Massachusetts Butterflies

Fall 2024, No. 63

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Horn Pond Mountain Appreciation

by Peter Loshin

The Horn Pond Conservation Area in Woburn MA is a remarkable wildlife resource, with a bonus view of the Boston skyline. A place of remarkable diversity, Horn Pond Mountain (HPM) offers the city-bound butterfly enthusiast easy access to a broad variety of species. HPM is just a 12-minute drive from my home, and this year I was able to visit 18 times between April 17 and July 3. On those trips I saw a total of at least 32 different butterfly species including five different hairstreak species.
The area comprises the 133 acre Horn Pond, surrounded by about 500 acres of conservation land. With several miles of walking trails, the area is popular with birders, hikers and naturalists. The recreation area includes a parking lot, public restrooms and the Woburn Water Pumping Station on Lake Avenue in Woburn, next to an Eversource power station serving the power lines that run over Horn Pond Mountain. Unofficial parking, much closer to areas of interest for butterflies, can be had at the rear of the New England Rehabilitation Hospital, on Rehabilitation Way in Woburn, just north of the Whole Foods Market on Route 3/Cambridge Street in Woburn.

Larger butterfly species including Monarch, Black Swallowtail, Spicebush Swallowtail, Tiger Swallowtail (Eastern and Canadian), American Lady and Painted Lady, are commonly seen in flight and nectaring in most areas of Horn Pond Mountain, it is an excellent place to see smaller species including hairstreaks, elfins, duskywings and skippers.

My field trips to HPM typically begin in the rehabilitation hospital parking lot, in the flat area just under the power line tower where birds including Killdeer, Indigo Bunting, Prairie Warbler and many others can be seen or heard. This year I saw Brown Elfins, American Coppers, Wild Indigo and Juvenal's Duskywings here. Other elfin species are commonly spotted here as well.

Just to the south of this area is a gravel path that begins at a paved utility parking lot; this path parallels the base of Horn Pond Mountain. Despite the presence of invasive weeds here, there are also enough native wildflowers including Common Milkweed and New Jersey Tea to attract skippers and other small species including Eastern-Tailed Blue, azures and American Copper. Continuing along this gravel path leads to an intersection, where the gravel path turns to the right, going uphill (another path continues forward from here, leading to the main Horn Pond recreation area). Most club field trips take a sharp right here, onto a narrow and rocky path that doubles back toward the southwest and uphill.

This path up Horn Pond Mountain can be challenging, but many butterflies can be seen around the intersection area. This year I saw numerous species along this path, including Northern Broken Dash, Dun, Long Dash and Little Glassywing skippers. I also saw Edward's Hairstreak, Striped Hairstreak, Coral Hairstreak and Gray Hairstreak at the bottom of the hill. Common Buckeye butterflies are also commonly seen puddling in the path here – but not (yet) this year.

Duskywings, American Copper, skippers and hairstreaks can be seen all along this path; a patch of vegetation to the right of a steep ledge area offered a particularly butterfly-friendly stand of New Jersey Tea and Dogbane blossoms.

Another relatively open area at the top of the hill, just past the power line transmission tower, is popular with swallowtail species; I saw at least one Black Swallowtail here on almost every visit this year. To the left is a forested section, and the intrepid seeker willing to explore the narrow trails and ledges on this side of HPM may find Juniper Hairstreaks on the Juniper trees growing on the slopes.

A dirt road continues south from the transmission tower for about 0.2 mile, where it meets a paved road; the Boston skyline

outlook is located there. Several paths branch off to the right from this road leading into the forested area, but Red Spotted Admirals can sometimes be seen puddling on the road itself.

About 200 feet before reaching the paved road and the Boston skyline outlook, take a right onto a path that leads to the top of the hill. Throughout the month of May I found Juniper Hairstreak butterflies in a stand of Juniper trees near a graffitied ledge. Brown Elfin (and possibly other elfin species—they never stopped long enough to identify!) were also very active in the grassy area next to these Juniper trees in early May. Swallowtails, Monarch, Red Spotted Admirals and other species can be seen hilltopping in this area as well.

Historically, Juniper Hairstreak have been seen on trees near the skyline outlook area, but not this year. On most visits, I doubled back along the dirt road to turn right at a concrete-paved area for the descent to the north back to the parking area. This path drops gently at first and then more steeply as it passes between two power transmission towers before rejoining the gravel path passing through wildflower fields. This year was not a good one for flowering plants along this path, but when there are flowers, many species of skipper can be seen here.

Horn Pond is a hidden gem for nature lovers of all stripes, and well worth a quick trip for anyone with a couple of hours to spare in the Boston/Cambridge area – as well as an excellent way to hook local people on looking for butterflies!

Many thanks to Howard Hoople, who leads MBC field trips to HPM and who taught me where to look for Juniper Hairstreaks.

(*Ed. note: For another perspective on butterflying at Horn Pond Mountain, please see Howard Hoople's article in the Fall 2019 issue of* Massachusetts Butterflies*, which you can access on the Back Issues page at:* https://massbutterflies.org.

An Informal Look at the Fritillaries

by Bill Benner

"Are butterflies less abundant than they were in the good old days?" This is a question that we all end up asking ourselves at one time or another. Whether we're asking it all the time or only once in a while depends at least partly on who we are. I tend to be a glass-half-empty worrier a bit too often, but even still, when it comes to overall butterfly abundance from year to year, I often try to chalk it up to annual variation rather than the end of the world. However, as I write about the 4th of July counts each year, and compare butterfly numbers over time, I often pause and wonder when I get to the fritillaries. My impression has been that at least one or two species (*e.g*. Atlantis and Meadow) seem to be harder for me personally to find in my count areas as the years go by. Are they declining over time? The paper by Breed *et al*. that was published several years ago using the club's data in the context of climate change [Breed *et al.*, 2013. "**Climate-driven changes in northeastern US butterfly communities**," Nature Climate Change, Nature, vol. 3(2)] seemed to conclude that many of our northern species might be slowly disappearing. Rather than rely on only my subjective impressions, I decided to take a more fact-based look at the fritillaries using the 4th of July counts available to me.

