



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

WBA in Eastern WA steppe. (M. Weiss)



Study Weekend: Ritzville, WA June 7-9 Schedule of Events

Make your lodging arrangements now, if you haven't yet. We won't be the only show in town that weekend.

Register online at: <https://reg.planetreg.com/E41382946146254>

Monday June 3 at 7 pm: Zoom presentation by David James on the butterflies of the Ritzville area.

Friday June 7: Meet in the Ritzville Days Inn Conference Room at 6 pm onwards for socializing, refreshments, and mothing. Bring your own chair, and a light. 1513 S Smittys Blvd, Ritzville, Washington 99169-2271. 509-592-4849.

Saturday June 8: Meet at 8:30 am in the Days Inn parking lot for field trip.

Saturday June 8, 6:30 pm: Taco Bar at the Days Inn. Bring your own chair if you wish to sit outside. There will be a Silent Auction, and a special presentation by Dr. Robert Michael Pyle.

Sunday June 9: Meet at 8 am in the Days Inn parking lot for field trip.

In this issue:

President's Message

[P 2](#)

Trip Reports

[P 4](#)

iNaturalist

[P 6](#)

Field Trip Schedule

[P 7](#)

President's Message: Outgoing (Jim Reed)

Greetings but not Farewell.

As many of you may be aware, I resigned my position as the President of the Board in February. I did so out of respect for WBA. As President I worked to get us through the COVID 19 pandemic and keep the organization moving forward. I feel that we accomplished that goal.

I resigned due to health issues. I would not have stepped down if I was not confident that our current Board was not fully capable of continuing to follow our founders' vision and mission. Our current Board has extremely competent people with a positive mix of experience and some fresh ideas.

Liz Kuehn is our acting President and brings in a lot of enthusiasm and energy. From her previous position as Secretary, she is intimately aware of the workings of WBA and I feel that she will do a fantastic job in her new role. Liz is supported with strong, experienced Board members that are dedicated to our members.

In February, I was in Arizona, hiking in beautiful Sabino Canyon near Tucson. I had ridden the tram buses up into the canyon and was walking several miles back out - my son and I were admiring the steep desert canyon walls with the Sonoran vegetation. We saw a few Desert Orange-tips and a Pipevine Swallowtail along the way. As the road down crossed a creek several times, and with the steep grade, I felt a tightening in my legs. It was a real thigh-burner! As I approached another creek crossing, my legs would not support me. I went down. Luckily, no trams were approaching. My son and brother got me to my feet and off of the roadway. I was able to catch another tram down and out of the canyon.

I spent several days recovering and eventually was able to travel back home to Klickitat. After several Doctor visits, I was told that I needed to do some serious recovery. My kidney function has dropped to under 20% of normal and my vision is now only 30% of what it once was. Energy levels have plummeted.

I am doing okay and will plan to attend the upcoming Wings over Ritzville in June. Otherwise my butterflying will be limited to Klickitat and local areas. I plan to remain on the Board as an at-large role. I will happily dispense advice (some of it may even be good). I hope to see everyone out in the field, if not this year, then certainly next season. Ya all be good. Keep on swinging nets and pressing the shutter button. And finally, get active or stay active. Go WBA.

President's Message: Incoming (Liz Kuehn)

I was honored to be voted by the Board to step in for Jim Reed to complete his WBA Presidency as he takes some time away from the post. Jim is still very much involved with the Board business and his insight is much appreciated. Typically, we vote for new officers at our annual WBA Study Weekend, however, since we are gathering earlier than normal this year, we will delay elections until later. This will be an online voting process sometime in August, so stay tuned for the announcement.

Is it time to put your butterfly knowledge and people skills to good use !or know someone you think should?

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

Nominations are open and we welcome your support.

The Board has been busy these past few months preparing for our WBA Study Weekend. WBA is celebrating its 25th year and Ritzville will be a new area to explore. We expect to see many species in this unique area including Viceroy's, Garita Skipperlings, Arrowhead Blues and perhaps Ruddy Coppers, plus other species we don't often see. Moth Night returns Friday, thanks to David Droppers; David James will be scouting the area and pick some ideal field trip locations for Saturday and Sunday; Saturday's dinner will be catered by the local Mexican restaurant, Porky's; and we will have a very special presentation from our esteemed member, Bob Pyle, for Saturday's program. Bob will enchant us with his talk "Butterflies in Poetry and Song." Sunday will be the final field trip for the weekend. I hope we see you in Ritzville for what promises to be another quality butterfly experience, to see your old friends and make some new ones too.

