



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*.



The intrepid butterfly hunters of WBA's Study Weekend at the Sawtooth Ridge trailhead, Blue Mountains. Participants came from all corners of the state: Seattle area, Spokane, Leavenworth, Winthrop, Olympia, Klickitat, and Yakima. One person came from Oregon, and one from Dayton! (R. Johnson)

Upcoming Programs by Zoom First Wednesday at 6 PM

September 7: Share the Wealth!

Share your photos and stories from the 2022 butterfly season. You may send photos to Paulette for uploading to Zoom, or just be prepared to jump in and share your screen during the meeting.

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President's Message from Jim Reed

Greetings & Salutations Fellow Lepidopterans,

As I am driving along Highway 12 on my way to Dayton, WA I am filled with conflicting ideas and emotions. What could go wrong... it is a long list for another day. On the bright, happy, cheery side; I am excited to see what I believed to be about 30 butterflyers. These are people that I have known for ten years and a few of them much, much longer. They are mixed with new fresh faces that I have not had the pleasure of meeting yet. And the rest are faces and names I know only from zoom meetings. And now I get a chance, the first in two years of melding all of these people into one powerful but fun loving entity called WBA.

That's right. We are a powerful and fun-loving group. We are powerful in that we are the eyes that witness what is going on in the natural world. We are the ears that hear what interested but non-butterfly folks are thinking about these beloved insects. We are the people behind the cameras and nets that document the diversity of our corner of the world. We report back to the folks who are in a position to influence policy and publish for the world to see what is going on and what a positive group of people are accomplishing right here in the great State of Washington .

We should thank and support our science group who gives countless hours of their time and energy to our cause. Bob Pyle, Jon P. Pelham, David James, Merrill Peterson, Dave Nunnallee and Caitlin Le Bar are all Northwest Lepidopterists who publish new scientific knowledge and trends. Their accessibility and dialogue are so crucial to us expanding our knowledge base and helping shape the future of our natural world - and not just our butterflies and other pollinators, but the plants that depend upon them and other animals in turn.

And are we fun loving? If you had a chance to be there at Lewis & Clark Trail State Park as we gathered for the first time in two very long and trying two years, then you know the answer. To see the hugs given and received (after checking to see if people were covid comfortable with that first) and to hear people checking in to see how they were doing, how they were coping with the isolation and distance of our changed world. To hear continued good discussion at the field trip stops, our pizza get together made it obvious that we were genuinely enjoying each others company.

And to the many members that were unable to make it to the Blue Mountains this year. I heard nothing but positive comments and renewed enthusiasm to continue this fine tradition again next year and beyond. Perhaps in a location less distant than the Blue Mountains and in a more forgiving world, it will make this available to us all once again. And maybe next year, will be the year with no flat tires!

Respectfully submitted,

James R. Reed



Hailey pounces on a butterfly while Allan watches. (R. Johnson)



Dan helps Lee with her netting technique. (R. Johnson)



Great Basin Fritillary. (R. Johnson)

Trip Reports 2022

Satus Snow Blues!

David G James

No, it is not a new species of butterfly but it does bring together three pretty cool field trips we had this spring and summer. These being:

Satus = Satus Pass on June 25, Snow = Snow Mountain ranch on May 21, and Blues = the mountains we visited for this year's wonderful study weekend, July 15-17.

All photos by David James.

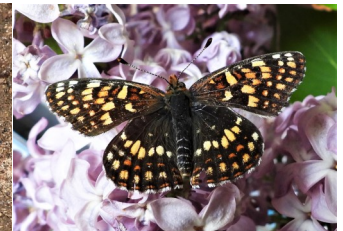
Snow Mountain Ranch: WDFW area

The first WBA field trip of the year visiting the vast, largely, unexplored shrub-steppe lands adjacent to Snow Mountain Ranch, west of Yakima, was postponed from May 7 to May 21 because of our record wet and cold spring in eastern Washington. And even on the 21st we barely had a couple of hours of sunshine before the heavens opened up and we had to beat a hasty retreat.

