



G'nun*

The newsletter of the Washington Butterfly Association

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

Three girls at the Annual Conference in Ellensburg.
(R. Johnson)



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Upcoming Programs

September 6, 7:00, Seattle: Share the Wealth

September 20, 6:00, Spokane: Share the Wealth

October 4, 7:00, Seattle: David Droppers— Inspiring the next generation of butterfly enthusiasts - How to make a great butterfly course.

November 1, 7:00, Seattle: Caitlin LaBar— Selecting and preparing photos for field guides, covering composition and post-processing; and mapping and recording data.

Trip Reports



Swakane Canyon. (R. Johnson)



Swallowtails Puddle Party, Swakane Canyon.
(M. Weiss)

On June 17th, 16 WBA members visited Swakane Canyon on a field trip led by Dave Nunnallee. The weather wasn't ideal, nor was the rough canyon road, but the butterflies were spectacular. All the rain this winter blessed us with a bounty of water in the area, which meant large numbers of butterflies were puddling in the runoff in this canyon. Someone commented that we should have brought chairs and just sat in awe at the changing patterns of colors, shapes and interactions of the different species. In fact, Jo Nunnallee did so and enjoyed watching the show. We saw 31 species including the Dreamy Duskywing, Common Checkered Skipper and Arrowhead Blue, new species for several people. A new butterfly was detected for this area on our trip, the Pacuvius Duskywing. It was a great day for viewing wildlife in this beautiful area, camaraderie, and, of course, the butterflies.

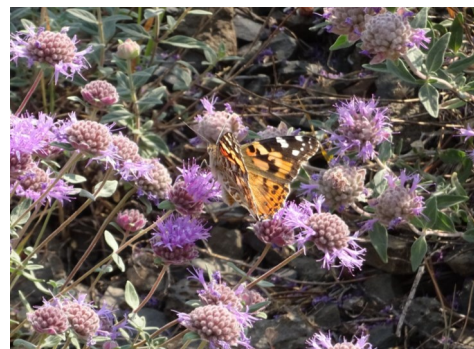
Melanie Weiss



Bethel Ridge on a very hazy day.
(R. Johnson)

On August 5th, a large group of WBA members gathered in an 8-car caravan to drive up Bethel Ridge east of White Pass. The area was still enveloped in Canadian wildfire smoke, so the promised views of Rainier, Adams and Rimrock Lake were invisible. But, the butterflies were not deterred so neither were we. We counted 24 species of butterflies, including 4 greater fritillaries, 3 hairstreaks, and 4 sulphurs, including the Queen Alexandra's Sulphur, uncommon in Yakima County and not previously recorded on Bethel Ridge. While there, we netted 50 Coronis Fritillaries for David James to tag for his migration study. Many more eluded our nets. The same area was revisited by Bob Pyle 10 days later, with an additional 11 species recorded, including both the Large/Common and Small/Dark Wood Nymphs and the Hoary Comma. A very rich area for butterflies!

Regina Johnson



A Painted Lady on Monardella (Coyote Mint) at
Bethel Ridge. (R. Johnson)

Al Wagar has posted videos of the above field trips:

Watching Washington Butterflies with Bob Pyle

Number Thirty

Bob's Big Birthday Butterfly Bash (and the First Washington Butterfly Big Year)

This was a big one, so why not do it up big? You don't enter your eighth decade, your seventh as a lepidopterist, just every day. It seemed only right to play it for all it was worth. Uninclined to bungee-jump or have hot ink stuck under my skin, I opted for The Field—because any birthday spent out-of-doors is better than almost any day spent otherwise.

At first, I was inclined toward a great big wilderness hike, as I had done for my fiftieth and sixtieth. I planned to backpack into Horseshoe Basin to try to see the Labrador Sulphur. But as the date approached, the logistics, the fact that this area is already rather well known, and concern over fires and smoke inclined me in a different direction: how about visiting a number of undersampled areas for day-hikes instead, where I could really make a contribution in terms of new dots on the map? And how about doing it with Dr. David Branch, with whom I try to have a least one good field trip (he calls them our "soirees") per year? David was agreeable: done deal.

My late wife Thea and I, on our last big field trip together, had rambled the southern part of the North Kettle Range, above Rogers Pass. The part of the range still farther north, adjacent to the Canadian border, has seldom been visited with butterflies in mind. So that seemed a good place to begin. And then I had one more thought: why don't we try to see seventy species—one for each year on Pan's Green Earth that I'd be celebrating? So that's what we set out to attempt.