If you haven't registered, please do so soon and don't forget to check out our Bonfire Store.

https://www.bonfire.com/store/washington-butterfly-association/?utm_source=native_share&utm_medium=store_page_share&utm_campaign=washington-butterfly-association&utm_content=default

The 25th on-line sale of our shirt or the mug, wins a copy of David James' new book, The Lives of Butterflies: A Natural History of our Planet's Butterfly Life

Your committee chairs keep our association meaningful.

The 2024 field trip season is underway, once again there is a selection of top-notch leaders and locations. We have Melanie Weiss to thank for organizing these great field trips. Check out the WBA website for details.

WBA Program night via Zoom is now on hiatus until September. Paulette Murphy coordinated and hosted another year of exceptional presentations. She does her research and finds interesting topics by experts in the lepidopterist community and they are viewed across the country. If you missed any presentations they have been uploaded to our WBA YouTube channel - <https://www.youtube.com/@washingtonbutterflyassocia4732/videos>- be sure to hit subscribe to get the latest updates and to share your comments.

Regina Johnson keeps us informed with all the latest WBA news as editor of the G'Num. Her desktop publishing and editing skills make for a good read! If you missed an edition, we have them archived on the WBA Website all the way back to 2000.

Carolyn Heberlein and Sylvia Sheets are our tech wizards and manage our social media, Gmail, Website and all things digital. The Website is going to get a makeover toward the end of the summer. Stay tuned for that announcement.

I was reminded the other day of a quote, "many hands make light work". WBA is a strong advocacy group thanks to the many hands who contribute their time and expertise to our mission. If you are interested in a volunteer opportunity, please reach out to any of the WBA Board members or watch for specific volunteer opportunities we may post occasionally.

Hope to see you soon,
Liz



Western Tailed Blue. (D. James)



Aher's Blue. (D. James)

Trip Reports 2024

Earth Day 2024 was celebrated in the Methow Valley April 27 sponsored by Methow Recycles and hosted at the John Doran Ranch in Twisp Washington. Cheryl Bellin and Jim Rauh represented the Washington Butterfly Association and appreciatively, John Kolts, a bumble expert and contributor to the Washington Bee Atlas, joined us at the event to jointly support native pollinators. Similar to last year, many children and adults came by. Live butterflies visible in the rearing cage and the WA native bee poster synergized interest across both bees and butterflies. Host and nectar plants to incorporate into home landscapes was of high interest as was the local butterfly species flight period and a bumble bee identification chart. Several individuals were interested in a butterfly walk or field trip, forthcoming, and a restoration specialist inquired about support for conducting butterfly surveys to document changes pre and post wildfire restoration efforts.



Earth Day in Twisp. (C. Bellin)

I was excited to be repeating the tabling event in 2024. Even more so after getting an email from a 2023 Earth Day attendee, Christy Stebbins, on April 2, 2024. Her question was if this butterfly in her yard was the “one” we talked about at their Methow River property last summer, looking at it from a butterfly perspective. Indeed, the butterfly she photographed was a Compton Tortoiseshell; right on her back doorstep. Her comment “Kind of hard to photograph when it lands on your sleeve”. If only and here’s to next year.



Compton Tortoiseshell (Christy Stebbins)

May 3: South Fork of the Ahtanum River near Tampico, WA

David James

I have lived in Yakima since 2007 and thought I knew all the good butterfly places. Turns out I was wrong. On 13 April I found myself on the south side of Yakima, along the Ahtanum River near Tampico exploring a forest road in upper sixties spring sunshine. Immediately, I was struck by the abundance of butterflies, 8 species and about 100 individuals. Most abundant were Oak Duskywings and Julia’s Orange Tips, coursing up and down the road. The habitat is an ecotone of mixed pine and Garry oak woodland alongside open shrub steppe hillsides. The confluence of two habitat types is always conducive for a good diversity of butterflies and this seemed to be a great example of that. I went back there three more times during April, each time seeing more species and greater abundance. I knew this had to be the location of the first WBA trip I was scheduled to lead in late April! A new butterfly habitat at an easy to get to and easy to amble location with no 4WD needed!



