



Washington Butterfly
Association

G'num*

The newsletter of Washington Butterfly Association
Volume 3, Number 4 October—December, 2002

*G'num 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*.

President's Message

Richard Youel

I am honored to be elected president of the Washington Butterfly Association and I am excited as we start a new year. It has been gratifying to observe our young organization take root and grow. We should all take pride in building a good foundation for it and infusing it with vitality. Our nurturing and care in these youthful years of our organization are important to insuring continued growth and development. We are at a point where we can make significant contributions in shaping a strong future for WBA. I hope you will feel free to contact me with your ideas for strengthening existing elements or for expanding with new endeavors.

Butterflies are a rich world of visual beauty and scientific wonder. They lead us on a path of learning and enjoyment into parts of our world we might not otherwise know. Exploring is fun to do together and I am looking forward to exploring that path with you.

Upcoming WBA Meeting Programs

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.

October 2:	Introduction to Biogeography as it relates to butterflies. <i>Jon Pelham</i>
November 6:	The world of Dragonflies: Identification tips on local damselflies and dragonflies. <i>Dr. Dennis Paulson</i>
December 4:	Wood Nymphs and Ringlets. <i>Jon Pelham</i>
January 1:	New Year's Day—No WBA meeting.
February 5:	Rearing and photographing immature stages of butterflies. <i>Dave Nunnallee</i>
March 5:	Symbiotic relationship between butterflies and ants and the families which use this relationship. <i>Dr. Merrill Peterson</i>

Washington Has Two New Butterflies

by Robert Michael Pyle

Science just won't stand still. No sooner had we settled into a current picture of our butterfly fauna in *The Butterflies of Cascadia*, than two more species came to light.

The first had been predicted for discovery in the near future. Introduced ca. 1910 in Ontario, the European Skipperling (*Thymelicus lineola*) has been spreading ever since. Overwintering as an egg (unusual in monocot skippers), and favoring timothy as a host plant, the butterfly can easily be transferred with loads of hay. Not only does it spread along an advancing front, but new colonies can hopscotch across the countryside, hitching a ride

on hay trucks. At least two prior introductions were known in British Columbia, and Merrill Peterson had seen them north of the border along the freeway. So on Friday, July 12, Thea Pyle and I investigated several sites along the BC-WA line in search of the Essex Skipper, as it is called in the UK. Failing to find it in the nectar-rich but close-cropped Peace Arch International Park, we extended our search eastward.

Just east of Blaine, D Street crosses a major north-south powerline. Rights-of-way, if not sprayed, may furnish excellent butterfly corridors. As soon as I left the car, I saw the first skipper, and Thea -- after a run-in with a cable across the access road -- netted it. This was apt, since she had previously found the first European Skipperlings in both Idaho and Montana in 1991. There were hundreds on the wing, all fresh males, some still drying wings, so we'd arrived early in the flight. They nectared on white clover, hawkbit, bramble, and other weedy flowers, and fluttered slowly. While it does have a higher gear, this species flies much more weakly than most tawny skippers. Compared to the Woodland Skipper, so common in the late summer and fall, *T. lineola* appears about half-size and half-speed. We found individuals east through the berry fields and pastures to Sumas and south to the Nooksack River northeast of Bellingham, so the colonization has already taken in a good chunk of northwestern Whatcom County. I suspect it may reach the Everett-Seattle area within three to five years.

The next addition, the Queen (*Danaus gilippus*), came in triplicate. The only previous Cascadian Queen had been spotted by Dana Ross in Harney Co., OR, in August, 1999. The first of three Washington records was spotted and photographed by writer Rob McNair-Huff on the afternoon of August 18, 2000, as it visited a spent mullein plant and then nectared on a flowering shrub in his North Tacoma yard. Rob later mentioned his find to Idie Ulsh, who encouraged him to report it, thus establishing the state record. Lepidopterist Dennis Streng netted a second Queen, a slightly worn male, while monitoring Monarchs among showy milkweed in Leslie Groves Park along the Columbia River in Richland on July 27, 2002. Then Charles Rogers netted a fresh female on August 26 -- also in Leslie Groves Park. Since these were too far removed in time to be siblings, at least two generations of Queens must have occurred there this year: July immigrants with August offspring, or perhaps a June immigrant yielding two broods.

How should we regard these new arrivals, one an alien, the other an exotic stray? Queens are not normally (or legally) used for commercial release; the Tacoma one might have escaped from a butterfly house, or have come up the coast or the Willamette-Puget Trough. The Richland Queens may well have arrived under their own steam via the Snake River, which Monarchs use extensively. The incidence of northeastern Queens is increasing, and we may see more here as summers grow hotter. As for the European Skipperling, I find it a positive addition -- unlikely to harm native fauna or flora, attractive, interesting, and capable of extreme abundance such as we seldom see. The Washington butterfly list now stands at 147, more or less. Maybe we'll hit 150 yet.

