



Washington Butterfly
Association

*G'nun**

The newsletter of the Washington Butterfly Association

P.O. Box 31317 Seattle WA 98103

<http://wabutterflyassoc.org>

Facebook: Washington Butterfly Association. Instagram: #washingtonbutterflies (anyone can use this hashtag)

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



Carolyn Heberlein



Melanie Weiss



WBA Host



Cheryl Bellin



David J.



paulette



Jim



Regina

The May Board meeting,
in which Jim Reed an-
nounced his candidacy
for the presidency.



John Baumann



Halley Armstrong

Our new president.
Please note that this is
NOT a butterfly.

Upcoming Programs

TBA—stay tuned to the WBA Noticeline

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Gold-hunter's Hairstreak in WA [p 8](#)

Oregon Swallowtail on the Okanogan trip. See page 6. (R. Johnson)



President's Message from Jim Reed

Greetings, Lepiophiles! As the newly elected President of the Washington Butterfly Association it will be my honor to welcome you all to another year of watching, chasing, studying and photographing Washington butterflies. WBA is such a great organization to share that which draws you to Lepidoptera. Be welcome and get involved in our organization if you are so inclined.

As a relative new-comer to WBA (but not butterflying) I undoubtedly will omit some crucial names and their accomplishments, and to those folks I sincerely apologize. As I talk with folks, it seems like it started with our founders, Idie Ulsh, Bob Pyle, Jonathan Pelham, David & Jo Nunnallee and Richard Youel among others. These folks got together in 1999 and founded WBA with Idie being the first president. We have cycled through our membership with many folks donning the leadership mantle since.

I was contacted by Idie in 2013 as she was driving through the tiny town of Klickitat, when she spotted four high-school-age girls wandering through town with butterfly nets in hand. At that point she knew that she had located me and asked if I could help lead a field trip for WBA in the area. Of course I agreed (who could say "no" to Idie) who I had met over ten years earlier. I joined WBA that year under Richard Youel's friendly leadership.

There have been several presidents since then, including John Baumann - who talked me into a Board position - David Jennings and Mary Schu. So now you know the story how I became involved with the WBA Leadership group. Take care and feel free to contact myself or your elected Board members if you have concerns or ideas as to how we can become a better organization. In diapause, Jim

Trip Report: Birding Instead of Butterflying from Al Wagar

With no butterfly field trips, I've shifted my attention to birds. Here are links to a couple of short videos:

2021 Stillwater & Lower Snoqualmie Falls - June 8 <https://youtu.be/6khFWSrp6bU>

2021 Juanita Bay Park - May 21 <https://youtu.be/z0q2YV5Gx8M>

And some stills:

Regina is guessing that these are Common Red Soldier Beetles, *Rhagonycha fulva*.



Eight-spotted Skimmer



Woodland Skipper

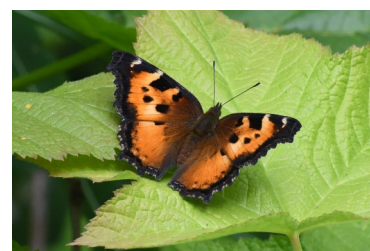
Watching Washington Butterflies with Bob Pyle

Number Forty-four Butterflies in Bigfoot Country

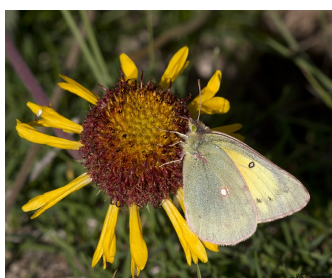
On July 19, for my 74th birthday, I took to the field in the Dark Divide, Gifford Pinchot National Forest, Washington. This is the area described in my book, *Where Bigfoot Walks: Crossing the Dark Divide* (<https://www.counterpointpress.com/dd-product/where-bigfoot-walks/>), and in the feature film based on it, *The Dark Divide* (darkdividefilm.com). This time I was looking for smaller game.