Happily, our group of 10 did see 12 species of spring butterflies, including Anise Swallowtails, Beckers Whites, Mourning Cloaks, Silvery Blues, Juba Skippers and Clouded Sulphurs. We also found a mystery checkerspot, flying alongside Desert Checkerspots (*Chlosyne acastus*). The mystery checkerspots looked very different (see photos) from the Desert Checkerspots. Instead (as Jon Pelham later informed me) they resembled the Columbia Gorge segregate of the Northern Checkerspot (*Chlosyne palla*). However, *Chlosyne palla* is 'never' found in the shrub steppe! Jon and I will be working to solve this mystery!



Desert Checkerspot.



Mystery checkerspot.

Satus Pass and Simcoe Butte

Fast forward one month and our second field trip was on June 25 and took in Satus Pass and Simcoe Butte. The weather this time was perfect and we saw 33 species! Our target species was the Nevada Skipper (*Hesperia nevada*) which wasn't present in the numbers I was hoping for, but we did see a couple of individuals at a hilltopping spot on Simcoe Butte. Other notable species on the day included a Northern White Skipper (*Heliopetes ericetorum*), Western Sulphurs (*Colias occidentalis*), Great Arctics (*Oeneis nevadensis*) and the three Duskywings, Propertius, Pacuvius and Persius. A highlight of the day was the unique situation of seeing spring and summer flowering native plants together on the one day! The spring Buckwheats, Lupines and Penstemons normally way past flowering in late June were in full glory this year



Hilltopping butterflies and spring wildflowers at Satus Pass.

Blue Mountains

Finally, in mid-July, many of us gathered in Dayton for our study weekend, again with perfect weather. The Blue Mountains did not disappoint and we ended up seeing 48 species over two days! We visited 7 habitats ranging from riparian sites in the Tucannon River Valley to high elevation sites on the Kendall Skyline Drive and at Mt Misery. The Pale Tiger Swallowtail (*Pterourus eurymedon*) was the most commonly-seen butterfly, closely followed by the Western White (*Pontia occidentalis*). One of the most interesting butterflies we saw was a grass skipper almost entirely lacking any ventral markings. After briefly wondering whether we had found a new colony of Yuma skippers, we received word from Jon Pelham that our butterfly was the Columbia Basin form or segregate of the Western Branded Skipper (*Hesperia colorado*). This form occurs within populations of normally-marked individuals of *H. colorado* and it was the first time seeing it for many of us.

On the Sunday we tried hard to reach the 'magic' 50 species mark and we did come close with 48. Jim and Regina did see extra species on their different ways home, but not in the Blues. However, a possible extra species was seen by Dave and Jo Nunnallee up at Mt Misery after some of us had left. It was a Dotted Blue (*Euphilotes spp.*) that both Dave and Jon Pelham think may have been the Rocky Mountain Dotted Blue (*Euphilotes ancilla*)! Not only would this have been our 49th species of the weekend, but much more importantly a new species for Washington!

Book your places now for a July 2023 WBA field trip to Mt Misery!

Trip Reports 2022 Continued

French Cabin Creek, Whoops! Reecer Trip. Melanie Weiss.

All photos by Melanie Weiss.

