ALBERTA LEPIDOPTERISTS' GUILD NEWSLETTER

FALL 2018

Welcome to the ALG Newsletter, a compendium of news, reports, and items of interest related to lepidopterans and lepidopterists in Alberta. The newsletter is produced twice per year, in spring and fall, edited by John Acorn.

Great Spangled Fritillary, photographed in Edmonton by Gary Anweiler.

Contents:

The Waterton Butterfly Count: A Remarkable Phenomenon

Kimberly Pearson and John Acorn

John Acorn: Far from the northern core where most ALG members live, the lepidopterists at Waterton Lakes National Park have been conducting an annual one-day butterfly count for nineteen years now. This alone deserves mention, and appreciation. The key figure in these counts has been Kim Pearson, an enthusiastic naturalist who has worked in this part of the world since graduating from the University of Alberta some two decades ago. While she was an undergraduate student, Kim was inspired by Barb Beck to begin the count, at a time when Barb was coordinating more one-day counts in Alberta than any other province or state (and the count has been tallied using Barb's original form). Most of these turn-of-the-Millennium counts, led by former students of Barb's, have long since fizzled out, but Kim has kept hers alive, with help from the park, a number of fine colleagues in particular, and folks from The Nature Conservancy Canada. Ted Pike has regularly traveled from Calgary to join the count, and in recent years my family and I have taken part in some of the counts as well. We were not able to go this year, unfortunately, and I am terribly curious how things have changed since the big fire of 2017.

Counters at Waterton Springs Campground in 2014, photo by J. Acorn

Kim Pearson addressing the counters in 2014, and holding a well used copy of "Alberta Butterflies." Photo by J. Acorn

Kim Pearson: As you'll see, there was a conspicuous absence of crescents in our count this year. Also a record high of cabbage whites; I saw one feeding on fireweed. All areas surveyed during this year's count were affected by the Kenow Wildfire of 2017, with high or very high severity. Virtually all above-ground vegetation and organic soil was removed by the fire in those areas. I don't see how butterflies at any life stage (or any other living organisms, for that matter, except deeply-established vegetative material) would have survived the fire in those areas, which range from alpine meadows down through grassland valley bottoms. So most of the butterflies observed in those areas this year have mostly likely moved in from surrounding unburned, or, rarely because there just aren't many of them in this post-fire landscape, less severely burned areas. The grasslands are looking very lush now, with lots of flowering forbs but lots of bare areas remaining. Formerly forested habitats at higher elevations are still looking very black/grey, some with literally no green appearing to date. However, some grasses and forbs are making appearances at lower elevation montane habitats.

John Acorn: Looking at the data summary on the following pages, I am struck by a number of things. Look at how well it documents the arrival of the European Skipper. The most common species overall is the Boisduval's Blue, a butterfly most of us see only rarely. The fourth most common species is the Phoebus' (Rocky Mountain) Parnassian. Now look at those Painted Lady numbers for 2005. And think about how many species on that list you haven't seen in Alberta yourself.

The Waterton Count is a remarkable phenomenon, and I do hope that more ALG members will participate in future, and keep the count alive. Experts in butterfly identification are always welcome, but so is anyone keen enough to participate. This is a lovely long-term project, and well worth supporting. This year, and in the years going forward, the count will document changes to the butterfly fauna after a major wildfire. And perhaps some year, someone will use the count as an excuse to trek into the backcountry and see if the Clodius Parnassian (*Parnassius clodius*) still exists in Alberta. Some of our members know where to look, I am told.