Photographing the Orangetip. (M. Weiss)

And so it was on May 3, six WBA people assembled at Union Gap for the 20-mile drive west to the Ahtanum River South Fork. Finding a good day among the days of unsettled, overcast spring weather was a challenge but May 3 was sunny and pleasantly mild in the upper sixties. When I saw three species before I had closed my car door, I knew it was going to be a good day! We ended up seeing 21 species which is remarkable for a spring butterfly safari and a great way to break the great winter butterfly drought!

Most abundant were Oak Duskywings, literally a hundred or more seen during the day busily screaming up and down the road, occasionally resting or feeding from flowering Ball head Waterleaf. Almost as common were Orange Tips.

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

When cloud obscured the sun for a while, a great photographic opportunity presented itself with the group crowding around a female Orange Tip who stayed cold and motionless on a flowering Rockcress. Everyone got excellent pictures! Later, we noticed there were Orange Tip eggs on this plant maybe laid by this female!

We saw six species of blues, Asher's, Echo, Western tailed, Boisduval's, Silvery and Acmon. This is a new site for Asher's and it is abundant, unusually occurring alongside the less common (at this site) Echo blue. Both Marbles were present, Desert and Large, as well as a few early Edith's Checkerspots. This is an unusually low elevation for the latter. Anise Swallowtails were abundant and the occasional Northern Cloudywing was also seen, a species I had not seen previously in the Yakima area.



Pine Elfin. (L. Kuehn)



Propertius Duskywing. (Todd Wildermuth)

We walked about three miles and I think I can describe the group's reactions to the butterfly bonanza as ecstatic! It is a site that potentially may be even better as the season progresses and the late spring fauna of Fritillaries, Checkerspots, Hairstreaks and Nymphalid appear. I will certainly be monitoring.... Oh, and I spotted the first Painted Lady of the summer here on April 28! The South Fork Ahtanum is an example of how butterfly habitat gems can still be found even in areas we think we know well! I can't wait to explore the North Fork of the Ahtanum!



The Julia's Orangetip. (M. Weiss)

Sammamish Valley Pollinator Festival

Washington Butterfly Association took part in the Sammamish Valley Pollinator Festival this year at 21 Acres Farm on May 4th, hosted by Liz Kuehn and Maureen Traxler. Despite the damp and dreary weather an estimated 900 people came out to stroll through the many information booths. Our WBA display was colorful and fun drawing quite a crowd. Children seemed particularly delighted by our displays and impressed us with their knowledge about butterflies. I think I learned a few things from them! Some crowd pleasers were: the pupae and cocoon display Melanie Weiss had assembled and loaned to us, and Al Wagar's display of a small sampling of butterflies from the region. Handouts, bookmarks and brochures were all gone by the end of the day. Children earned a flapping paper butterfly by arranging a butterfly life cycle in proper order. Most of them nailed it, metamorphosis education is going strong it seems. We sent them home with a maze puzzle and stickers. Adults were also delighted by our displays and information sheets about Puget Sound butterflies, their flight times, host and nectar plants. We sent them home with WBA brochures. For me as a first time table host, it was a fun and engaging experience. The festival goers were enthusiastic to learn about our organization and tips on how to attract and enjoy our region's butterflies.



(L. Kuehn)

WBA's iNaturalist Project: Washington State Butterflies

<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/washington-state-butterflies>

WBA has a new iNaturalist project. You won't have to join the project to be included – any observation of any butterfly (and some moths) in WA state will be automatically included in the project. So – what? You might be asking. Well, what this does, is it allows you or anyone else interested in butterflies to see what's being observed, where and when; and to verify or change identifications as able. But wait there's more! All these observations, with their identifications and every change ever made, will be available to scientists to help them figure out where things live and when they appear. Julie Combs, the invertebrate conservation biologist at WDFW, told us at our last meeting that we just don't have enough data about even the common butterflies, let alone the 21 Species of Greatest Conservation Needs (https://wdfw.wa.gov/sites/default/files/publications/01742/14_A5_Invertebrates.pdf). This iNaturalist project will be an easy way for you to contribute to our knowledge of butterfly distribution!