July 9, 2022

Washington has had a rollercoaster ride this butterfly season with a lengthy cool, wet beginning, then hot hot hot weather beginning in July. Upon scouting the French Cabin Creek area the week prior to the scheduled trip, few flowers were seen and only two Pale Swallowtails were detected. In general this season, many locations have been two weeks behind in plant and insect emergence. Rather than heading to French Cabin Creek, participants were invited to visit Reecer Canyon instead. With sites at elevations from 2,900 ft. to 5,500 ft., butterfly sightings seemed promising. And we were not disappointed. Tall Buckwheat was abundant at the lower sites, while Northern Buckwheat and Sulphur Buckwheat were seen further up. At the highest site, the meadow was flush with the lavender of allium blooms. Our enthusiastic WBA members detected 26 species by day's end. While we had a good diversity of species, the abundance was lower. Coronis Fritillaries were sighted in good numbers at all elevations on their altitudinal migration from the senesced shrub steppe. Also seen were: Mountain Parnassian, Lilac-bordered Copper, 5 Blue species, 4 Swallowtail species, Hoffmann's and Snowberry Checkerspots, Julia's Orangetip, Large Marble, Field Crescent, and others. We all agreed that being together in the field once again with other WBA members, some we hadn't seen since 2019, topped off the day's outing.

Follow-up trip to French Cabin Creek July 21, 2022

Several of the Reecer trip participants took me up on an offer to visit French Cabin Creek two weeks later. We were delighted to find flowers and butterflies in good numbers. The dirt road had received a dousing of water from road graders working in the area. This resulted in nice puddling activity. 25 species were seen including the Indra Swallowtail and 4 other Swallowtails, Edith's Checkerspot, Snowberry Checkerspot, Hoffmann's Checkerspot, Zerene Fritillary, Great Spangled Fritillary, Two-banded Skipper. The entertainment of the day was a mated pair of Snowberry Clearwing Moths attempting awkwardly to nectar. It was a grand day in the field for all.



Al Wagar is still going in the field.



Coronis Fritillary.



Hoffmann's Checkerspot.



Snowberry Clearwing moth pair.



French Cabin Creek.

Watching Washington Butterflies with Bob Pyle

Number Forty-seven

The Women of Washington Butterflies: Part Two

Now we get to the tricky part of this brief history of the women who have played a part in the study and understanding of the butterflies of Washington State. In Part One, I brought us from Lucia Edson and Louisa Pennell all the way up to Sharon Collman and the Vogels—roughly, the Twentieth Century. The small cast of characters could readily be encompassed.

Where we resume, around the Millennium and the Digital Divide in photography, the personnel grow more numerous, and the danger of leaving people out, more acute. My intent is to remember the women who have made unique, consequential, and durable contributions to our knowledge of Washington butterflies. Some of these I will surely leave out, with no such intentions and all apologies. I thank Jonathan P. Pelham, mentor to many of these, for his input and review, but any omissions are mine. Timing is also at my own whim: chronologies intersect and overlap, as time stands still for no woman.

Several women lepidopterists and collectors were active on either side of the year 2000, each contributing much valuable data. Stephanie Shank and Patti Ensor were both based in the little-sampled Columbia Basin. Stephanie produced a number of county records, while Patti worked with others to document the diversity of the Fitzner/Eberhard *Arid Lands Ecology Reserve* (ALE), on today's Hanford Reach National Monument. Julie O'Donald has long studied the butterflies of her wildlife garden in Brier. Charlotte Albright collected with Susan Masta, and brought to light her father Joe Albright's unique find of Reakirt's Blues near Ellensburg. Other distaff net-wielders were die-hard Scarab Louise Kulzer, Sandy Mayberry, Kathy Burgess, and Maurita Smyth. Meanwhile, Robin Wahl returned Whatcom County sightings, Jay Kelly surveyed the Nisqually NWR, and Kathleen Sayce investigated Oregon Silverspots and others in Pacific County. Next door in Wahkiakum County, botanists Cathy Maxwell, Sally Hughes, and Thea Linnaea Pyle, birder Anne Musche, and master gardener Elaine Myers all helped to build the butterfly picture.