Rocky Mountain Parnassian, photo by C. Bird

	Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Scientific Name	**Common Name**	**Number of observed individuals**																		
PAPILIONIDAE	**Swallowtails & Parnassians**																			
Parnassius phoebus smintheus	Smintheus (Pheobus') Parnassian	23	38	100	154	11	161	31	4	5	4	6		3	1	15			1	
Papilio zelicaon	Anise Swallowtail	12	21	3	1	6	6		6	5	6	11	3		1					
Papilio machaeon	Old World Swallowtail			2	1	1					1									
Papilio canadensis	Canadian Tiger Swallowtail	5	12	17	2	5	7	1	1	1	2	6	5	1				1		
Papilio rutulus	Western Tiger Swallowtail			3								2								2
Papilio multicaudata	Two-tailed Swallowtail																			1
Papilio sp.	Swallowtail sp.		1	18		5	6		1	5		6		1						2
PIERIDAE	**Whites & Sulphurs**																			
Pontia occidentalis	Western White				20		1						1				1	1		6
Pieris oleracea	Mustard White		2		2	1			1											7
Pieris marginalis	Margined White	4	3	16	4	4	8	5	2	1	4	3	12	1	2					
Pieris rapae	Cabbage White	3			9	3								3	1		3			15
Euchloe ausonides	Large Marble			2		4														
Euchloe creusa	Northern Marble													1						
Anthocharis stella (sara)	Stella (Sara) Orangetip	1		3		2	4				1	3	6							
	White sp.	4		2	24			1	2	2	1			1						
Colias philodice	Clouded Sulphur		1	2			2		2					1	1		54			2
Colias eurytheme	Orange (Alfalfa) Sulphur		2	1													3			
Colias christina	Christina's Sulphur			10	17		2				1		4	1		3	5	1		3
Colias alexandra	Queen Alexandra's Sulphur	3															2			
Colias meadii	Mead's Sulphur																1			
Colias gigantea	Giant Sulphur				2			3		2			2				3			
Colias skinneri (pelidne)	Skinner's (Pelidne) Sulphur	1		1				1			2									
Colias interior	Pink-edged Sulphur	2	3		1		1	1	3	3	5		7	1	3		11			1
Colias sp.	Sulphur Sp.	5	6	8	72		7	5	1				2				1			5
LYCAENIDAE	**Gossamerwings**																			
Lycaeninae	**Coppers**																			
Lycaena dione	Gray Copper				1															
Lycaena heteronea	Blue Copper			1	11			5		6	1			5	2		2	2		
L. dorcus dorcas	Dorcas Copper																2			
Lycaena helloides	Purplish Copper			1											3					
Lycaena mariposa	Mariposa Copper		1					1					3	1	3		2			
Lycaena sp.	Copper sp.									4										
Theclinae	**Hairstreaks and Elfins**																			
Callophrys sheridanii	Sheridan's Hairstreak						1													
Polyommatinae	**Blues**																			
Cupido (Everes) amyntula	Western Tailed Blue		4	7		6	10		1		1	7	40							2
	Unknown Azure											1								
Celastrina echo nigrescens	Western Spring Azure			3					1											
Glaucopsyche piasus	Arrowhead Blue			1					1		1									
Glaucopsyche lygdamus	Silvery Blue			2		11	2				1									2
Plebejus (Lycaeides) scudderii (idas)	Unknown Northern Blue						1		1						5		5			
Plebejus (Lycaeides) scudderii scudderii	Northern Blue (scudderii)						1		1						5					6
Plebejus (Lycaeides) scudderii atrapraetextus	Northern Blue (atrapraetextus)		18	15	65		4													
Plebejus (Lycaeides) melissa	Melissa Blue		17				13			37			2	3	2	20	8	5	14	9
Aricia (Plebejus) saepiolus	Greenish Blue	14	2	6	9	1	16	3	3		2	3	2	3		7	1	2	1	1
Aricia (Plebejus) icarioides	Boisduval's (Icaroides) Blue	76	259	164	30	16	29	10	3	13	15	30	25	5	4	5	1	10	1	4
Aricia (Plebejus) shasta	Shasta Blue										2									1
Aricia (Plebejus) lupini (acmon)	Lupin Blue (Acmon Blue)		1	1	6		2	1		1							1			
Agriades (Plebejus) rusticus	Rustic (Arctic) Blue	1	3	3	2						1									
Agriades (Plebejus) megalo	Megalo (Rustic) Blue		45	360	151	2														
	Blue Sp.	71				2		2	1	4	3	2	2	2			4			1