It's pretty easy to post observations. Upload a photo, hopefully with a date and gps stamp, which iNat will read automatically. If your camera doesn't have gps capability, you can add the location manually. Then either you let iNat suggest what species it thinks your photo is showing, or you tell it from a dropdown list of possibilities. You will be limited to their nomenclature but they use Jon Pelham's Catalog of butterflies so that should be fine. You can add notes, and as many photos as you need. <https://www.inaturalist.org/pages/getting+started>.

If you feel like you can verify other people's identifications, then add this project to your Community so you can easily browse the posts. Just search for Washington State Butterflies under the Community – Projects tab (NOT Butterflies of the Washington Area – that's the wrong Washington), click About, and Join. Now it will be in your Community tab whenever you sign in to iNaturalist. But be careful about verifying or disagreeing with identifications. Not every observation will have the information needed to identify it to species. And unless you're Bob Pyle or Caitlin LaBar, there will be posts identified as a species that you are not familiar with. In those cases, just leave the observation alone (except in the case of bad photos, you can post a comment to that effect). Don't be the person who says to himself, "Oh I don't know what a Western Tiger Swallowtail is; all I know is it's a butterfly so I'm going to Disagree with the identification of Western Tiger and say it's Lepidoptera." Don't do that. People will hate you, and not unjustified. Second, don't just Agree with observations unless you can actually tell that that's what it is. Get out a field guide if necessary. And don't assume that iNaturalist is right when it suggests an identification. iNaturalist only knows what total strangers have told it, and some of them just Agree with anything.

Which brings us to another big benefit of this project: We'll be correcting iNaturalist's incorrect identifications and improving its butterfly-identifying algorithm!



EVENT IN PROGRESS

Washington State Butterflies

About

Join  44

Butterflies and selected day-flying moths of Washington State. The Washington Butterfly Association seeks to further the appreciation, understanding, and conservation of butterflies and other pollinators and their ecology. Using education, scientific studies, and advocacy we seek to raise appreciation of their value to our

[Read More >](#)

 Project Journal

2024 Field Trips n' Protocols

Non-consumptive appreciation of butterflies is central to our purpose, basic to our approach, and the guiding principle behind general membership field trips. Collecting of adult butterflies is not allowed on these trips. Collecting of eggs and larvae for rearing is accepted on condition that individuals raised to adult stage are released at their original location.

HOW TO SIGN UP: Anyone can sign up by contacting the trip leader. (See Board and Committee list in this issue for contact information)

Check our website and Facebook page for last-minute additions (Flash Field Trips!).

DIFFICULTY RATINGS:

- 1 Easy, mostly by car, minor walking along roads.
- 2 Fairly limited walking, some slopes may involved.
- 3 Moderate, 3-4 miles walking, or with some slopes.
- 4 Difficult, hiking required off road, may have short steep sections, total of 4 miles or so.
- 5 Strenuous, extended hiking on trails with steep terrain, 4-8 miles.

SWAKANE CANYON, mid week due to activity in the canyon on the weekend, week of May 20 or week of May 27

Melanie Weiss

An old favorite, Swakane Canyon is abundant with puddling butterflies in the spring. We will follow the canyon road for several miles making stops at puddling spots along the way. Note that the road is narrow, full of serious pot holes and rocks, definitely not for vehicles with low clearance. We can combine cars at the canyon entrance. 25 to 35 species may be seen including several species of Swallowtails, Green Hairstreaks, many Blue species (9 on one visit), all four Duskywings, Northern Cloudywing, grass skippers. The canyon is located 5 miles outside of Wenatchee along the Columbia River. Sign up with Melanie Weiss: melanierweiss@gmail.com Level 2

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



WBA BUTTERFLY WEEKEND, WINGS OVER RITZVILLE, THREE DAY EVENT, June 7-9

Check G'num for information and online registration.

<https://reg.planetreg.com/E41382946146254>

STEPTOE BUTTE, tentatively June 22

Hailey Armstrong & John Baumann

Join us for a fun field trip to Steptoe Butte State Park where you can experience panoramic Palouse views and a surprising wildlife oasis! Steptoe Butte is located in Whitman County, just off US 195 about 52 miles S of Spokane and 30 miles N of Pullman. There is a paved road all the way to the top (3,612') with some areas to pull over for exploration, a variety of butterfly species can be found all over the area!