The girls helped too! Also in wildest Wahkiakum, Stephanie and Katrina Ervest marshaled local kids to make 4-H collections, finding the westernmost wood nymphs, among others. Dory Hellyer snagged several county records at Swede Park. Precocious way-pre-teen collector



Silvery Blue. (D. Wilderman)

Shaundelle Vail hauled her compliant parents into the Pasayten Wilderness Area, returning with some of the few records of our rarest arctic-alpine species. And how about the Three Vanessids, Jasmine, Rhiannon, and Annabella, daughters of David and Tanya James? Their nimble nets seen bouncing over the vegetation on many field trips surely contributed much to their dad's scientific findings. It is often the case that extended families butterfly together. Just in our guru's case, his career in butterflies has been hugely extended by a passel of female field companions, including Etta Major, Othea Major, Ruth Pelham, Louise R. Lew, and Martha, Cynthia, and Kristi Robinson. Other women colleagues of their lepidopterist men active here have been Kit Stanford, Sigrid Shepard, June Preston, Jo Anne (Pyle) Heron, and Jeannette Barreca. If only we could keep all the young lasses catching butterflies past perilous adolescence! One who did keep on is Moria Robinson, who adeptly studied Silvery Blues on Vashon Island at twelve, styling herself "The Girl Naturalist." She is now a pro, a postdoctoral scholar in community ecology at Georgia Tech! Stay tuned for a brilliant career.



Reakirt's Blue.



Oregon Silverspot. (USFWS)

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Female field workers for state and federal agencies and private organizations endeavor to find, monitor, and manage our state's butterflies. Regina Rochefort, formerly of North Cascades National Park, founded and coordinates the Cascades Butterfly Project (2011) through which volunteers monitor the alpine butterflies of Mount Rainier and North Cascades national parks. As I write, Jenny Shrum and Janet Coles of NPS are surveying Mariposa Coppers in Olympic National Park, which Janis Burger did as well in earlier years. As South Zone Botanist for the Gifford Pinchot National Forest (USFS), Andrea Ruchty Montgomery has been working on projects aimed toward Golden Chinquapin habitat restoration and Golden Hairstreak butterfly conservation for the past decade.

In the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Ann Potter, Mary McCallum, Anita McMillan, and colleagues extensively surveyed West Side grasslands and other scarce habitats, making many finds of note including Taylor's Checkerspot, Mardon Skippers, and (with John Fleckenstein) the rediscovered Island Marble. Also the agency's Western Gray Squirrel authority, Mary Linders is the DFW biologist now in charge of the Taylor's Checkerspot reintroduction. In academia, UW Bothell professor Amy Lambert has spearheaded the



Ann Potter surveying for Island Marble. (WDFW)

research to understand the ecology of the Island Marble, to bolster its numbers, and to manage their habitat. UW Vancouver professor Cheryl Schultz and her cadres of mostly female graduate students have studied every aspect of Oregon's endangered Fender's Blue for twenty years, but also Mardon Skippers, Oregon Silverspots, and West Coast Monarchs. And the Xerces Society's Endangered Species Program Director Sarina Jepsen, with colleagues including Candace Fallon, conducted many productive surveys for the Mardon Skipper and others in the Cascades.

Returning to Ann Potter of WDFW, the former Northern Spotted Owl researcher applied her keen interest in butterflies (which I observed personally in several of my field seminars) to become the chief butterfly officer for the State of Washington. As such she oversaw field research and habitat management, discovered the remarkable Fuca Blue on northern tidelands, and transferred data from the Hinchliff books to the state data base. She volunteered her own time to receive and process collecting and observation records at the annual Northwest Lepidopterists' Association gatherings in Corvallis. On her retirement, Ann's long-time role as state butterfly conservation coordinator has been ably assumed by Pollinator Species Lead Julie Combs, with Data Biologist Sarah Krock.

Five women's enthusiasm for places and the butterflies they harbor have led to books or published lists. Long-time extension agent, educator, and entomologist Sharon Collman (also mentioned in Part One) wrote *The Butterflies of Lowland King County* in 1986. Susan Vernon published a definitive list of the butterflies of the San Juan Islands in 2005. In the same year, Kristi Murray Knowles' charming and very helpful *Butterflies of the North Olympic Peninsula* came out. 2014 saw Ann Potter's *A Region Specific Guide to Butterflies of the South Puget Sound, Washington* (with Rod Gilbert); and *Field Guide to Okanogan County Butterflies* by Caitlin C. LaBar, a scientist and crack cartographer who trained with Professor Cheryl Schultz.