C. Raymond

NYMPHALIDAE	**Brushfoots**																			
Argynninae	**Fritillaries, Crescents, Checkerspots & Admirals**																			
Euptoieta claudia	Variegated Fritillary																3		5	6
Speyeria cybele pseudocarpenteri	Great Spangled Fritillary		3	1										2	5			1		
Speyeria (cybele) leto	Leto Fritillary				25			2												
Speyeria aphrodite	Aphrodite Fritillary		1					1					3		1		4			1
Speyeria edwardsii	Edwards' Fritillary	2													2					
Speyeria zerene	Zerene Fritillary	2	1	3	17	1		1	4		1	1		2	2	1	5			2
Speyeria callippe	Callippe Fritillary				5															
Speyeria atlantis hollandi	Atlantis Fritillary	2			2		6													2
Speyeria hesperis	unknown Northwestern Fritillary		2			1							16		4		5	1		1
Speyeria hesperis beani	Bean's (Northwestern) Fritillary		5		19		2		1				2	1			1	2		
Speyeria hesperis dennisi (=lais)	Northwestern Fritillary (dennisi=lais)		1								1			1						
Speyeria hydaspe	Hydaspe Fritillary								1								1			
Speyeria mormonia	Mormon Fritillary	1	4	1	18	1		1	4		4		4	1	7		9			
Speyeria coronis	Coronis Fritillary								1											
Speyeria sp.	Greater Fritillary sp.	23	22	15	177	3	5	2	6	4	1						3			5
Boloria (Clossiana) bellona	Meadow Fritillary															2	14			
Boloria (Clossiana) epithore	Pacific Fritillary				1	3			2		1									
Boloria (Clossiana) grandis (chariclea, titania)	Purple Fritillary				5			11	9	1	1						1			
Boloria chariclea	Arctic Fritillary														1		1			
Boloria (Clossiana) sp.	Lesser Fritillary sp.		3					1			1						3			
Phyciodes tharos	Pearl Crescent		3						1			1			10	12	1	14		
Phyciodes cocyta	Northern Crescent	17		28	42		39	1	4		1			1		7	17	9	1	
Phyciodes batesii	Tawny Crescent	13	11								4				4		1			
Phyciodes pulchellus	Field Crescent	23	38	54	57	34	14	18	13	10	18	2	8	3	18	2	21	13		
Phyciodes sp.	Crescent sp.	42	2	97	37	3				3		1				1	1			
Chlosyne palla	Northern Checkerspot	17		6	22	4	17	3		8	7	2						2		
Euphydryas anicia anicia	Anicia (Variable) Checkerspot	49	34	47	30	11	22	9	4	11	8	2	3					3		1
Euphydryas anicia bernadetta	Bernadetta's Checkerspot																2			
Euphydryas editha beani	Edith's Checkerspot (beani)					3	8	1	6		2									
Euphydryas. editha hutchinsi	Edith's Checkerspot (hutchinsi)	17	14																	
	Checkerspot sp.	54	1	6	2												5			
Nymphalinae	**Anglewings**																			
Polygonia satyrus	Satyr (Anglewing) Comma					4									1					
Polygonia faunus	Green Comma		1			5					1	5					1			
P. gracilis gracilis	Hoary Comma	5		1																
Polygonia oreas	Oreas Anglewing (Comma)			1									1							
Polygonia progne	Gray Comma	1		2		3														
Polygonia sp.	Polygonia sp.	3				3				1							1			
Nymphalis antiopa	Mourning Cloak		1			2														
Aglais milberti	Milbert's Tortoiseshell	1	4	1	5	2	11		1		2			1	1	1		1	7	3
Vanessa cardui	Painted Lady		2		2		377									1				
Limenitis arthemis	White Admiral		6	3	9		12	4	2	1	3		1	3	2		4	1	1	1
Limenitis archippus	Viceroy			1																
Limenitis lorquini	Lorquin's Admiral		2						1	1					1					
Limenitis sp.	Admiral sp.		7		2			4	2	1			1							
NYMPHALIDAE	**Satyrs**																			
Coenonympha inornata	Inornate (Common) Ringlet	1	2	196	281		32	1	3	6		3	11		2	4		2	6	2
Cercyonis pegala	Common Wood Nymph										1				11	28	116		14	4
Cercyonis oetus	Small (Dark) Wood Nymph		2		14			11	8	58	2			18	21	12	14	2	2	14
Erebia epipsodea	Common Alpine	14	2	40	7	16	3	9	3		3	1	3					1		
Oeneis macounii	Macoun's Arctic					1														
Oeneis chryxus	Chryxus Arctic		2	1	1		1			1		1	3							
HESPERIIDAE	**Skippers**																			
Pyrginae	**Spreadwing Skippers**																			
Erynnis icelus	Dreamy Duskywing									1										
Erynnis persius	Persius Duskywing		1	4																1
Erynnis sp.	Duskywing sp.		1									1								
Pyrgus ruralis	Two-banded Checkered Skipper			5						1										
Carterocephalus palaemon	Arctic Skipper		1	1			2	1	1		3		8			1				
Carterocephalus palaemon magnus	Magnus Arctic Skipper						2													
Carterocephalus palaemon mandan	Mandan Arctic Skipper																	1		
Hesperiinae	**Fold Wing Skippers**																			
Oarisma garita	Garita Skipper			10	6		3													
Thymelicus lineola	European Skipper										1		1	85	78	126	274	16	44	64
Hesperia manitoba	Manitoba (Common) Branded Sk.	1		7																
Hesperia assiniboia	Plains (Common Branded) Skipper											1								
Polites draco	Draco Skipper					1	2													
Polites themistocles	Tawny-edged Skipper				3		3													
Polites mystic	Long Dash				2		1											1		1
Amblyscirtes vialis	Common Roadside Skipper												1							
Hesperiinae sp	Fold Wing Skipper sp.		4																	
Hesperiidae sp	Skipper sp.			2	8															
	Total Number of Species	35	50	52	50	35	41	32	39	23	40	*22*	*32*	*27*	30	*17*	39	23	12	33
	Total Number of Individuals	513	622	1283	1375	181	846	151	112	197	120	*101*	*182*	*151*	204	*244*	618	92	97	178
	Number of Participants	15	37	18	48	16	38	26	17	16	23	*29*	*18*	*23*	34	47	61	41	40	34
	Date	8 Jul	14 Jul	13 Jul	12 Jul	10 Jul	9 Jul	12 Jul	16 Jul	23 Jul	17 Jul	16 Jul	18 Jul	23 Jul	22-Jul	26-Jul	21-Jul	12-Jul	11-Jul	16-Jul
	Notes																		poor weather	post Kenow Wildfire