I camped the night of the 18th at Elk Pass on NF 25, just below Mt. St. Helens on its east side, at the parking area for Boundary Trail # 1. The next morning's early sun, warming a big patch of naturalized *Lotus corniculatus* (Birds-foot Trefoil), brought out a male Anna's Blue (*Plebejus anna*) to bask, and then many males and females among the yellow lotus, surely its hostplant here (as it is for acmon blues not many miles away, and for several blues in its native Europe). One fresh female Mormon fritillary (*Argynnis mormonia*) also appeared.

I took NF 25 north to NF 28, east to Mosquito Meadows, which I had long wanted to visit. Driving all four small Forest Service roads that are supposed to circumscribe the meadows, I saw no sign of them, only fir forest; perhaps they have largely succeeded to woods? But the mosquitoes were there, so that's something. (I see on Google Earth now that the main meadow is a little off NF 28 to the south, not visible from the road).



California Tortoiseshell. (M. Schu)



Orange Sulphur. (J. Dammarell)

From here, NF 77 runs northward to Pinto Rock and French Butte. In the first mile, on Pearly Everlasting, nectared a male Mariposa Copper (*Lycaena mariposa cascadia*), and Lorquin's Admiral (*Limenitis lorquini*) and Coronis Fritillary (*Argynnis coronis*) cruised by. Here was also the first of several stands of Naked Buckwheat (*Eriogonum nudum*) I would see throughout the day. In the second mile, the only California Tortoiseshell (*Nymphalis californica*) of the trip appeared. Two miles out from Mosquito Meadows one comes to a climbers' parking lot at the base of the tall and very rugged welded-tuff breccia formation known as Pinto Rock. From here, NF 77 runs due north along and under the summit ridge of Pinto Rock.

The next mile took me a couple of mid-day hours to drive and walk, it was so rich: one of the most rewarding sites for both plants and butterflies I have experienced in years. The rocky slope on the right (east) side of the road was flower-packed, including much Stonecrop (*Sedum* (prob. *divergens*) and *Valeriana*, and ditto for the verge and slope down on the west side (almost in the lap of Mt. St. Helens), including yellow and purple asters and three species of blooming buckwheats: *E. nudum*, *compositum*, and *heracleoides*. These flowery areas alternated with stretches of shaded forest, but kept on coming, along with the butterflies they hosted.



Anna's and Boisduval's Blues with friends Lorquin's Admiral and Field Crescent. (R. Johnson)

Here's what I encountered over this butterfly-and-flower wonder-mile, in order: one small Orange Sulphur (*Colias eurytheme*) sighted, unless it was a Sleepy or Tailed Orange—Occam's Razor! And one Western Sulphur (*C. occidentalis*) netted. Boisduval's and Anna's blues (*Icaricia icarioides*, *P. anna ricei*), both common; Edith's (*Euphydryas editha colonia*) and Snowberry (*E. colon*)

(Continued on page 4)



Purplish Copper. (M. Weiss)

Then came a big rock outcrop with much *Sedum* and a stand of *E. nudum*. As I'd hoped, it supported a colony of Mountain Parnassians (*P. smintheus*, several males), within a quarter-mile of the Clodius. Nectaring on the *Sedum* and sailing up and down the rock face, never in reach except for binoculars, was a pale female checkerspot (*Chlosyne* spp.), surely *C. hoffmanni* from the location and the nearby presence later of several fresh males. Two quite light Field Crescent males (*Phyciodes pulchella*) were alighting on raspberry leaves and chasing everything else. Of course I checked all three buckwheats for blues, and on *E. compositum* I found Blue Coppers (*Lycaena heteronea*), which became common farther along; and one worn, pale female Acmon Blue (*Plebejus acmon*) almost devoid of scintillae. And the butterflies just kept coming.