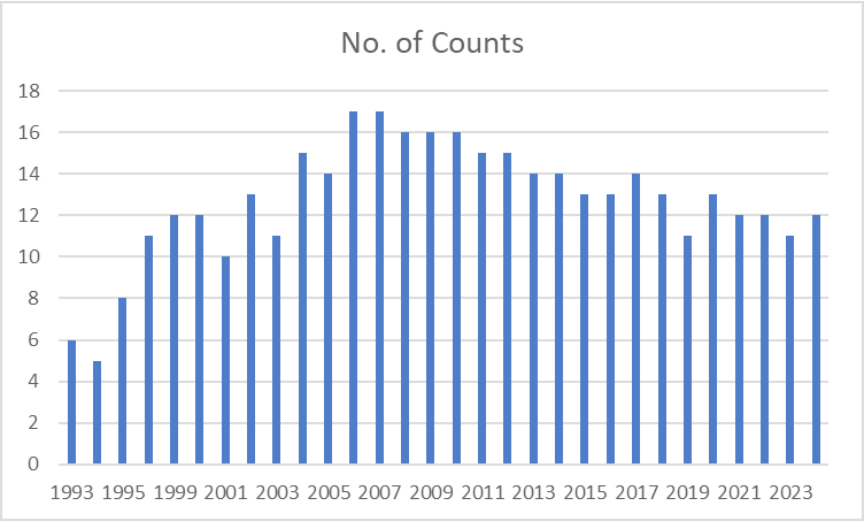
I chose to include the 3 greater fritillary species in our area – Great Spangled (*Speyeria cybele*), Aphrodite (*S. aphrodite*) and Atlantis (*S. atlantis*) – as well as the 2 lessers – Silver-bordered (*Boloria selene*) and Meadow (*B. bellona*). My original musings were about Atlantis and Meadow, the two species I tend to fret about when I see a low, sometimes single-digit, count total for a given year. But since this mini-project meant looking back through all of the count data in the back issues of the journal, I decided to expand and include all five while I was at it.

I made simple tables: From the 4th of July counts, a list of the total number of each species seen each year from 1993 through 2024 (but not including 1996 and 1997, since those years were reported in the journal only as count summaries without individual

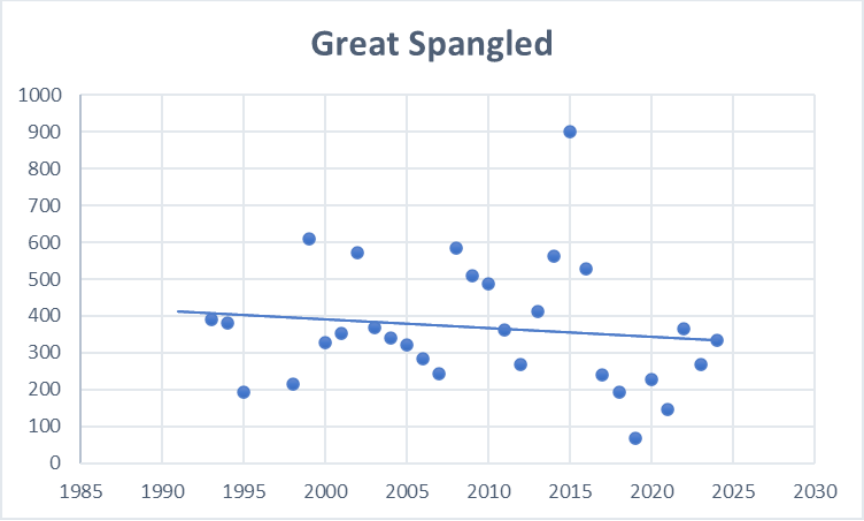
numbers.) Then I used these to make simple graphs, so that I could look at the data visually for a general impression of trends.

Note that this is not a formal analysis. There are a lot of assumptions that get violated when you don't account for other differences between years; more effort one year will often mean more butterflies seen that year, for example. I did also make a graph of the total number of 4th of July counts for each year, which varies. But while a more rigorous statistical analysis that corrects for multiple confounding variables might be an interesting future task, it was beyond the scope of this simple report. So, my impressions may need to be taken with a grain of salt.

Nevertheless, let's take a look! First, here's a bar graph of the number of 4th of July counts each year. You can see that, in general, there were fewer counts earlier in the 1990's, then it peaked at 17 counts for a couple of years in the mid-2000's, and has since stabilized at around 12 counts each year, give or take:

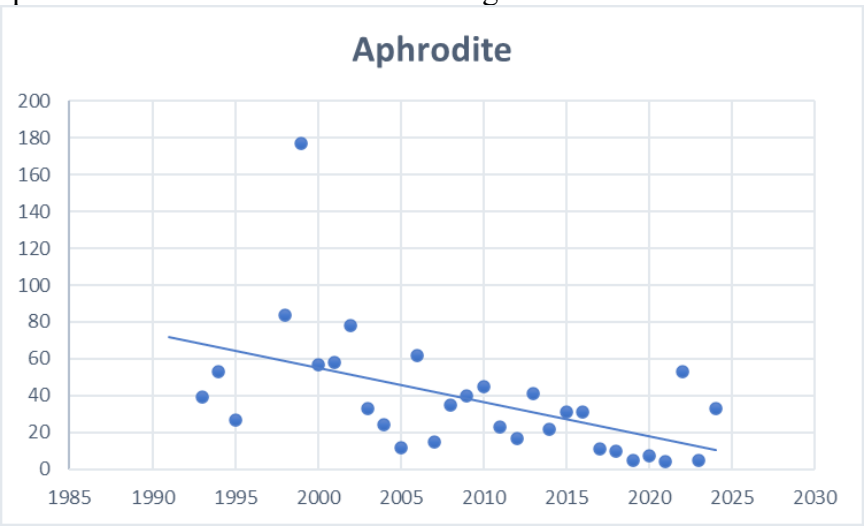


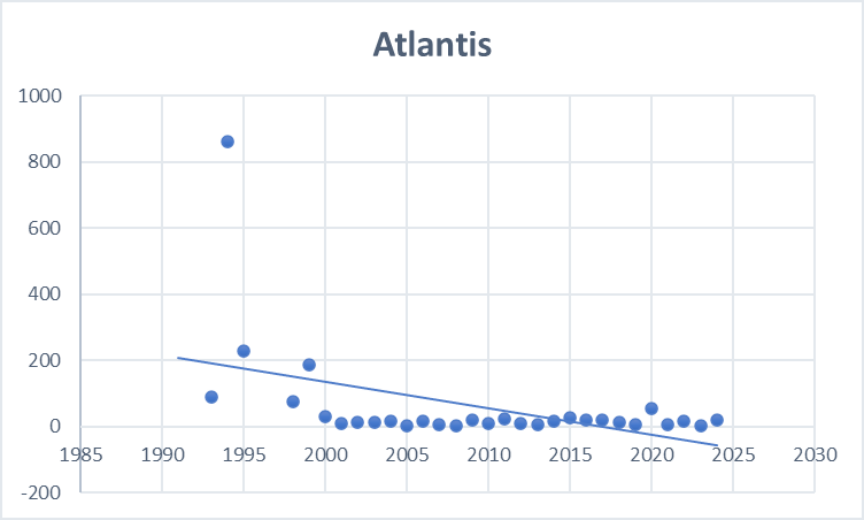
Now, let's look at the most common of the fritillaries by far, the Great Spangled. Here's a graph of the numbers by year from the 4th of July counts:



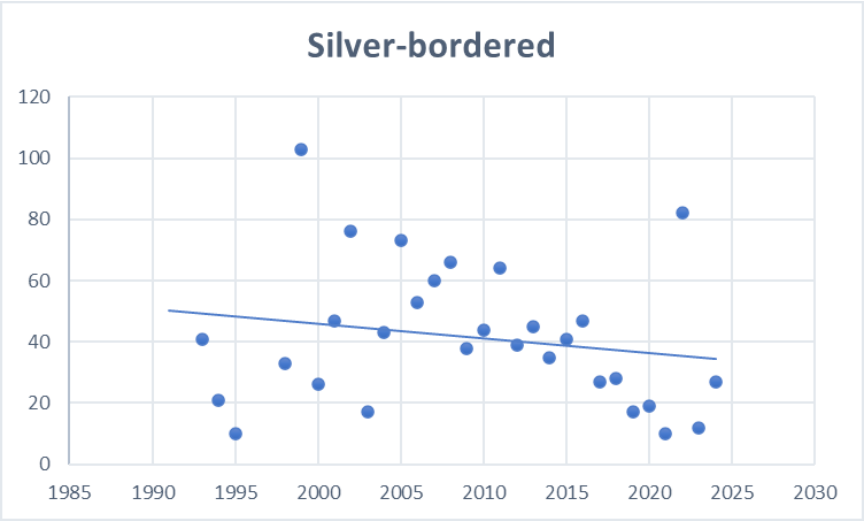
As we can see from the regression line (the straight line that is showing the general trend of the numbers), there is a slight decline in the total count numbers over time. Such a mild trend may or may not be significant, however, if you accounted for party hours and other factors that might vary from year to year. But it is interesting to me that Great Spangled, the one fritillary I've always thought of as being relatively stable, may actually be slowly decreasing over time.

Interestingly, and worryingly, the other two greater fritillary species also seem to exhibit a similar gradual downward trend:

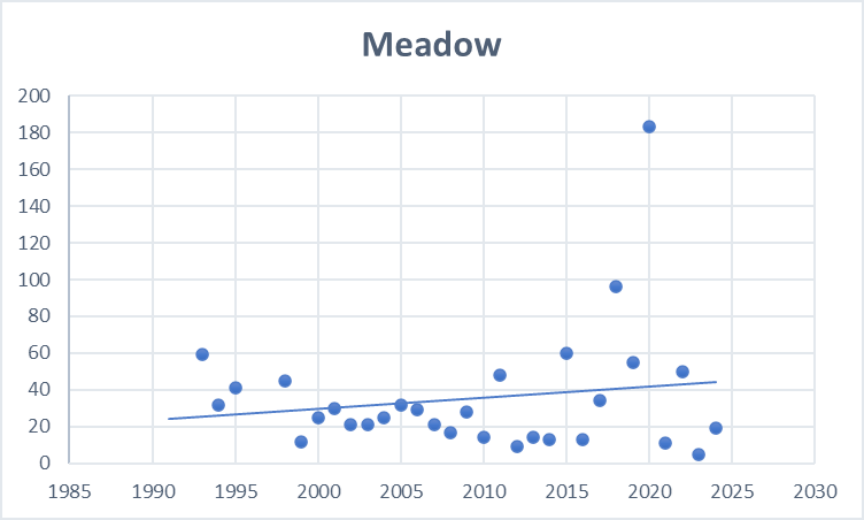




as does the Silver-bordered lesser fritillary:



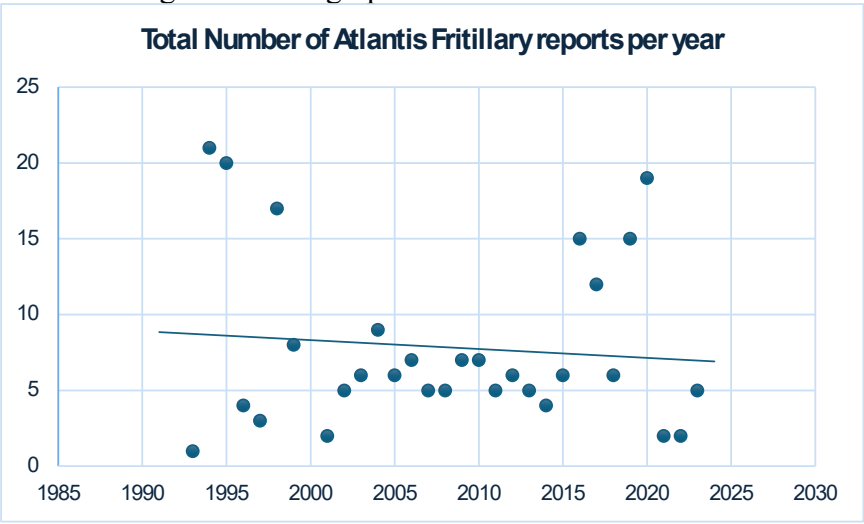
But also interesting, and to me surprising, is seeing that the other lesser fritillary species, Meadow Fritillary, actually shows an *increase* over time in numbers reported during the counts:



That increase hasn't been apparent to me in my own count areas, so I decided to take a further look at some of these recent high counts of Meadow Fritillaries in the count summaries. As perhaps expected for this northerly species, it is the Northern Berkshire count that accounts for the couple of really high numbers of Meadow Fritillaries recently. That one count recorded 85 in 2018, and 171 in 2020! I'm not sure where they're being seen, but it's encouraging that we do still seem to have some places with decent numbers of these beautiful little fritillaries.

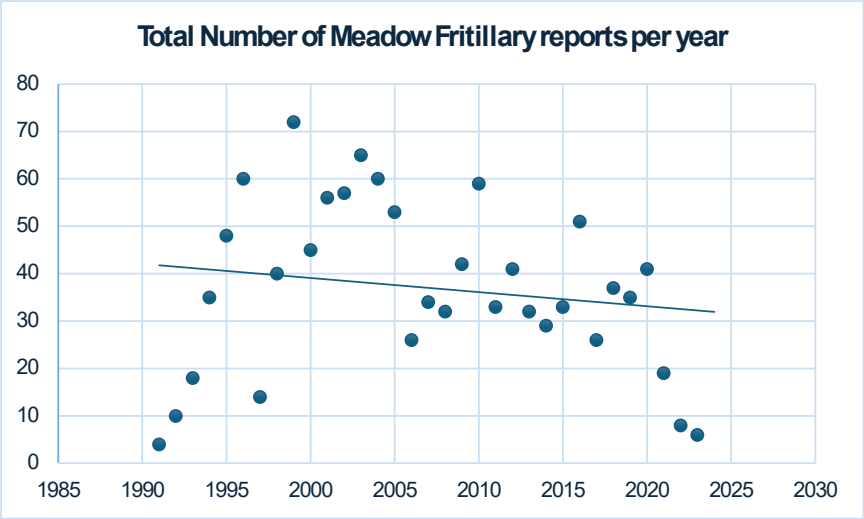
The last thing that I noticed, and wasn't aware of until I went back looking through these records, is the sudden and apparently long-term crash around the turn of the century of the numbers of Atlantis Fritillaries seen on the counts. The mid to late 90's seemed to have good, to incredible, numbers of Atlantis Fritillaries – 861 in 1994! – numbers that seem almost unbelievable to us today. Their numbers dropped from 186 seen on the 1999 counts, down to only 30 in 2000, and they have remained at a few dozen or less on average every year since then, though with a high of 183 in 2020. It's almost as though their population crashed abruptly in MA and has never really returned in any sustained way, though since we don't have data from prior to the early 1990's, it's also possible that those very high counts during the mid-90's were an anomaly, and their numbers had been much lower before that.

Another way of looking at Atlantis Fritillary numbers over time comes from the club's overall database, which has records submitted from throughout the season rather than just from isolated 4th of July counts. Mark Fairbrother, our hard-working records compiler, provided me with some of these data. Looking at just the number of times that Atlantis Fritillary has been reported each season gives us this graph:



While there are a higher number of reports each year in the mid-1990's, there are also a similarly higher number between 2015 and 2020. This increase in reports in the mid to late 2010's has not, however, resulted in the large numbers of individuals that were reported in the 1990's, suggesting that the apparent drastic reduction in their population is perhaps real.

Not necessarily, however. As I said above, using the 4th of July counts alone, it seems like all species are trending downward except Meadow Fritillary. But if you look at a similar graph of the total number of reports of Meadow Fritillaries from the club's database, you get this graph. This would seem to suggest that Meadow Fritillaries are also decreasing over time, whereas the 4th of July counts suggest they are increasing:



So what's the real story? As I said, it requires an analysis that accounts for the confounding variables to be able to tease out the truth, and that is beyond the scope of these musings. Different data sets already seem to be suggesting different answers. It's possible that the 4th of July counts, being just a snapshot of time during the season, are not as good at telling the whole story as the full season of records. It's also possible that the total number of individuals seen during an entire season, rather than the number of reports of that species, would be a more accurate indication of the population trend.

There's lots of information and speculation to be gleaned from some of these older records. Looking at data isn't quite as exciting as being out in the field looking for butterflies! but it can teach us a lot. It certainly opens up a Pandora's Box of questions! It might be worth taking a deeper dive into the fritillaries' history in MA. Including more of the club's data base, not just the 4th of July counts, as I started to do for the Atlantis and Meadow Fritillary reports graphs above, could be worthwhile. Formal statistical analyses of the data, which would likely be more accurate than the impressions I've provided here, might give us interesting insights into past and present population trends. Projects for the future!

Butterfliers of Massachusetts

Marjorie Watson

I have been interested in all aspects of nature ever since childhood. Although I grew up in Connecticut, our family spent every summer helping on our grandparent's farm in Maine. We were lucky to have a variety of experiences that many children don't usually have. We were outside every day and were in the barn or the field with the cows and horses. We helped with the gardening at age-appropriate levels. We picked strawberries and raspberries and helped rake blueberries. We often took hikes in the woods with my dad. My grandparents always had back yard bird feeders where we first learned to ID birds. We enjoyed watching the deer or coyotes that appeared in the local fields. Bird watching led me to butterfly watching, but even as a child I could easily ID the common butterflies such as Monarchs, Eastern Tiger Swallowtails or Black Swallowtails. In 2013, I joined the Mass Butterfly Club to learn more about butterflies and I have enjoyed the club walks to many new locations.