Golden Hairstreak- *Habrodais grunus*

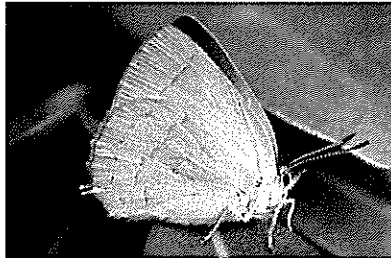
by David Nunnallee

Note: All photos are by David Nunnallee.

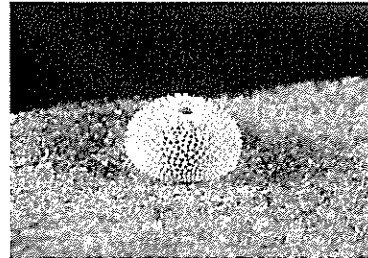
Our species profile for this issue is the Golden Hairstreak, *Habrodais grunus*. The Golden Hairstreak belongs to the family Lycaenidae, the large worldwide family of butterflies which includes all blues, coppers, hairstreaks and metalmarks. Lycaenids are typically small, nectar-feeding species. The Golden Hairstreak is unique among Washington's Lycaenids in several respects. It flies very late in the season; it is said to be crepuscular, flying at twilight and early morning, and often in shade; and its larva feeds on a plant used by no other Washington

butterfly. It is also somewhat larger than most other Lycaenids, and it is the only American butterfly placed in the genus Harbrodais.

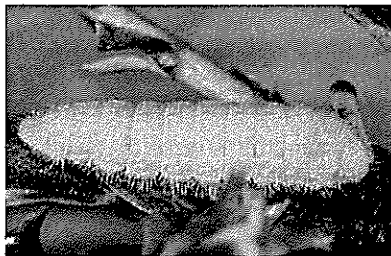
Why all these unique features? Because the Golden Hairstreak is an outlier, a far north extension of a group of butterflies with tropical affinities. It really has no close relatives in this region.



Adult Golden Hairstreak



Golden Hairstreak Egg



Fifth Instar Larva



Pupa

The Golden Hairstreak flies only where its food plant, the Chinquapin tree, occurs in Washington. The range of this tree is severely restricted in Washington occurring only in two tiny areas, one in Skamania County near the Columbia River Gorge, and the other along western Hood Canal. The hairstreak is known only from the Skamania County site. Further south in Oregon and California the Golden Hairstreak also feeds on several species of oak and is more widely distributed. As Garry Oak is not among the species' foodplants, the Golden Hairstreak has not expanded into the oak groves of Washington.

Because of its food plant restrictions, the Golden Hairstreak is one of Washington's rarest butterflies. It is found flying late in the season, long after most other hairstreaks have completed the adult portion of their life cycles, and only in the immediate vicinity of Chinquapin trees in a tiny area of Skamania County near Willard. Thanks to the efforts of Robert Michael Pyle and others, the Forest Service has inventoried and is now protecting the few remaining Chinquapins rather than eradicating them as junk trees as previously planned.

The Golden Hairstreak is well named, as the egg, larva, chrysalis and adult are all pale yellow to golden in color, closely matching the color of the underside of the Chinquapin leaf. Like all six of our hairstreak species of the genus *Satyrium*, the Golden Hairstreak overwinters in the egg stage. The egg is placed on the underside of the Chinquapin leaf very close to the edge and often near the stem. A tiny black wasp is known to parasitize some of the overwintering eggs; parasitized eggs appear to hatch several weeks later than healthy eggs, with winged wasps emerging directly from them.

Our tiny database of Washington information indicates that the healthy egg hatches in mid June and the yellow larva "feeds up" quickly on tender new terminal Chinquapin leaves, quickly pupating to a golden chrysalis anchored by a silk cremaster at one end and a silk girdle strand in the middle. It appears, again based on very limited information, that the butterfly may remain in chrysalis for quite a long time, perhaps a month, before emerging as an adult butterfly in mid August. Unconfirmed and tentative reports of Golden Hairstreak sightings as early as June warrant further investigation however.

The Golden Hairstreak adult should not be confused with any other Washington butterfly. Its relatively large size, golden color both dorsally and ventrally, and hairstreak "tails" render it unique in appearance. Fresh adults also have subtle reddish-orange markings on the ventral wing surfaces, forming two parallel broken lines of dashes across the middle and outer edge of both wings.

Confessions of a Beginning Butterflier: NABA Conference at Bend, Oregon

by Tom O'Connell

Bend, Oregon, July 18-21, 2002: Ten of us WBA members got to enjoy the NABA national conference in Oregon just three weeks after our own chapter conference. Ten representatives was by my count more than any other chapter could claim. Even the LANABAs (from the Los Angeles region) were less numerous than us WBAs.