Beyond this long mile the road crests the ridge and drops onto the east slope of French Butte to continue northeasterly. Here the aspect is entirely different, with fewer flowers and few butterflies other than Coronis Fritillaries in flight and Boisduval's Blues on the



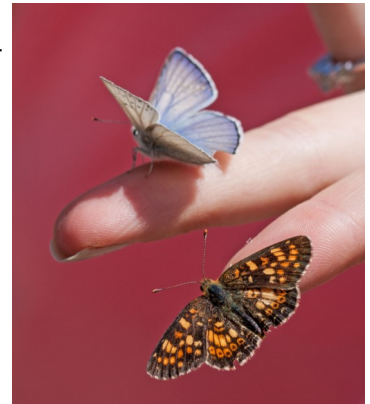
Western Meadow Fritillary. (C. Bellin)

lupines. At one point above a hairpin culvert, a mini-meadow retained a tiny flow, the only water I saw all day except for one sadly shaded puddle. Here appeared a lone, worn female Silvery Blue (*Glaucopsyche lygdamus*) on a horse mint, a surprise addition held over from the spring flight.

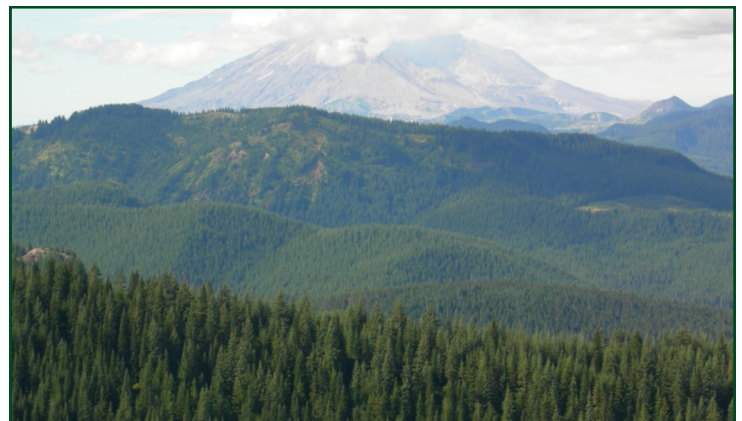
My ultimate objective was the Burley Mountain Lookout, one of only three remaining on the GPNF. This is barely across into Lewis County, all the above being in Skamania. One can drive (dodgily) most of the way to the 5,304-foot lookout, then hike the last bit. There is actually a little bit of subalpine aspect, with cushion plants such as Spreading Phlox (*Phlox diffusa*), and lots of *Sedum*. It was 3 pm, still clear and warm (70s), but breezy. I was surprised how few butterflies were here—I'd expected more, hilltopping and utilizing the pseudo-tundra veg. But the good habitat is

actually very small, it may have been a little late for such a dry year (flowers were going over already), and it must have been devastated in the 1980 blast, as it sits just NE of Mt. St. Helens (the views are fabulous of Mts. St. Helens, Rainier, Adams, all very near, and more distant Hood), plus the rugged juts of the Dark Divide—Juniper, Sunrise, Jumbo, Dark, Hat, Snagtooth, Badger, Shark, Pinto, and others. Plus, there wasn't a hint of smoke on the air. It was strange to look directly down on the Cispus Center, where I have taught many times.

There are a couple of modest stands of *E. nudum* on the summit, but no sign of the Dotted Blue (*Euphilotes enoptes*). Here's what I did see up there: *P. smintheus* (only one), *L. helloides*, *P. anna*, *I. icarioides*, several each of *A. mormonia washingtonia* (very near the type locality), *A. hydaspe*, and *A. coronis*; one Hoffmann's Checker male; and then, right at the west end of the summit on the wind, one Anise Swallowtail (*Papilio zelicaon*)—the only thing



Blue Copper and Field Crescent. (J. Baumann)



Mt. St. Helens (Loo Wit) from Burley Mountain. (R. Johnson)

(Continued from page 4)

hilltopping besides flies, and the only swallowtail I saw all day! *P. smintheus* and *S. mormonia* were the only "alpine" notes on top. I was hoping for Arctic Blues (*Agriades glandon*), as the summits where I'd got the Skamania County records for both Arctic Blues and Mountain Parnassians were just a few miles away and clearly visible, but no such luck. The lookout is no longer staffed, but it's open for visitors to see what life must have been like for a high-country fire lookout. In the visitors' book, I left a list of the butterflies I'd seen up there.