I love photographing both butterflies and birds, but I consider myself a novice photographer when it comes to technique or equipment. I use a simple "point and shoot" Canon SX 70 Power Shot that has a good zoom. Sometimes I get lucky and get a nice photo. The key is to get out in the field and enjoy the search. Finding and photographing a new butterfly is so exciting. Whenever I go birding, whether it's local here in Essex County, or traveling to another state like Florida or Texas or another country like Costa Rica or Ecuador, I am always on the lookout for butterflies too. In August and September, I love spending more time looking for butterflies at our local community gardens.

Hairstreaks are some of my favorite Massachusetts butterflies and I remember seeing my first Juniper Hairstreak at Horn Pond Mountain. I was amazed to see a green butterfly! White M Hairstreaks and Early Hairstreak are still on my wish list for someday. Another wish list butterfly is the Pipevine Swallowtail. Since Covid, I haven't attended as many Club walks as I used to, but I hope to return to joining walks in 2025 so that I can see some of these target butterflies. Like many of us, I still have trouble identifying some of the Skippers, but I am pleased that I can confidently ID a few more skippers as I have gained more experience.

I definitely feel that I have seen many less butterflies than when I first started keeping track of species. I often think it has been summer droughts that affect some of it, but also changes in habitat and host plants. However, I have seen some different species more often, such as Zabulon and Sachem Skippers that seem to be moving father north due to what I assume is global warming changes. In my own yard, I have been trying to add more native plants for pollinators as well as simple host plants like parsley, dill, or milkweed. Some of the garden centers are now trying to carry more native plants that are not cultivars.

Whenever I am in the field taking a photo of a butterfly, invariably, someone will notice and ask about the butterfly. Sharing

the name of the species with others and also letting them know about the Mass Butterfly Club is something easy we can all do. I also encourage them to check out our website massbutterflies.org. This is such a great resource especially for the side by side comparison photos.

I am looking forward to seeing some of you in the field as we search for these beautiful butterflies.

Marjorie Watson
Georgetown MA
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Eastern Tiger Swallowtail (*Papilio glaucus*), 8/12/24,
West Newbury, MA, Marjorie Watson

Gray Hairstreak (*Strymon melinus*), 8/9/24, Lancaster, MA, Dawn Vesey

Common Buckeye (*Junonia coenia*), 8/1/24, Lancaster, MA, Dawn Vesey

Bog Copper (*Lycaena epixanthe*), 6/22/24, Royalston, MA, Garry Kessler

Atlantis Fritillary (*Speyeria atlantis*), 6/28/24, Berkshire Co., MA, Andrew Griffith

Arctic Skipper (*Carterocephalus palaemon*), 6/2/24, Washington, MA, Michael Newton

Mulberry Wing (*Poanes massasoit*), 7/4/24, Ipswich, MA, Michael Newton

Zabulon Skipper (*Poanes zabulon*), 8/16/24, Petersham, MA, Alan Rawle

Dusted Skipper (*Atrytonopsis hianna*), 5/25/24, Groveland, MA, Bo Zaremba

Least Skipper (*Ancyloxypha numitor*), 8/2/24, Rutland, MA, Alan Rawle

Monarchs (*Danaus plexippus*), "Max" and "Minnie", 8/24/24, Foxboro, MA, Brian Cassie

European Skipper (*Thymelicus lineola*), 6/17/24, Newburyport, MA, Bo Zaremba

Coral (*Satyrium titus*) (above left) and Edwards Hairstreaks (*Satyrium edwardsii*) (above right), 6/30/24; Juniper Hairstreak (*Callophrys gryneus*) (below left), 5/2/24; and Striped Hairstreak (*Satyrium liparops*) (below right), 7/3/24. All photos taken at Horn Pond Mountain, Woburn, MA, Peter Loshin

Appalachian Brown (*Satyrodes appalachia*), 6/29/24, Sherbourne, MA, Garry Kessler

Eyed Brown (*Satyrodes eurydice*), 7/2/24, Washington, MA, Garry Kessler

Bronze Copper (*Lycaena hyllus*), 7/27/24, Longmeadow, MA, Andrew Griffith

Pipevine Swallowtail (*Battus philenor*), 8/12/24, Wareham, MA , Andrew Griffith

2024 4TH OF JULY COUNTS

by Karl Barry and Bill Benner

"Altogether…it was...marvelous. Not only was there wonderful sunshine and delicious rain, in due times and perfect measure, but there seemed to be something more: an air of richness and growth, and a gleam of beauty beyond that of mortal summers that flicker and pass…"

Those of you less geeky than your esteemed editor (meaning probably all of you) may not have experienced quite as perfect a count season as these lines describing the elven-blessed Shire in J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* would suggest, but still, it was far better than the floods of 2023 and the drought of 2022. For many of us, at least during the count period, there didn't seem to be any really prolonged periods of either excessively hot weather with no rain, or of excessive rains without intervals of sunny days. (Ignore the fact that we're currently in a late-summer drought as this summary is being written!) Whether it was the combination of relatively steady moisture and warm, sunny weather, or some other quirk of butterfly biology or fate, the butterflies responded, and it was nice to have a count season of relatively normal butterfly abundance again, and one in which the counts mostly happened as scheduled.

The numbers of species and of individual butterflies were indeed good to above average overall during this year's counts, with the combined values of number of species and number of individuals taken together being the best out of the past 5 years. 2024's species count of 73 was considerably better than 2023's count of 65 individuals. In the past five years, only 2020 did better, with 74 species, but that year also saw 13 counts, as opposed to only 12 this year. Similarly, this year's total of 10,148 individuals is the highest of the past 5 years. 2020 came close, with 9,941 individuals, but again with 13 counts rather than this year's 12. 2022 came even closer, with 10,125 individuals, but almost 10% of that total was a very high number (1,064) of European Skippers, almost 10 times 2024's count of 140 European Skippers (though see Pearl Crescents, below!)