The ALG 2018 Mountain Adventure

Dave Lawrie

This year's ALG Adventure took members to the mountains southwest of Calgary for the July 27 to 29 weekend. We visited three high alpine areas: Hailstone Butte (Friday), the East Peak of Pasque Mountain (Saturday) and Plateau Mountain (Sunday). Vic Romanyshyn and I also did some scouting the second week of July in the same area, and I'll report on our findings here as well.

The main goal of the trip was folks to have a chance to get into the high alpine (above treeline = higher than about 2300 m, 7500 ft) and see some species that just can't be seen at lower altitudes. Overall this was a great success, and we recorded 38 species of butterflies. Getting into the high alpine is usually a bit of a challenge; a strenuous hike, but Hailstone Butte and Plateau Mountain offer road access to reasonably high altitude starting points which greatly cuts down on the climb.

All three spots are relatively close together and about 55 km west of Nanton. The most direct access is west from Hwy 22 along Hwy 532 (which has many fantastic lower altitude spots for butterflies and other insects). We camped at two sites: East Willow Creek Camping Area, and at the Indian Graves Provincial Recreation Area just off Hwy 532. Longview is the closest town for gas and supplies and is about 30 km N of the Hwy 22/532 junction. It is also possible to approach from the west and north on the Kananaskis Trunk Road (Hwy 40 / 940), but this is a longer drive.