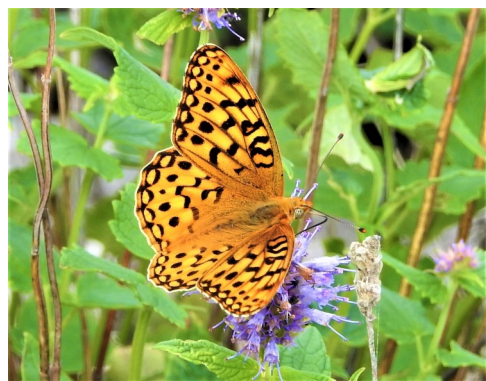
I took the long loopy drive on tiny FS roads down to the Cowlitz River Valley below, trying in vain for a woodland skipper in weedy habitats and White Clover fields around Randle, in the waning warm sun. Then I completed the circle back to I-5 and westward out the Columbia to home. It had been a great birthday with the butterflies, up there in Bigfoot country.



Eriogonum nudum, Ansel Adams
Wilderness, CA. (Jane Shelby Richardson)

Further notes:

The most notable distributional records were for the plant *Eriogonum nudum*, these several new stands being among the most western and southern for this rare species (and *Euphilotes enoptes* hostplant) in Washington. The *P. pulchella* are the southwesternmost record in Washington, and must be one of very few Skamania County records for Field Crescents. The *L. heteronea* are the third Skamania County record, after the MSHNVM finds that both Caitlin La Bar and I have had on *E. nudum*, and the only robust colony of Blue Coppers known west of the Cascade Crest. The *P. smintheus* occurrences at Pinto Rock and Burley Mountain are among very few records in that part of the state, and the westernmost in Lewis County by a good stretch; I'd found it a few miles farther west in Skamania, on Strawberry Mountain, in 2018.



Coronis Fritillary. (D. James)

Argynnis coronis: Coronis Fritillaries were everywhere! I saw hundreds of them, to just one *N. californica*. Coronis Frits are the new Cal Torts! at least this year. And they came in all sizes—from *mormonia*-small to quite hefty. See James & Pelham: <https://bioone.org/journals/the-journal-of-the-lepidopterists-society/volume-65/issue-4/lepi.v65i4.a4/Observations-on-the-Seasonal-Biology-and-Apparent-Migration-of-Argynnis/10.18473/lepi.v65i4.a4.full>

And what wasn't there: interestingly, I saw not a single skipper of any kind all day. Also absent were *Pterourus* (tiger) swallowtails. I also failed to record a single hairstreak of any species, nor any satyrs. While working on this I've just seen my first two Woodland Skippers (*Ochlodes sylvanoides*) of the year in my yard, and a western tiger swallowtail. I'm tempted to consider the field trip still on till I file this, and count them! Even so, I saw, netted, and released 24 species in all – not a high count elsewhere, but most respectable for an old guy in Western Washington!



Edith's Checkerspot. (M. Weiss)



Clodius, left, and Mountain, right, Parnassians. (M. Weiss)

Okanogan Butterfly Adventure! By Paulette Murphy



Meadow Fritillary. (M. Weiss)

We waited for two years, but a recent butterfly field trip to Okanogan County was well worth the wait. At our last WBA annual conference in 2019 Dale Swedberg, former manager of the Sinlahekin Wildlife Area, donated his time to raise money for WBA, offering a guided tour at the silent auction. Melanie spearheaded a group bid, and we were finally able to make the trip, after all participants were confirmed as fully vaccinated. Participants were Melanie Weiss, Regina Johnson, Reg Reisenbichler, Kim Kendall, Cheryl Bellin, Jim Rauh, Kiva (the dog) Bellin-Rauh and I. Since many of us were making a long drive, we decided to make the most of the trip and took several days (9-11 July) in the area. Much of the trip was in areas in which Dave Nunallee had led a Study Weekend trip several years ago, so Kim and Melanie remembered some of the stops and butterflies seen on that trip, and Regina had some familiarity with the roads.