The team: RMP, DWB, and Loke the Butterfly Dog. (David W. Branch)

Here's a rundown of what followed, over the next 34 days.

- July 14: I set out from Gray's River, but had to detour deep into Oregon before I could head way north and east. I was obliged to introduce the new edition of my book *Where Bigfoot Walks: Crossing the Dark Divide* (Counterpoint Press) at a Bigfoot gathering way down the coast, near Alsea. Heading southbound out of Astoria on US 101, I stopped first at the Gearhart Fens, where consummate naturalist Mike Patterson had amazingly discovered Mariposa Coppers south of the Columbia River last summer. In addition to finding the copper, I encountered Dun Skipper, Western and Pale Tiger Swallowtails, Margined White, and Echo Blue, for a good bog-hopping start. I made the Bigfoot confab in time for my talk, but had 360 miles to drive the next day; so I slipped away from the lively campfire and drove to a rest area near Salem.
- July 15: I had to get all the way to Teanaway by dinnertime in order to report on the forthcoming *Butterflies of the Pacific Northwest* at WBA's annual field gathering. On the way, I made one stop in the Columbia Gorge and another on Satus Pass, finding Woodland Skipper, Clodius Parnassian, Two-tailed Tiger, Half-moon, Sylvan, Hedge-row, and Gray Hairstreaks, Acmon Blue, Zerene Fritillary, Lorquin's Admiral, Painted Lady, and Ochre Ringlet. I made it just in time, and co-author Caitlin LaBar helped me introduce the new book (coming from Timber Press in spring 2018). Then I drove to David's place in nearby Roslyn for needful sleep and sweet dreams of days to come.
- July 16: David, his good pooch Loke the butterfly dog, and I set out for the far Northeast. We drove from Roslyn to Republic via the Keller Ferry, where David somehow wangled a brilliant "Geronimo Hot-Shots" tee-shirt from a group of visiting Apache firefighters. Cabbage and Western Whites flew over the lonely Farmer Cemetery like scraps on the wind.
- July 17: Now began the real action. The morning sky was nearly obscured by forest fire smoke, but we drove northeast out of Curlew into the borderlands of Boundary and Togo mountains, Ferry Co., and got above some of it. The only person we saw up there all day was a pleasant Border Patrol agent on a four-wheeler. The rutted little road we plied did not appear on the USFS map, and DB's laptop soon announced: "Welcome to Canada"! Unintentionally, we drove through our Neighbor to the North for several miles, without interdiction by our friend. Our greatest goal for the trip was to seek the Aphrodite Fritillary, known from neighboring B.C. but never yet found in Washington. Netting all the silverspots we could, we recorded lots of Great Spangleds and Northwesterns, and then...yes! A candidate, at least, for Aphrodite (TBD)! In addition, we found European Skipperling (a County

Record), Roadside Skipper, Northern Blue, Green Comma, and Large and Dark Wood Nymphs, before heading back to the Northern Inn in Republic, excited by our possible find.