Further comparisons help to tell the tale. There were 23 species in 2024 for which the total number of that species seen over all the counts this year was the highest of the past 5 years, and an additional 22 species with the second-most seen this year compared to the past 5 years. Contrast that with 11 species which had their second-worst count this year of the past 5 years, and only 5 species whose numbers this year were the lowest of the past 5. Additionally, there were 2 species seen this year that had otherwise not been seen at all over the past 5 years (actually for much longer): a Silvery Blue on the South Berkshire count, and a Dreamy Duskywing on the Central Franklin count. Dreamy Duskywing has only been seen on a count once before, in 2009 when one individual was found on the North Essex count. Twice before there have been individual Silvery Blues seen on counts: one in 2005 on the Northern Worcester count and one in 1993 on the Northern Berkshire Count, which was shortly after the species arrival in the state. For some interesting history about Silvery Blues firmly colonizing Massachusetts, check out the notes in the Spring and Fall 1993 issues of *Massachusetts Butterflies*. You can access them from our back issues web pages, here: https://massbutterflies.org/back-issues.asp#cover-02 .

Looking at the different butterfly groups, it is clear that some groups of butterflies did better than others this year, at least during the count periods. Swallowtails had an average to good year. Blacks had their best showing (98 individuals) of the past 5 years, almost double the number of the 54 seen last year and the 50 in 2022. Likewise, Eastern Tiger Swallowtails had a good year, with 113 seen, though this is nowhere near the high of 474 seen in 2020. Only 1 Canadian Tiger was reported, but this butterfly is usually in the single digits, since its flight period mostly happens prior to the counts. No Giant Swallowtails were seen, as is usual; although they appear in MA regularly now, the count period must be either between broods and/or before the influx of southern immigrants. Spicebush came in at about average, with 54.

Whites and Sulphurs overall had a slow count season. There were 2 Mustard Whites seen, which is better than the zero seen in 2021 and 2022, but still not very many. The other three

species normally seen during the count period had either their lowest – Cabbage White and Orange Sulphur – or second-lowest – Clouded Sulphur – counts of the past five years. We tend to think of these as common "background species", so it's interesting to wonder about why all 3 would have had lower-than-average numbers this count season.

Coppers, Hairstreaks, and Blues had an average season, overall, with the Silvery Blue mentioned above probably being the highlight for this group. American Copper numbers were their second highest (632) over the past five years, while Bog Coppers were at their second lowest (380). No Bronze Coppers were seen for the second year in a row, but this species only appears during count season in the low single digits at the best of times. Hairstreaks also had an average season, overall. Only Banded Hairstreak had a poor season, with only 11 total seen (19 were seen last year, and 24 in 2021, but there were 181 in 2022 and 118 in 2020). No Hickory Hairstreaks were seen for the second year in a row, but it's difficult to know whether this is due to a change in their actual numbers or a change in observers and identification attempts, since this species is notoriously difficult to separate from Banded. The Blues likewise had a middle-of-the-road year, with the lone Silvery Blue the standout.

Nymphalids were a mixed bag during the counts, as they often are, given the wide range of life-styles and flight periods in this catch-all group, but results generally were better than average. The greater and lesser fritillaries overall did very well, with 4 of the 5 species having their second-best of the past 5 years. It was encouraging to see 19 Atlantis Fritillaries reported; there are years when it is seen only in the single digits. Likewise 33 Aphrodite Fritillaries were a welcome number, though not as many as the 53 seen in 2022. Only Meadow Fritillaries were somewhat disappointing, with 19 seen—better than the 5 seen last year, but a far cry from the 50 of 2022 and the amazing 183 reported for 2020's counts. And the "least fritillary"—Pearl Crescent—had an even more amazing count season, with 1,646 reported, accounting for more than 15 percent of the total number of individuals seen during the counts! Of these, 823 were on the Northampton count,

442 on the Central Berkshire count, and 169 on the Brewster count. There was also one Variegated Fritillary on the Brewster count—not a species we see every year.

Baltimore Checkerspots likewise had a very good count season, with 591 seen. The last 3 years have seen good number of this species, with 383 last year and 474 in 2022. Prior to that, the highest number reported was 389 in 2013.

Anglewings were fairly well represented, with Gray Comma being the only missing species this year, but that butterfly hasn't been seen on a count since 2020. One Compton and two Milbert's Tortoiseshells were seen on the Northern Berkshire count, both being species that we don't get every year. Likewise, the *Vanessa* butterflies also had a good count season—the influx of Red Admirals early in the year seemed to linger into the count period, and American Ladies were common throughout the summer, which led to good numbers of both of these species on the counts. Twelve Painted Ladies was quite a few more than the single digits reported annually, since prior to 2020. Red-spotted Admiral and Viceroy numbers were also above average, each also having their best years since 2020.

The two Emperors went unreported, however. The back story for the Tawny Emperors is an unhappy one. This butterfly's presence in the count summary is pretty much always in the single digits. It has for years usually included a few individuals being seen on the Northampton count, in one particular spot where a small population has been established on one lone large Hackberry tree. Sadly, that tree blew down in a storm two winters ago, and unfortunately no Tawny Emperors have been seen in that spot since, either during the count period or at any other time at that spot during the past two summers. There are other sites with Hackberry tree(s) in the state that are supporting Tawny Emperors, and which also sometimes contribute individuals to the count summary, so perhaps others will continue to find some on future years' counts. As with other multivoltine species, it depends on finding individuals flying at the right time during the count period.

Satyrs had an average count season overall. Little Wood Satyrs had their lowest count (89) of the past five years. Common

Ringlets (189) and Common Wood Nymphs (656), on the other hand, both had their second-best counts since 2019. The counts for Northern Pearly Eye and the two Browns were about average. There were 320 Monarchs seen, which is more than twice the 124 found during last year's count, but not as many as the 442 seen in 2022 or the 450 seen in 2021.