Our first day was spent at three locations in Moses Meadows, located about 15 miles east of Omak. As you might guess from the name, the area is flat, with undulating topography and an elevation over 3400 feet. During the 2015 trip led by Dave Nunallee, Kim netted the Tawny Skipper, a first record for the Sinlahekin. This year, at our first stop, she netted the uncommon Meadow Fritillary, *Boloria bellona*. Way to go Kim! Some of the other species we found throughout Moses Meadows included the Pink-edged Sulfur (*Colias interior*), Northwestern Fritillary (*Speyeria hesperis*), Anicia Checkerspot (*Euphydryas anicia*), Arrowhead Blue (*Glaucopsyche piasus*), and Northern Blue (*Plebejus idas*). The last of these was called out after consultation with Jonathan Pelham. In this area, *Plebejus idas*, *melissa*, and *anna* may not be readily distinguished in the field, but the location and elevation of the sightings suggest *Plebejus idas*.

The next day, during the short wait at our Sinlahekin roadside meeting spot with Dale, we found 10 species, including a Purplish Copper, *Lycaena helloides*. The Sinlahekin Wildlife Area, located in the eponymous valley, is a narrow strip of land stretching north from Conconully Lake for ~15 miles and is managed by the state Department of Fish & Wildlife. The 14,000 acre area is a wonderland of riparian areas, grassland, shrub-steppe, and pine forest, punctuated with cliffs, streams and lakes. Our stops ranged in elevation from 1730' to 2430' and included a potholes area, a higher elevation site, and a meadow site. At the higher elevation site we were fortunate enough to find the Great Spangled Fritillary, *Speyeria cybele*. Although we had already seen the large brilliantly colored and silver-spotted male at other sites, here we also found the female with her deep brown velvet coloring edged with yellow and spotted darkly in a lacy pattern. The sexual dimorphism is extraordinary and it was a wonderful experience to see them both. The temperature at our final site, a low elevation meadow, was well over a hundred degrees F, but we found more Great Spangled Fritillaries in dappled shade, as well as the Oregon Swallowtail and a very large caterpillar, possibly the moth *Acronicta perditia*.



The group working a damp meadow in the Sinlahekin Valley. (R. Johnson)



Anna's Blues, showing both strong and weak markings. (M. Weiss)

Our final day involved a very long drive over very rough roads from Long Swamp to Salmon Meadows, with nine stops through the day. The elevation varied from 3460' to a high point of 6859'. We started the day at North Fork Nine Mile Camp where we found multiple fritillary species (*S. cybele*, *hesperis*, *hydaspe*, *zerence* and *callippe*) as well as a handful of other species. Long Swamp was infested with biting flies, but also blues, fritillaries, swallowtails, sulphurs, and alpine species. The highest spot of the day was Corral Butte where some of us trekked to the top of the butte (6859'), and found Mountain Parnassian (*Parnassius smintheus*), Western Branded Skipper (*Hesperia colorado*), and Persius