- July 18: The next day, we essayed outward from Curlew again into another small range, but this time northwesterly toward Vulcan and White mountains. Almost everywhere we went, butterfly numbers were low, sometimes all but absent: presumably a result of the late, wet, cold spring followed by rapid onset of heat and drought. But working hard, we found good diversity. This day delivered up our high total of 30 species, including Clouded, Orange, Christina, and Pink-edged Sulphurs, Blue Copper, Greenish Blue, Western Meadow Fritillary, a rare Great Basin and Hydaspe Fritillaries, California Tortoiseshell, Gray Comma, and a branded skipper. David netted a second Aphrodite candidate. Also very meaningful to us here was finding many examples of the super-dark Mari-
 posa Coppers that I am naming (with Paul Hammond) as a new subspecies in honor of Thea, who first pointed it out to me. We had planned to cross into Canada for a day at Midway, to seek *Coronis* Fritillaries up there. But missing the border station's closing by fifteen minutes, we headed instead to Tonasket, where we celebrated the great day with a big Mexican dinner, margaritas, & (of course) beer; then retired to the Red Apple Motel.
- July 19: This was the Big Day, my LXXth, and so it turned out! We chose to sample Mt. Annie, Okanogan Co., east of Tonasket, new territory as far as we knew. Beautiful if close-cropped green and moist spring-meadows on the way up were more inviting to us than to butterflies. From the end of the road we hiked nearly to the top, where the larch forest closed in. The day's sixteen species included Christina's Sulphur, Boisduval's Blue, and Edith's Checkerspot, as well as an absolutely gorgeous and giant Red Admirable. And, on a thistle, spotted from afar, a Variegated Fritillary—the first Washington specimen ever vouchered, after two prior sight records by John Bauman and Charles Rogers. What a birthday present—I've been seeking it in the state for forty years! We still had time to explore around the top of Bonaparte Lake and across to the pioneer mining hamlets of Chesaw and Molson. The former offered steak and beer in a great old cowboy tavern, and the latter, a poignant border sunset. Back at the motel, a bottle of fifteen-year-old The Macallan came out for my other great birthday present.
- July 20: We had hoped to reach the top of Aeneas Lookout to seek hilltoppers, but found the road gated. Never mind: we winkled out two phenomenal habitats, one weedy and full of thistles and fritillaries, the other rich in native plants including G'nums. Both of them were bountiful with butterflies including Oregon Swallowtails, Anna's Blues, and a far-northern *Coronis* Fritillary. On the Aeneas Road abundant Large Wood Nymphs flew up into the firs when we disturbed them. A quick run up to famous Salmon Meadows found them late and dry, but still sporting a few Cascadia Blues, Dark Wood Nymphs, and Bluebell Tiger Moths. Day's end found us atop Funk Mountain Lookout, where Painted Ladies hilltopped way above blue Lake Conconully.



The butterfly that started it all for RMP:
Vanessa atalanta, the Red Admirable, on Mt. Annie, Okanogan County. (David W. Branch)



Fritillary voucher specimens:
 in search of Aphrodite.
 (David M. Branch)

- July 21: And so we arose in Tonasket for our last day together. Traveling south on the Okanogan River offered mostly sprayed orchards, but we made a getaway up a tiny road onto the Colville Indian Reservation. This brought us to Soap Lake—not the big one much farther south, but a small oasis in the hot dry hills with just two Colville moms watching their kids frolic in the lake, not a man-made device in sight. Also in attendance, Oregon Swallowtail, Becker's White, Purplish Copper, and a Melissa Blue. There was just time after that to get to Gallagher Flats, a backwater basin off the Columbia north of Chelan, which was a favorite wild asparagus site for Thea. She had found the Chelan County Record for the Monarch there, and the showy milkweed-rich site did not disappoint us in that regard, with two males and a female gliding about. The place also brought a probable West Coast Lady sighting, and—at last! —faded Mylitta Crescents plying the rutted track. We returned to David's in Roslyn with somewhere around 57 species for our efforts, depending on some final IDs.

- July 22: That still left me more than a dozen short, so in the morning I took off for points south. In the late afternoon, way up the Little Naches River, I found a meadow with Callippe and Mormon fritillaries. I camped at the very end of FR 1900, just southwest of Naches Pass. With smoke much dispersed by now, the stars over the Norse Peak Wilderness were stilling.
- July 23: A clear morning brought lots of fritillaries and blues over the lupines, and a late Persius Duskywing that would be the day's only new species as I explored many miles of teeny forest roads around the headwaters of the Little Naches. The law of diminishing returns had set in well and truly, but I was making the rules, and I could take as long as I wanted to reach seventy species. Unless it took a year, and then I'd have to make seventy-one!