Those folks from other places really seemed excited at seeing some of what seem to us to be ho-hum butterflies. One huge STAR was the Lorquin's Admiral, for example. But the surprising find was the Mexican Cloudywing, a lifer for just about everybody, including Bob and Thea Pyle.

The national gathering, about five times the size of our own, was like ours in that people were wonderfully open and friendly. Most of them were like our members in being what might be called "generalist-naturalists," folks with broad interests in all kinds of flora and fauna. In general, they are better butterfliers than we are. That's to be expected; most of them have been butterfliers longer than most of us. It showed. I was particularly impressed by how many of the women, both young and older, charged into the field at every stop, confident that even far from home they could identify whatever they came upon (most of the time they could, too.) Both women and men also had more equipment around necks or in pockets or strapped on in some way or other: elaborate cameras, binocs, field guides, magnifying glasses and other devices that I couldn't even guess about.

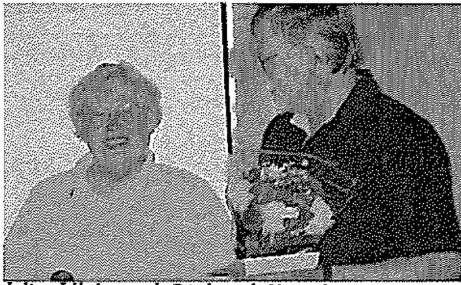
But no nets. No, indeed, not a net in sight. Most of our WBAs didn't need nets because we knew most of the butterflies so close to home. Some of the strangers, though, said that they could have used nets since most of the flitting beauties were new. Then again, they had ten new WBA friends to help them.

Even I helped out a couple of times.

It's Not Too Early to Plan for WBA Holiday Party

The WBA Social Committee is already busy planning the second annual WBA Holiday Party. It will take place on the evening of Saturday, January 11, 2003 at Jon Pelham's home in Shoreline. The 2002 party was a big success—lots of fun, lots of people, lots of presents. It's an excellent opportunity to get to know your butterflying companions better, and postpone the post-holiday doldrums. More details will come in the next issue of *G'nnum*.

WBA Elects New Officers



Idie Ulsh and Richard Youel at 2002 WBA Annual Conference. Photo by Marty Hanson.

Washington Butterfly Association elected new officers at the Annual Conference in The Dalles, Oregon last June. Idie Ulsh retired as President after guiding WBA through its formative years. Richard Youel will serve as President for the coming year. Dave Nunnallee will continue as Vice President; Mardell Moore was elected Secretary; and Marty Hanson will serve as Treasurer.

If you have any questions, suggestions, kudos or concerns about WBA, feel free to contact the officers or any other of the Board members listed on the back of this issue of *G'nnum*.

A Note from WBA's First Past-President

by Idie Ulsh

I wish to express my deepest thanks to each member for making this organization what it is. Your gifts of bouquets of flowers and the gift certificate touched me deeply as I left office. It caused me once again to reflect on the wonderful assortment of individuals which this organization has attracted. Thanks to each of you for your kindness and support.

Idie Ulsh at WBA Annual Banquet, June 2002.

Photo by Marty Hanson



WBA Tee Shirts

Beautiful and stylish WBA tee shirts are available! Two designs can be ordered: a bright blue shirt with an Indra Swallowtail design and the WBA name; and a dark green shirt from the 2002 Annual Conference with a California Sister design. Shirts are \$15.00. If you'd like a shirt, contact

WBA E-Mail Notice Line

Here's a reminder about WBA's notice line. Members can use WBA's e-mail address () for several conveniences: Report local sightings you feel might be of interest to other members; Receive notice of local sightings that might be of interest to you; Ask butterfly-related questions; Be notified of special WBA program events such as the holiday party, book or tee shirt sales, and room or program changes for our monthly meetings.

Back Issues of *American Butterflies* Sought

WBA is starting a collection of the back issues of the North American Butterfly Association publication, *American Butterflies*. Issues will be available for members to borrow. If you have copies of past editions of *American Butterflies*, contact Idie Ulsh at

Officers/Board Members

Richard Youel	President	
Dave Nunnallee	Vice President	
Mardell Moore	Secretary	
Marty Hanson	Treasurer	
Idie Ulsh	Programs	
Käthe Watanabe	Membership	
Jon Pelham	Science Advisor	
Tom O'Connell	Writer/Reporter	
Jo Nunnallee	Hospitality	
Mary Maxwell-Young	Social Events	
Maureen Traxler	Newsletter	
NonBoard Position:	Bob Hardwick is	Research Coordinator, organizing WBA field WBA projects.

Membership Application

Washington Butterfly Association

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