The skippers also continue this trend of mostly-positive count results, with a few especially encouraging numbers. The 264 Silver-spotted Skippers seen was the highest count since the 753 seen in 2020. Hoary Edge was seen 5 times this year, much closer to the average counts (7 in 2020, 3 in 2021, 7 in 2022) than the zero seen last year. One each of the two cloudywings was seen on the Central Franklin count, and the above-mentioned Dreamy Duskywing on that same count was a great find. The Central Franklin count also provided the reported 7 Juvenal's Duskywings, a species often missed during the count season due to its early flight season. In fact, the Central Franklin count reported either all or some individuals of every one of the reported larger skippers this year (Silver-spotted, Hoary Edge, cloudywings, and duskywings), a feat not managed by any of the other counts. However, the Brewster count led the way with Horace's Duskywings, reporting 26 of the amazing 37 of this species seen on the counts this year.

Grass skipper numbers were also overall fairly good across the count reports. European Skippers were an exception to this, with only 140 seen, compared to 475 in 2023 and 1,064 in 2022. Possibly this was a matter of timing of the counts with respect to the flight period of this species this year; time will tell. Several of the other common grass skippers had exceptional count numbers this year, however. The 935 Peck's Skippers seen is 10 times the usual number (e.g. 81 in 2023, 115 in 2022, 105 in 2021, and 51 in 2020). The Northern Berkshire folks accounted for 843 of these. Northern Broken Dash also had a good count season, with 355 seen, the most over the past 5 years. Other species—Least, Tawny-edged, Crossline, Hobomok (and one Zabulon! On the Blackstone Corridor count), Little Glassywing, and Long Dash—had more average counts, though Long Dash (nearing the end of

its flight period during count season) had a below-average count of only 14. Delaware Skippers had a really good count season, with 134 reported, the most since the 349 reported in 2014. And perhaps we can invoke global warming to account for the amazing 17 Sachems reported, the most since 2013.

Finally, without exception, the wetland-associated skippers had their best count seasons of the past 5 years. Mulberry Wings (76) were above the average of 50 or so for most years. A very robust count of 88 Broad-winged Skippers was the most since the next-highest 21 of 2020; 34 of those seen this year were on the Concord count and 42 on the Brewster count. Similarly, 26 Black Dashes were the most since the 23 of 2020. Eleven Dion Skippers was a rare double-digit count for this state-listed, mostly western MA species, and included 2 seen on the more easterly Blackstone Corridor count. Thirteen Two-spotted Skippers was another rare double-digit entry, interestingly all seen on the Central Berkshire count, away from their often-reported Franklin County area locations. And lastly, 587 Dun Skippers was better than usual, with the 387 seen in 2020 being the most recent high count.

As always, thanks to everyone who makes the counts happen—all of the participants, and especially the following compilers for all of their hard work: Tom Tyning, Rene Wendell, Mark Fairbrother, Wendy Howes, Jay Shetterly, Simon Perkins, Russ Hopping, Mark Rosenstein, Tom and Cathy Dodd, Andrew Griffith, and Mark Faherty. Everyone's careful observations are invaluable and much appreciated. Karl Barry deserves a special note of thanks for receiving all of the count data from across the commonwealth and tabulating it for easy access. If you haven't been on a count yet, please consider joining one or more in 2025! It's a great way to contribute to citizen science while having a fun day in the field.

Wild Indigo Duskywing (*Erynnis baptisiae*), 8/1/24, West Whately, MA, Bill Benner

July Counts 2024	Black Swallowtail	Eastern Tiger Swallowtail	Canadian Tiger Swallowtail	Spicebush Swallowtail	Mustard White	Cabbage White	Clouded Sulphur	Orange Sulphur	American Copper	Bog Copper	Coral Hairstreak
Total count	**98**	**113**	**1**	**54**	**2**	**601**	**460**	**38**	**632**	**380**	**37**
Northern Berkshire	12	26	1			71	57	1	5		4
Central Berkshire	27	11			2	38	104	1	48		6
Southern Berkshire	2	10				32	81	7	2		
Central Franklin	3	23		3		103	29	3	139	376	9
Northampton	25	7		8		119	87	4	67		
Northern Worcester	21	19		6		48	79	5	124		
Concord	5	2		3		39	4	5	3		
Northern Essex						7					
Blackstone Corridor	1	2		1		34	14	2	35		3
Falmouth	1			13		1	5		12		3
Truro	1	3		15		21		5	146	4	3
Brewster		10		5		88		5	51		9

July Count 2024	Edwards' Hairstreak	Banded Hairstreak	Striped Hairstreak	Juniper Hairstreak	Gray Hairstreak	Eastern Tailed-Blue	Summer Azure	Silvery Blue	Variegated Fritillary	Great Spangled Fritillary	Aphrodite Fritillary
Total count	**13**	**11**	**23**	**2**	**42**	**179**	**77**	**1**	**1**	**333**	**33**
Northern Berkshire		2	3			25	26			72	4
Central Berkshire						28	8			50	1
Southern Berkshire			1		1	27	6	1		69	22
Central Franklin		2	1		3	9	15			73	6
Northampton		1			1	25	3			41	
Northern Worcester					1	7	5			13	
Concord						2	1			1	
Northern Essex										1	
Blackstone Corridor		3			19	46	10			13	
Falmouth	11				7	5					
Truro	2		17		4		2				
Brewster		3	1	2	6	5	1		1		

July Count 2024	Atlantis Fritillary	Silver-bordered Fritillary	Meadow Fritillary	Pearl Crescent	Baltimore Checkerspot	Question Mark	Eastern Comma	Compton Tortoiseshell	Mourning Cloak	Milbert's Tortoiseshell	American Lady
Total count	**21**	**27**	**19**	**1,646**	**591**	**19**	**19**	**1**	**7**	**2**	**68**
Northern Berkshire	1		15	12	33	4	4	1	1	2	4
Central Berkshire	15			442	95	2					7
Southern Berkshire	5		4	21	21	3	11		2		4
Central Franklin		5			16	1	2		3		4
Northampton		17		823	6	1	1		1		5
Northern Worcester				71		1	1				1
Concord		5		84		1					1
Northern Essex					14						1
Blackstone Corridor				7	6	2					3
Falmouth					400						21
Truro				17							10
Brewster				169		4					7