- July 24: My objective in these parts was big Government Meadows, very near the four corners where King, Kittitas, Yakima, and Pierce counties all meet. I had found my way over tiny Pyramid Pass, just north of the ATV trail over Naches Pass, and went to ground at Horse Camp at the end of FR 70. From there it was a short walk on the PCT to Government Meadows—a vast green expanse of high wet meadow, with far fewer butterflies than it seemed to promise. I did, however, find the Sonora Skippers I was hoping for, and later, a lone Silvery Blue at the top of Chinook Pass with its galaxies of Avalanche Lilies, before I rolled on into Packwood.
- July 25: I always love returning to the Gifford Pinchot National Forest, for which I have a soft spot. This time I found my way up Strawberry Mountain, just NE of Mt. St. Helens. As usual on this trip, I saw no one else at all. Instead, I found lots of Snowberry Checkerspots, and a lovely surprise: a robust colony of Mountain Parnassians at road's end, a significant southwestern range extension from the nearest known colony on Jumbo Mountain in the Dark Divide.
- July 26, 27, 28, and 29: After a day at home in Gray's River to sort out and repack, I drove back into Oregon for a lecture and reading date in Bend and Sisters. Though I saw nothing new on the way, Santiam Pass and much of the adjacent Oregon Cascades were experiencing the largest outbreak of California Tortoiseshells I'd ever seen. The next day, between engagements, I had time to zip up to Dutchman Flat on the side of Mt. Bachelor and find the as-yet undescribed new species discovered by Andy Warren that we are calling the "Volcano Blue", a relative of the Lupine and Acmon. Never mind the fact that I ran out of gas twice that day. I made my dates somehow, and added that one species to the tally. The next day, however, was long- hot, parched, and scant on butterflies, only six species all the way along the Deschutes River to the Columbia, and down the Columbia home. Favorite places were bone-dry, the once-great Maryhill Gardens now derelict and barren.
- July 30, 31, August 1: Two days at home with the usual suspects bracketed a return to the Clatsop County bogs with Mike Patterson. He busted me out of the doldrums by taking me to a fine colony of Anise Swallowtails in the dunes, and to another colony of Eastern Tailed Blues, which are not uncommon in northwest Oregon but have never been found, strangely, in western Washington. Back to my own bed with about 67 species. Would I ever get to seventy?
- August 2, 3: I've always wanted to visit the famous Bigfoot locality, Skookum Meadows on the GPNF, for butterflies. But when I got all the way up there, I found the access roads gated. The one close-enough foot-route in was guarded by a man who told me that a young tribal lad was undergoing a vision quest in the meadow. So I drove to McClellan Meadow and camped on Old Man Pass. Morning brought a beautiful walk all around these wet lonely meadows, very different from Government floristically. They had fair nectar, but almost no butterflies except the Cascadian subspecies of the Mariposa Copper. I spent the torrid afternoon exploring above Ape Cave onto the southern flanks of Mt. St. Helens. Kalama River crossings and roadsides produced twenty species, including an Echo Blue nectaring on tiny snowberry flowers. But I despaired of finding anything new until, bingo! There, on tansy ragwort, just above beautiful Lake Merritt, was a rather tatty but very welcome Silver-spotted Skipper—number sixty-eight!
- August 4-14: My grandson Francis was coming from Milwaukie, Oregon for our annual Grandpa Camp, and I wanted him to get in on the action. Most of the week we played around Swede Park, my home in Wahkiakum County, among the Woodland Skippers, Painted Ladies, wood nymphs, and swallowtails, but we also ranged out by canoe, foot, and auto. On the eighth, we ventured up Radar Hill, a bare prominence over the Naselle River estuary into Willapa Bay. There we found Anise Swallowtails hilltopping, and Hydaspe Fritillaries on thistles.
- Then on the tenth, we took our big expedition, over the North Willapa Hills through the extremely remote village of Brooklyn, down to Oakville on the Chehalis, and back around the Bay to home. We were on the lookout for Pine Whites and Mourning Cloaks; to no avail, but we did enjoy good Lorquin's Admiral gliding over the North River, and Francis found late Clodius Parnassians on the watershed divide. Nothing new, but we made up for it with oysters at Bay Center, which he likes best as shooters, backed by hot chocolate. I preferred the pan-fried, with IPA. Nary an electronic device came out during Grandpa Camp, and when his time came to go home, Francis had exercised the butterfly nets as much as the bb-gun, shooting beer cans.



The first voucher of *Euptoieta claudia*, Variegated Fritillary, in WA: 19 July 2017, 48° 42' 38.51" N, 119° 02' 25.47" W, 3805', Mt. Annie Road, Okanogan Co., WA. (David W. Branch)