Duskywing (*Erynnis persius*). This site was the location where I personally gave up on blue species identification altogether. One of a mating pair was clearly Anna's Blue, *Plebejus anna*. But the other looked entirely different, smaller, with more background coloration and faint spotting. Could they be an example of the fabled cross-species hybridization that the experts tell us may be occurring? A wonderful picture by Melanie, and advice from one of those experts, Jon Pelham, merely revealed the large intra-species variation of *P. anna*, a humbling experience. A bonus stop was next, at a roadside seep where hundreds of blues were mudding, along with a few fritillaries (*S. mormonia* and *B. chariclea*) a Field Crescent, Lorquin's Admiral, Chryxus Arctic and Persius Duskywing. We descended to Thirtymile Meadows at 6150', also infested with biting flies, and found both Vidler's and possibly Butler's Alpines (*Erebia vidleri* and *epipsodea*). Cheryl, Jim and Kiva left us in the afternoon to return home, but the rest of us drove to Lone Frank Pass, stopping for the view as well as late afternoon glimpses of California Tortoiseshell, *Nymphalis californica*, and Arctic Fritillary, *Boloria chariclea*. A long final day, but a rewarding one.

Over the three days, our species total was 53, with two additional 'probables' (Butler's Alpine) and Tawny-edged Skipper (*Polites themistocles*). One of the most common butterflies seen over the three days of our trip was the Mariposa Copper, *Lycaena mariposa*, seen in large numbers and at many locations. Cheryl and Jim made a Herculean effort to find the Freija Fritillary, *Boloria freija*, but the timing wasn't quite right.

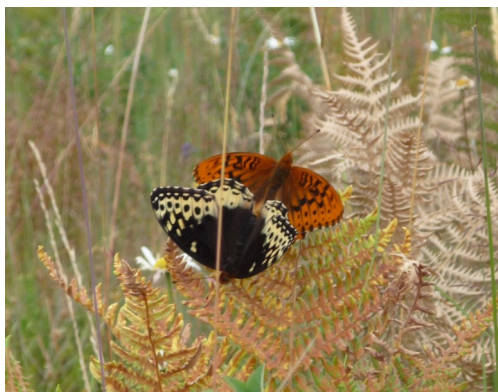
In addition to the wonderful experiences with butterflies, we had an uplifting human experience when a tire blew out on Kim and Reg's vehicle in Sinlahekin. The road was quite gnarly and lightly trafficked, but just as we were figuring out how to lower the spare tire, a young man in an enormous yellow truck appeared and insisted on helping. While his family waited, he took charge and quickly had the spare tire on, waving cheerfully as he roared away, and as we appreciated the marvel of unsolicited human kindness.

We were also fortunate in the timing of our trip. We observed the pall of smoke from nearby wildfires and within days of our return, the state Department of Natural Resources, as well as the Umatilla National Forest and the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, closed all of their lands in eastern Washington. And as we go to press, the Okanogan National Forest has closed FR 39, the road we took from Long Swamp to Lone Frank. Thanks again to Dale for guiding us in the Sinlahekin, to Dave Nunnallee for assistance in preparing for this trip, based on the WBA conference trip that he led in 2015, and also to Cheryl and Jim, who had scouted a number of the areas in advance. We also owe great thanks to Caitlin for all the historical information and work that she has done to document the species found in the Sinlahekin.

(If You Go: FR 38, from Salmon Meadow over Lone Frank Pass to FR 39, is very rough, though not quite a jeep road. You will need, at minimum, all-wheel drive and moderate clearance. No Priuses or Mini Coopers.)



The group marveling at a multitude of mudding blues on FR 39 near Thirtymile Meadows. (R. Johnson)



Great Spangled Fritillary mating pair, Thurston County. (R. Johnson)

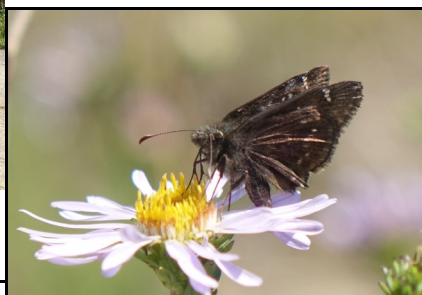


Female Great Spangled Fritillary. (M. Weiss)



Male Great Spangled Fritillary. (M. Weiss)

Persius Duskywing. (R. Johnson)



Anna's Blues, mating pair. (M. Weiss)

A Search for the Gold-hunter's Hairstreak in my own backyard by Jim Reed

It started as an inquiry from Bob Pyle about whether I had found the new butterfly to the Pacific Northwest; the Gold-hunter's Hairstreak. *Satyrium auretorum* had been photographed by a gentleman from Tigard, Oregon at Swale Creek Canyon in my own backyard. What?? Of course not! He must have mistaken a California Hairstreak (*Satyrium californica*) for it. Yet for two years I looked and looked and found several hairstreaks but not the Gold-hunter's.