July Count 2024	Painted Lady	Red Admiral	Red-spotted Admiral	White Admiral	Red-spotted Purple	Viceroy	Northern Pearly-Eye	Eyed Brown	Appalachian Brown	Little Wood-Satyr	Common Ringlet
Total count	**12**	**110**	**2**	**15**	**36**	**44**	**13**	**24**	**95**	**89**	**189**
Northern Berkshire	1	29		6	10	4	7	8	2		10
Central Berkshire	4	12		3	9	9	1	6	1		2
Southern Berkshire	1	11		2	2	4			12	13	8
Central Franklin		9		4	5	1	2	9	13	26	1
Northampton		11			2	8	1		11	1	77
Northern Worcester		6			3	1	1		15	4	78
Concord		5	2			7			16	2	12
Northern Essex		1							2	5	1
Blackstone Corridor	2	6				6	1	1	6	34	
Falmouth	1	2				4					
Truro	1	7							17	4	
Brewster	2	11			5						

July Count 2024	Common Wood-Nymph	Monarch	Silver-spotted Skipper	Hoary Edge	Southern Cloudywing	Northern Cloudywing	Dreamy Duskywing	Juvenal's Duskywing	Horace's Duskywing	Wild Indigo Duskywing	Common Sootywing
Total count	**656**	**320**	**264**	**5**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**7**	**37**	**43**	**9**
Northern Berkshire	50	8	12								
Central Berkshire	153	36	12							14	
Southern Berkshire	179	10	12								
Central Franklin	2	20	90	5	1	1	1	7	1	2	
Northampton	41	131	37						9	21	9
Northern Worcester	38	45	10							4	
Concord	47	30	3							2	
Northern Essex											
Blackstone Corridor	67	10	36								
Falmouth	2	5									
Truro	49	2	39						1		
Brewster	28	23	13						26		

July Count 2024	Least Skipper	European Skipper	Peck's Skipper	Tawny-edged Skipper	Crossline Skipper	Long Dash	Northern Broken-Dash	Little Glassywing	Sachem	Delaware Skipper	Mulberry Wing
Total count	**52**	**140**	**935**	**12**	**14**	**14**	**355**	**122**	**17**	**134**	**76**
Northern Berkshire	1	86	843	4		8	25	7		7	
Central Berkshire			32				40	5		8	17
Southern Berkshire	5	33	53	1	1	1	51	76		51	15
Central Franklin	3	11		4	3	1	24	11		47	14
Northampton	9	1			2		58	4		1	9
Northern Worcester		3					11	10		2	
Concord			4				10				5
Northern Essex	23	6				2		4			
Blackstone Corridor	3				1	1	36	5		9	16
Falmouth			1	1	7	1	1			9	
Truro							36		3		
Brewster	8		2	2			63		14		

July Count 2024	Hobomok Skipper	Zabulon Skipper	Broad-winged Skipper	Dion Skipper	Black Dash	Two-spotted Skipper	Dun Skipper
Total count	**7**	**1**	**88**	**11**	**26**	**13**	**587**
Northern Berkshire	5			1			47
Central Berkshire	1		9	7	1	13	95
Southern Berkshire	1			1	1		95
Central Franklin					18		38
Northampton			1		3		103
Northern Worcester							18
Concord			34				18
Northern Essex							
Blackstone Corridor		1		2	3		65
Falmouth							8
Truro			2				42
Brewster			42				58

July Counts 2024 Summary	No. of Individuals	No. of Species	No. of Participants	Party Hours	Date	Compiler
Total	10,148	73	-	-	-	-
Northern Berkshire	1,567	46	9	31	July 7	Tom Tyning
Central Berkshire	1,375	40	11	18	July 14	Tom Tyning
Southern Berkshire	971	45	14	25	July 5	Rene Wendell
Central Franklin	1,202	52	8	35	July 4	Mark Fairbrother
Northampton	1,792	42	5	21	July 14	Mark Fairbrother
Northern Worcester	661	31	10	16	July 13	Wendy Howes
Concord	353	29	14	18	July 14	Jay Shetterly / Simon Perkins
Northern Essex	67	12	6	14	June 22	Russ Hopping & Mark Rosenstein
Blackstone Corridor	522	38	7	18	July 7	Tom & Cathy Dodd
Falmouth	521	23	13	n/a	June 29	Andrew Griffith
Truro	453	26	7	10	July 14	Mark Faherty
Brewster	664	30	7	14	July 21	Mark Faherty

Red Admiral (*Vanessa atalanta*), 5/3/24, Boxford, MA, Bo Zaremba

Submission of Articles, Illustrations, and Season Records

We encourage all members to contribute to *Massachusetts Butterflies*. Articles, illustrations, photographs, butterfly field trip reports, garden reports, and book reviews are all welcome, and should be sent to the Editor by August 31 for the Fall issue, and January 31 for the Spring issue.

Send NABA Fourth of July count results to Karl Barry at: karl@massbutterflies.org by **August 15** for inclusion in the Fall issue. Send your season sightings and records to Mark Fairbrother at: mark@massbutterflies.org, by **December 15** (or earlier if possible!) for inclusion in the Spring issue. Records may now be submitted via the online checklist and reporting form, which is available for download from our website at: http://www.massbutterflies.org/club-publications.asp

Contributions

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Massachusetts Butterflies Advisory Board

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Red Admiral (*Vanessa atalanta*),
9/4/24, Danvers, MA, Marjorie Watson

American Copper (*Lycaena phlaeas*),
8/11/24, Wareham, MA, Michael Newton