- August 15: One last time into the breach. Inspired by David James's report on the 23-species WBA field trip to Bethel Ridge on August 5, I decided to make a visit for myself. Conditions were ten days drier, and I found Cash Prairie almost free of butterflies. But on the way up, little Tieton Pond was delightfully rich in nectar and moist edges, and rife with the bright wings of summer. Walking a little bower between alders and willows along the north shore, I had just said, "what a good place for a cloak," when immediately a big, bright, summer Mourning Cloak flew out and circled my head! I laughed aloud at that. Branded skippers joined the Woodlands and Acmons on pink knotweeds blooming around the shore. And even after six pm, long-elusive Milbert's Tortoiseshells abounded on the wonderful purple mints and asters on the steep road to the tower on Bethel Ridge. Boosted to 69 species by the two tortoiseshells, with one last chance ahead of me, I revived with a salmon dinner down on the Yakama reservation at Wapato. Then, safely across Satus Pass, I camped at Stonehenge, drifting off to the warm breeze and train whistles in the Gorge below.
- August 16: The last day. Walking the handsome curves of the historic Maryhill Loops, I found the prickly yellow star thistle, damned by stockmen but beloved of beekeepers, thronged with Gray Hairstreaks and my first Sachems of the summer: Seventy, at last! Eastward, where dry Rock Creek meets its Columbia backwater, a Viceroy floated over the sandbar willows. Up across the Goodnoe Hills, through windmill country, I found a shred of an old Columbia Dotted Blue on a thistle. At the toe of the Big Lava Bed just before sunset, a single Golden Hairstreak egg on the edge of a chinquapin leaf nicely capped the whole thing off. And so, over a glass of a good Columbia Hills red blend in Stevenson, I toasted the habitats, the sun, and the butterflies themselves—somewhere between seventy and seventy-five species, once we certify all the IDs—that helped me mark seventy years spent largely in their charmed company.



Golden Hairstreak on Chinquapin in Oregon. (Angelique Irvin)

And one final note: Having found well over a third of the Washington butterflies in our single week in northeast Washington, David Branch and I (over a glass or two of The Macallan) rashly decided to undertake the first Washington Butterfly Big Year: stretching from July 15, 2017 to July 15, 2018, instead of the usual January 1-January 1. Why not? One month in, I've tallied nearly half the fauna (DB has a little catching up to do). Will we be able to find the other half over the next eleven months? They include some very difficult and challenging species, which should make for some great soirees afield. Maybe next summer for Horseshoe Basin.... Stay tuned!

2017 Idie Ulsh Scholarship Winners



Alex and mom Gretchen (Kettle Falls)

(photos by R. Johnson)



Kiera and mom Lisa (Bothel)



Tisko and mom Christina
(Lakewood)

2017 Annual Conference, Ellensburg/Teaaway



Gray Hairstreak. (R. Johnson)



Carol Smith, Jim Reed and David James
examine Alex's catch. (R. Johnson)



Kiera stalking the wild frits! (J. Baumann)



Snowberry Checkerspots on Yarrow. (M. Weiss)



David Nunnallee at lower Quartz Mtn. Meadow.
(R. Johnson)

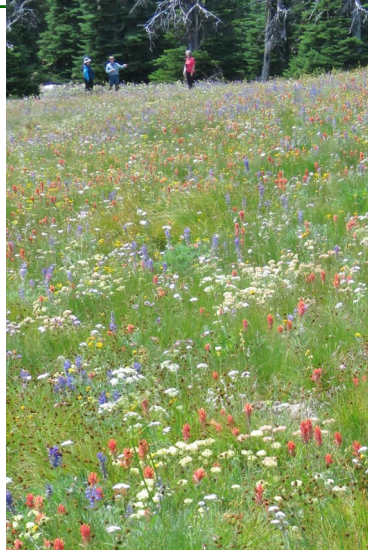


Jon Pelham, David James and Shirley
Sekarajasingham. (R. Johnson)

2017 Annual Conference, Ellensburg/Teaaway



Sheep Moth caterpillar. (R. Johnson)



Lower Quartz Mtn. Meadow.
(C. Clark)



John Baumann found a gray Longhorn
Beetle. (R. Johnson)



Jasmine James' Birthday! (R. Johnson)



California Hairstreak. (M. Weiss)



Regina Johnson found a black
Longhorn Beetle. (R. Johnson)



Halfmoon Hairstreak. (M. Weiss)



"Nothin' Gets By" Alex has a Checkerspot!
(J. Baumann)

2017 Conference/President's Message from David Jennings

Well the 2017 annual conference for the WA Butterfly Association is behind us. From all accounts I have received it was a success. The Swauk-Teaaway Grange was a lovely location and the setting was bucolic. The weather treated us well—not too hot, not too cold. The final species list was quite impressive, a full 50 species of butterflies plus at least 7 species of bumble bees. We had not one, not two but three scholarship winners present, plus last year's recipient returned. I like this trend!

In spite of all of our pre-conference concerns relative to road closures and USFS permit challenges, the field trip leaders did a great job of taking us to lots of beautiful spots full of flowers, moisture and butterflies! While there was a bit of confusion around hotels and lodging, in the end it all seemed to work out.