This would be just the first of an increasingly impressive flight of books by Caitlin, leading up to her phenomenal *Butterflies of the Sinlahekin Wildlife Area* (2017), National Outdoor Book Award-winning *Butterflies of the Pacific Northwest* (2017, with R. M. Pyle), and *Pocket Guide to the Butterflies of Washington* (2022). Recently, with Jon Pelham and Norbert Kondla, she discerned and described the new species *Celastrina asheri*, Asher's Azure (my favorite) or Asher's Blue. Her blog and website (Northwest Butterflies) are both helpful and highly informative. Caitlin exemplifies just the productive blend of scientific collecting and watching/photography that I hoped for when I loosed the latter element upon an unsuspecting but ready public in *Watching Washington Butterflies* in 1974. Caitlin is our rising star.



Asher's Blue. (R. Johnson)

Which brings us at last to the Women of WBA. Everyone knows, or should know, that first and foremost among these was the late, great Idie Ulsh. I first met Idie on June 14, 1991, on Whidbey Island, when she took a butterfly field class I taught for North Cascades Institute. I remember her bright-eyed, new-found enthusiasm for butterflies at the time. Al-

Mary Linders conducting Taylor's Checkerspot surveys on the artillery range at Joint Base Lewis-McChord. (R. Johnson)



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ready an accomplished bird watcher, she became a "birder gone bad" before my eyes, as she came over to the bright side (as many jaded birders do). Idie took several more of my classes, learning all the while. Eventually (to my great relief) she began offering butterfly classes of her own, taking some of the pressure off. It wasn't long before Idie had a big following. Noting the growing passion for these wonders on the wing, she came to the conclusion that there should be an organization (other than the Old Boys collectors' clubs of long standing), especially for the new legions of butterfly watchers and photographers. And in 1999, with several others including Jo Nunnallee, Idie co-founded the Washington Butterfly Association and became its first president. She took many a fine slide herself, and with Dave Nunnallee, coordinated the images for *Butterflies of Cascadia* (2002), the last pre-digital field guide.



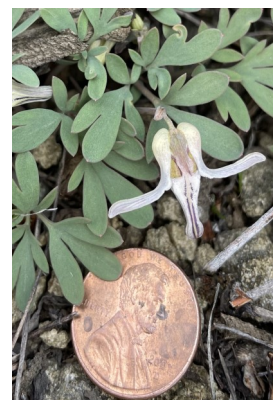
Idie's butterfly class. (Kim K. and Reg R.)

A formidable presence, Idie was also pragmatic. WBA was at first a chapter of no-net NABA. But with essential compromises on that front and others, Idie managed to maintain the support, scientific guidance, and essential participation of the lepidopterists.

Beloved and key to the whole as she was, Idie was far from the only woman important to the success of our group. From Carolyn Heberlein's brilliant computer and PR oversight, to DNR ecologist Regina Johnson's long-running and highly competent editorship of *G'num*, and Paulette Murphy's professional program direction right through the virtual years, plus busy members such as Cathy Clark, Maureen Traxler, Joyce Bergen, Marty Hanson, East Siders Sue Orłowski, Brenda McCracken, sisters Mary Schu and Lora Langford and Lora's daughter Isabella, and many others—every woman who has helped keep WBA's wings flapping deserves recognition here.