The Gold-hunter's Hairstreak is a California native found amongst the oak woodland forests in the California Coast Ranges and in the Sierra Nevada foothills. Its caterpillars thrive on Oregon White (Garry) Oak (*Quercus garryana*) along with other oak species. Well, there is no shortage of *Quercus garryana* in the Klickitat River Canyon. Seems possible that it could be here.

The next step was finding out when it flew, not easy considering so very few of us knew that it was here. My first year I looked for it around the first of July but I was too late. I reasoned that the Klickitat River canyon is great butterfly habitat in the spring and about the first of June we get a change over from the spring butterflies to our summer species. In the summer we get Lorquin's Admirables as well as a switch in our Swallowtail population. In the spring, we see Indra and Anise Swallowtails aplenty, but as summer approaches we see the Western Tigers, Pale Tiger, and Two Tailed Swallowtails. In the summer I see very few smaller butterflies because their nectar sources dry up. Only large strong fliers can find the necessary nectar sources.

So this year I reasoned why not start in late May and go through the first week of June to hit both sides of the transition period. So I visited many places along the Klickitat where I had heard that it was often seen puddling on damp river sand. After two weeks of searching I had yet to see it. I had met several other butterfly enthusiasts (often with very large camera lenses) on the Klickitat River Trail. They seemed to find it but not I. It even got to the point that on June 3 I was at the magic spot and had no luck - there were puddling swallowtails, blues, and sulphurs. On June 4 I tried an upriver location for a couple of hours before retreating from the heat. That was the day that Bob Pyle went to the downstream location and saw it! I tried again on June 5 and sure enough there were three or four tiny grayish brown butterflies puddling on the sand and perching on oak branches as well as a territorial Lorquin's Admirable busily defending his patch of sand!

I had found it!! The Gold-hunter's Hairstreak that had a gold flake sized thecla spot on the Ventral Hind Wings. I wandered upstream a few hundred yards to the tiny community of Pitt and found four others scattered along the unofficial boat launch banks. I even went back up to Swale Creek trailhead and found two perched on willow at the trailhead where I usually find the California Hairstreaks. It was back in its original discovery site. There is a little concern over the fragility of the colony so exact locations are not given until we can better assess the population.

Welcome to Washington my Hairstreak Friends.



Gold-hunter's Hairstreak, Yuba Pass. (M. Weiss)



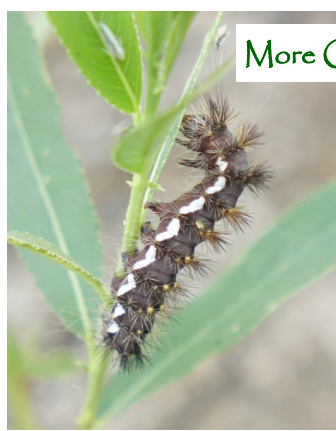
For comparison, the California Hairstreak. Both are about 1.25" wingspan. (M. Weiss)



Northern Blue. (M. Weiss)



Gray Hairstreak. (R. Johnson)



More Okanogan Leps:



Arctic Fritillary. (R. Johnson)



Greenish Blue. (M. Weiss)

The caterpillar that might be *Acronicta perdita*, except that the host plant is wrong. The listed host plant is bitterbrush but this is on willow. Anyone know what it is? (R. Johnson)

Schinia suetus. (M Weiss)



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