We had great attendance from around the state—and beyond! We were honored by both Jon Pelham and Robert Pyle attending. We also began our expanded organizational focus on butterfly conservation with an excellent and compelling keynote presentation on *Butterfly Conservation in Washington*, by Dr. David James. The silent auction was a lot of fun and the funds raised will help us moving forward.

This year we had a relatively new board with limited experience organizing a statewide conference. We very much appreciate the patience and understanding shown as we **slowly** pulled everything together—luckily it did seem to come together in the end. Yay!

A lot of individuals deserve credit for making this year's conference a success: David James and Dave Nunnallee as field trip leaders, John Baumann for his leadership as board chair, Melanie Weiss and Maureen Traxler for their help and advice with project management and silent auction coordination; Richard Youel for signs and signage placement, and everyone who pitched in and helped setting up and taking down all the tables, chairs, plus cleanup after Saturday's dinner.

Now, it's time to start planning for next year!

Butterfly Species of Greatest Conservation Needs

Ann Potter (Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife) and David James (professor of Entomology, WSU) have done a wonderful job of kicking off a multi-year program this year to train WBA volunteers and other naturalists to survey five species of Eastern Washington's rarest butterflies, "Species of Greatest Conservation Need": The Juniper Hairstreak, Columbia Basin segregate; The Monarch; the Yuma Skipper; the Silver Bordered Fritillary; and the Meadow Fritillary. In three group outings so far for the 2017 season, we had the opportunity to learn about 3 of 5 of these focal species, the Juniper Hairstreak, the Monarch and the Yuma Skipper. Each group session included a treasure hunt to a known habitat for one or more of these species. Our program began in Spokane in May, with a day's worth of class time on the biology, habitat, and distribution of each species, a review of historical records, and discussion of the need to collect current information to assess their conservation status. The group then travelled to the Juniper Dunes Wilderness for an introduction to the Juniper Hairstreak, *Callophrys gryneus*, Columbia Basin segregate, which our group was not able to locate despite David James' pinpoint accuracy in the field: he recalled best habitats to the nearest juniper tree! More than a dozen additional pairs of eyes were not still enough. On our second training day, June 22nd, Candace Fallon of the Xerces Society, and Ann Potter conducted a classroom training on Monarch butterflies near Vantage Washington, with follow up field time at the Lower Crab Creek Wildlife Area milkweed site where Washington's Monarchs make regular annual appearances. Though migrant Monarchs this year arrived in Washington a little later than usual, the group was very enthusiastic and able to see milkweed in all phenological states, milkweed beetles, and a few adult Monarchs.

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I attended this year's final field training on a trip to Sun Lakes State Park on July 22nd, where WBA members and other naturalists from across Washington converged to the heart of state's picturesque Grand Coulee on a 90-degree morning. Despite withering heat, we persevered long enough to survey three locations in the park for the rare Yuma skipper, *Ochlodes yuma*. Again serving as our guide, Professor David James was very pleased that we found more than 20 of the skippers, mostly taking nectar near their unique larval host, the native *Phragmites* Common Reed. By David's report, this indicated a significant increase in the population from his last visit in 2014, when he had found only ten adults. Adding very much to our enthusiasm was the fact that we found a total of 15 butterfly species at home in this harsh landscape, including Old World Swallowtails and Viceroy's. Some thirty or so Viceroy's were seen. Last but not by any means least, group members saw a total of six Monarchs. David retained two fresh gravid females, whose hundreds of progeny will be raised to adulthood, tagged and released as part of David's ongoing study of northwest Monarch migrations.

Please stay tuned for further information on plans for the 2018 season, when Ann Potter will work with us to sponsor another training on the Meadow Fritillary and the Silver Bordered Fritillary, two small *Boloria* butterflies whose populations also need careful monitoring. We will also continue looking for new populations of the three species we began surveying this season. Your help in this statewide series of treasure hunts will be very much appreciated!

John Baumann

Board Members

President	David Jennings		
Vice President	John Baumann		
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Treasurer	Regina Johnson		
At-Large	Dan Dunphy		
At-Large	David Droppers		
At-Large	David James		
At-Large	Jim Reed		
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Committees

Science Advisor	Jon Pelham	
Membership	Reg Reisenbichler	
Annual Conference	Available	
Field Trips	Available	
Programs	Available	
Publicity/Website	Carolyn Heberlein	
Newsletter	Regina Johnson	
Trip Leader, Central WA	David James	