I reserve my conclusion for several women of WBA who have gone forth into the field in recent years again and again with their cameras and their increasingly experienced eyes wide open. Jeanne Dammarell, one of our East Side members, has ranged widely beyond Spokane to make stunning photographs of butterflies at poorly sampled potholes, prairies, and pineylands, coming up with some great range extensions and other notable records along the way. Next, I'll mention experienced butterflyer Melanie Weiss. A hard worker both in and out of the field, "Melanie has been the key for getting the data flowing," according to Jon Pelham, who has mentored her. Melanie has generated scores of noteworthy finds all over the state, spotting something fresh and surprising on every outing. For example, working off the James & Pelham *Coronis* fritillary migration paper, she became expert at finding and recording the behavior of *Coronis* females ovipositing on their desiccated host violets in windswept Kittitas sites earlier left behind by the altitudinal summer emigrants. This is not easy work! You can revisit Melanie's project in her fine species profile in *G'num* 22:4, November 2021.

Cheryl Bellin is another wonder. A resident of the Chewuch Valley not far north of Sun Mountain, Cheryl is well situated for exploration, but also prepared to hike far and wide to find the good stuff. She has ranged into little- or unsampled territory with her lenses, uncovering many striking new distributional records—such as the first site for the Lustrous Copper to be found away from Slate Peak in many years. She takes us back to the 'thirties and before when John Hopfinger and Andy Anderson roamed other wild heights not far away, making major first discoveries—but now documenting them by camera instead of specimen where no net has gone before. Recently, Cheryl solved a riddle that had particularly bugged me: for years, Thea and I and Art Kruckeberg sought the bleeding heart hosts for the *Clodius* Parnassians we found at Sun Mountain, but none were to be found—even by arch-botanist ARK. Cheryl discovered how to find that hostplant—the inconspicuous Steer's Head (*Dicentra uniflora*)—early in the season, before it dries out into invisibility for most of the season (see her beautiful write-up of this experience in *G'num* 23:1, February 2022). We await the further discoveries and data of Melanie and Cheryl, who between them embody the quality of contribution that butterflies can make.



Dicentra uniflora. (C.

Across the state, Tanna Knouse (with her husband and field companion Woody) has also occupied a favored spot for butterfly study. Hoodsport, on the drier West Side of Hood Canal, was a productive butterfly area for early collector Don Frechin and others, and more recently for the young Jon Pelham. But living right there, Tanna is able to look about frequently and in depth, and as such, she and Woody have made many fine "catches" of southeast Olympics species and

2022 Study Weekend: Dayton and Blue Mountains

Carl Barrentine has provided a short YouTube clip on Friday night's mothing: <https://youtu.be/9PY47mOpDBQ>



Carl shows some moths. (M. Weiss)



Panjab horse corral along the Tucannon River.
(D. James)



Satyr Anglewing. (C. Bellin)



Edith's Copper. (C. Bellin)



Columbia Dotted Blue pair. (M. Weiss)



Western Whites. (M. Weiss)



Field Crescent and Dreamy Duskywing. (R. Johnson)



Dan and Cheryl at Godman Spring. (Lisa Therrell)



Dave N. and Cheryl at Willow Spring. (Lisa Therrell)



Lisa looks at a butterfly. (C. Bellin)



Lori and Reg look at a butterfly. (Lisa Therrell)



Izzie shows off a Lorquin's Admiral. (R. Johnson)

Have you seen the world's largest moth? It just showed up in Bellevue.

<https://wastatedeptag.blogspot.com/2022/08/atlasmoth.html>

Washington State entomologists are asking the public to report sightings of the Atlas moth after one was recently discovered in Bellevue. There are no known traps for Atlas moths, so WSDA is hoping to determine whether there are additional moths in the area based on public reports. With this single Atlas moth detection only, there is no evidence that an Atlas moth population is established in Washington.

Residents are encouraged to photograph, collect, and report Atlas moths if they are seen. The moths do not pose a public health threat and thus can safely be photographed, handled, and collected.