Silver-bordered Fritillary. (M. Weiss)

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7)

Note: The park requires a Discover Pass and is an attraction to many visitors so parking may be limited during the day, carpooling will be recommended.

For details about the trip or if you would like to sign up, contact Hailey Armstrong at: eggogecko@gmail.com or 509-220-8599 Level 2

Possible trip to visit LEONA'S LITTLE BLUE, last two weeks of June

Stay tuned. David James david_james@wsu.edu

SLATE PEAK, OKANOGAN NF, late July, early August TBD

Cheryl Bellin and Jim Rauh

This beautiful high elevation site is truly stunning to behold with its profusion of flowers, spectacular views and, of course, butterflies. This is an even year, so we may see the rare Melissa Arctic or Astarte Fritillary, both biennial species. Lustrous copper is also a possibility but I've never seen the "big 3" on a given day. Twenty five plus species is likely when venturing to this wonderful location. The road up to the peak leaves from Mazama, but beware that this road is narrow with steep drop offs. That said, the road was in excellent condition last year as road crews made Dead Horse Point navigable for equipment and crews that added a parking lot between Harts Pass and the Windy Pass Trailhead. A short hike is required to reach the top of Slate Peak and to fully explore roadsides and mountain meadows.

Sign up with Cheryl: bellinca@gmail.com Level 3



Slate Peak scenery. (J. Reed)

CRYSTAL MOUNTAIN, August 16, note this is a Friday due to weekend crowds

Regina Johnson, Melanie Weiss

After being rained out last year, we're giving this popular trip of two years ago a second try. In the hope of seeing a few different species than on the past trip, we'll be visiting earlier in the month. We'll take a gondola up to the top of the ridge at 7,000 ft. elevation and butterfly in the alpine flowers along a trail with stunning views of Mt. Rainier. Participants will have to pay the gondola fees.

Sign up with Regina: reg@madronas.net Participants limited to 12, Level 3

WBA at the top of Crystal Mtn.



TREASURE HUNT' FOR GOLD, GOLDEN HAIRSTREAK, THAT IS.

HOODSPORT AREA, mid to late August

Karen Holtrop, Regina Johnson

Help search for Hairstreaks in the Hamma Hamma. We will visit the northernmost disjunct Golden Chinquapin stands located in Mason county on Forest Service and WA DNR lands in the Hamma Hamma River Watershed. Walking into the chinquapin areas could be rough but short walking. We may also stop at some other good flowering spots along the gravel roads. All wheel drive vehicles are recommended. We will carpool from Highway 101. The meeting location will be provided for those who sign up.

Sign up with Karen: KKHOLTROP@msn.com Level 3 (bushwhacking in dense brush)

(Continued on page 9)

(Continued from page 8)

RICHLAND RAMBLE, October, first or second weekend.

Cathy Clark, Dan Dunphy, Sylvia Sheets

We will visit up to 3-4 locations in the TriCities area. Exact locations to be determined closer to October based on local reports of sightings and weather conditions. Most locations should provide for level walking or gentle inclines. Possible species to anticipate include skippers (including Northern White), sulphurs, Viceroy, Monarch and blues (we will be hoping for another showing of the Western Pygmy Blue!). Contact any of the co-leaders for sign up: Cathy Clark: snowcatclark@gmail.com, Dan Dunphy: ddunphyj@gmail.com, Sylvia Sheets: sylvia.sheets@protonmail.com. Level 1-2.



Western Pygmy Blue. (E. Kuehn)

FLASH TRIPS MAY OCCUR, STAY TUNED!

Board Members

President	Liz Kuehn	
Vice President	Dan Dunphy	
Secretary	Dan Dunphy	
Treasurer	Regina Johnson	
At-Large	David James	
At-Large	Carolyn Heberlein	
At-Large	Paulette Murphy	
At-Large	Sylvia Sheets	
At-Large	Melanie Weiss	

Committees

Science Advisor	Jon Pelham		
Membership	Reg Reisenbichler		
Annual Conference	Available		
Field Trips	Melanie Weiss		
Programs	Paulette Murphy		
Publicity/Website	Carolyn Heberlein		
Newsletter	Regina Johnson		

The views expressed in articles in this newsletter are those of the authors, and not necessarily those of the WBA.