Blue can be found by carefully examining the base of Lathyrus blossoms and nearby plant stems while the plant is in full bloom. Later the larvae can be found on the same plants by examining the pea pods for small round entry holes. Other insects also bore into such pods as well, although a single plant is seldom host to more than one species.

The Western Tailed Blue, and its sibling species the Eastern Tailed Blue, are the only blues with tails in Washington. Some hairstreaks may be dark blue dorsally and have tails, but they do not rest with their wings open as the Blues often do.



Pupa



Mature Larva on Lathyrus

In Washington the Western Tailed Blue is very pale ventrally, sometimes almost pure white, with a few distinct small black spots and a distinct orange "thecla spot" near the tail. In other regions the species may be darker on the ventral side. The males are bright blue dorsally with a white fringe, and females are brown with a distinct reflective blue cast and a row of black-on-white marginal spots along the dorsal hindwing margin.

The Eastern Tailed Blue is very similar but is darker ventrally, with more pronounced black spots, and is confined to the far eastern and northeastern parts of Washington.

Book Review: *The Butterflies Of Cascadia*, by Robert Michael Pyle

Reviewed by Tom O'Connell

WBA butterflyers now have two fine new field guides to use in the field as we try to identify our butterflies. In addition to the recently-published *Butterflies Through Binoculars: The West*, we now have Bob Pyle's *The Butterflies of Cascadia*. The *Cascadia* book has several unique advantages over any other guide.

First, it treats only the butterflies of our own area, essentially Washington, Oregon and the peripheries. So that means that there are fewer species to thumb through as we try to figure out which one we've found in the field. Second, this is a book to STUDY. I have spent hours with it already even though as of this writing I have not yet had a chance to use it in the field. I have already got more than my money's worth in learning from it. For a field guide it has an enormous amount of information about

each species, including the kind of information one wants the minute one has identified a butterfly. ("It's MINE! Now, let's see what makes it so SPECIAL.") It is a book to study before and after butterfly searches.

That brings us to the third and related feature that's special about this guide: we get so much of Bob Pyle. For each species there is a "Remarks" section, printed in blue so we can't miss it. Here we have Bob's engaging ruminations about this butterfly: history, geography, ecology, humorous metaphor, personal anecdote, whatever he wants to share with us. Remarking on the fleet-flying Western Pine Elfin, which in some places in Cascadia is seen with the slower-flying Brown Elfin, he says: "When Browns and Pines fly together, it is a case of a prop job and a jet with vertical takeoff." Now, wouldn't you love to see that?

In addition to Bob, who is an Advisory Member of WBA, a number of WBA stalwarts have played roles in the making of the *Cascadia* book, as Bob with typical generosity acknowledges at length. They run from Jon Pelham, Bob's earliest Washington butterflying buddy and WBA's Science Advisor, to Richard Youel, who saw the book through its final stages. Much credit goes to both our founding president, Idie Ulsh, and our Vice President, David Nunnallee, who between them produced something like half of all the splendid butterfly photographs. Idie is also responsible for the gracefully-written Foreword and, from WBA's perspective, has been the spirit behind the book as it was being created.

The book is a gem and WBA can be proud.

Butterflies and Blooms Returns to Woodland Park Zoo

Back for its fifth year at Woodland Park Zoo, the "Butterflies and Blooms" exhibit displays nearly 1,000 free-flying butterflies, representing at least 15 and as many as 50 species of North American butterflies, as well as flowering plants and an outdoor conservation garden. Visitors view the butterflies by walking through an "immersion landscape" located in two greenhouse-like structures that enclose a variety of habitats including a woodland clearing, meadow's edge and open meadow. Trees, shrubs and flower combinations have been selected to provide butterflies with a wide range of behavioral choices. The exhibit includes eclosion boxes that house pupae. Visitors can observe recently emerged adults perched on a nearby tree as they dry and expand their wings. For those interested in native plants and gardening, an outdoor landscape features a demonstration garden of hardy plants in the Pacific Northwest. Zoo horticulturists, docents and other volunteers are on hand to answer specific questions. The cost is \$1.00 in addition to zoo admission.

WBA Nominates Officers

WBA has nominated officers for election at the 2002 Annual Conference. Richard Youel was nominated to be WBA's President; Dave Nunnallee to be Vice President; Marty Hanson to be Treasurer; and Mardell Moore to be Secretary. At the time this *G'nun* is going to the printer, nominations are closed, but the election has not been held, so we'll congratulate the new officers in the next issue.

Officers/Board Members

Idie Ulsh	President/Programs
Dave Nunnallee	Vice President
Richard Youel	Secretary
Spencer Smith	Treasurer
Käthe Watanabe	Special Projects
Jon Pelham	Science Advisor
Tom O'Connell	Writer/Reporter
Jo Nunnallee	Hospitality
Vivian Gross	Conference Coordinator
Maureen Traxler	Newsletter

NonBoard Position: Bob Hardwick is WBA Research Coordinator, organizing WBA field projects.

Membership Application

Washington Butterfly Association

<https://wabutterflyassoc.org/membership/>