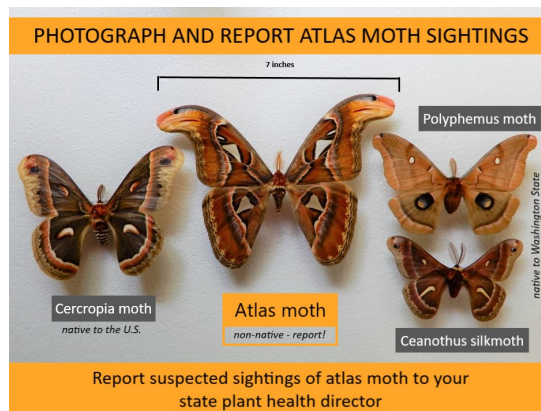
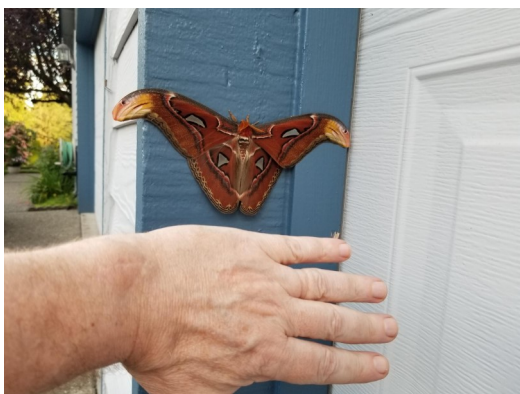
“This is a ‘gee-whiz’ type of insect because it is so large,” Sven Spichiger, WSDA managing entomologist, said. “Even if you aren’t on the lookout for insects, this is the type that people get their phones out and take a picture of – they are that striking.”

Washington State residents who believe they have seen this moth should send a photo to pestprogram@agr.wa.gov for identification and include the location where it was spotted. While there are no reports of Atlas moth anywhere else in the U.S., if you believe you’ve found it outside of Washington State, please take a picture of it, note the location, and report it to the State Plant Regulatory Official or State Plant Health Director in your state.

The moth was initially reported to WSDA via a University of Washington professor on July 7. WSDA entomologists identified it as an Atlas moth and sent it to USDA for confirmation, which is the standard process for new pest detections. USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Investigation Service confirmed the specimen as an Atlas moth on July 27 and it is believed to be the first confirmed detection of the moth in the United States.

One of the world’s largest known moths with a wingspan of up to almost 10 inches, it is also a federally quarantined pest – meaning it is illegal to obtain, harbor, rear, or sell live moths whether adults, eggs, larvae, or pupae without a permit from USDA. USDA has more information about permits on its invertebrate pets web page. While there is minimal research about the moth, entomologists believe host plants may include apple and cherry.

“This is normally a tropical moth. We are not sure it could survive here,” Spichiger said. “USDA is gathering available scientific and technical information about this moth and will provide response recommendations, but in the meantime, we hope residents will help us learn if this was a one-off escapee or whether there might indeed be a population in the area.”



(Continued from page 7)

"Hoodsport Heath" specialties. One of their coups has been a large colony of Mariposa Coppers in a gap in the map for the bridging population between the Cascades and Olympics. Recently, Tanna photographed a truly amazing GREEN Hoary Elfin, likely a one-off aberration.

With that odd image, I will conclude this appreciation of the women who have helped to color in and define the panorama of Washington butterflies. Some might accuse me of cultural or gender appropriation by writing this as a male, and I'll accept that; but who else was going to do it? The women are too busy enjoying butterflies, and too modest, to write about themselves.

The gender balance in butterfly study has vastly shifted from when I grew up, with the majority of contemporary college field investigators, conservation professionals (as in Xerces), and butterfly hobbyists now female. That is a change long due. Gene Stratton Porter and Maria Sybilla Merian would be thrilled. We are still mostly white, and maybe that will be the next inclusive earthquake. The more of us represented, the more interesting our little butterfly world.



"Brilliant Refraction". Green Hoary Elfin. (Tanna Knouse)

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