Some notes on permits are in order. The majority of this area are in Public Land Use Zones (Do a Google search for "Alberta PLUZ", the previous link no longer works!), and, to the best of my knowledge, no permits are required for insect collecting (at least not yet). There have been some recent


G. Romanchuk

changes to the boundaries of the PLUZ's in this area and it isn't clear to me exactly which PLUZ Hailstone Butte and Pasque Mountain are now in; perhaps the Cataract Creek Snow Vehicle PLUZ. The Camping Areas along Hwy 532 now appear to be mostly in the Livingstone PLUZ. Anyhow, permits do not seem to be required for collecting at Hailstone Butte or Pasque Mountain, nor along Hwy 532. With one caveat – permits are required for collecting in any Public Recreation Area (PRA) in Alberta. This means a permit is required to collect in the Indian Graves PRA (despite what staff there may have indicated). This is why I and some others chose to camp at the East Willow Creek Camping Area– no permit needed for collecting. Finally, essentially the entire top of Plateau Mountain is an Ecological Reserve, and permits are required for many activities (https://www.albertaparks.ca/parks/kananaskis/plateau-mountain-er/). As such, all our trips to Plateau were observation/catch and release only.

The weather was pretty good for the mountains, but we did get our share of rain and a wee bit of hail (just to make the alpine experience complete!). In typical mountain weather, the days dawned practically cloudless, but clouds would then begin forming in the early afternoon and we had rain in varying amounts each evening. As a result, we only ran a moth light one night at the East Willow Creek Camping Area, and we didn't get much moth-wise!

Vic and I explored the route up the East Peak of Pasque Mtn July 13 (unsuccessful – lots of blundering around in very steep forest) and July 14


Edith's Checkerspot (D. Lawrie)

"On July 26, 2018, Helen and I headed down to Bragg Creek on our way to Indian Graves Campground, hoping to reach it in time to find members of ALG, and get our tent set up before the sun went down. As we turned towards Turner Valley, we saw black smoke and five or six vehicles pulled over on the highway. I checked with a bystander and was informed that the driver of the burning truck was okay. Folks had called 911, so the only thing we could do was to watch the greatest fireworks show I have ever seen as paint cans in the back of the truck exploded. We took this as a sign that this was going to be a great trip."

Bruce Christensen


Vic on top with Plateau Mountain the background (photo by D. Lawrie)

(successful after finding the cutline). We visited Hailstone Butte on July 15, primarily looking for Rockslide Checkerspots (*C. damoetas*) and Lustrous Coppers (*L. cupreus*) and so didn't climb all the way on to the top, therefore not being in the right habitat to see Astarte Fritillaries (*B. astarte*) or Melissa Arctics (*O. melissa*).

Gerry Hilchie, Zac MacDonald, and I explored Hailstone Butte again on July 27. This was Zac's first time finding *Parnassius* in Alberta. The three of us, along with Tyler Nelson, explored the East Peak of Pasque Mountain on July 28. This was Tyler's first experience in the high alpine. We had sun and great weather upon first reaching the summit but then the clouds rolled in and we were hailed on before we reached tree line on the way down. See Tyler's poetic account of our adventure in this issue. Finally, the four of us, along with Colleen Raymond and Gerald Romanchuk, visited Plateau Mountain.

The species list for all these trips along with my solo scouting trip to Plateau Mountain on July 9 are summarized in the table. Essentially the same species were found at all three sites. Some (*O. melissa, E. creusa*) clearly fly earlier and others (*L. phleas*) later, but it seems we were at the main flight period for most species.

Overall, it was a fantastic trip! Many thanks all! -- Dave Lawrie

Family	Species	Plateau July 9	E Pasque July 14	Hailstone July 15	Hailstone July 27	E Pasque July 28	Plateau July 29
Hesperiidae Skippers	*Pygus centaureae* Grizzled Skipper	lots	1-2	2-3	1 or 2	1	2
	Carterocephalus palaemon Arctic Skipper	1-2	1-2	2-3	2-3	1	0
	Hesperia comma Common Branded Skipper	A few	2-3	3-4	1-2	2-3	2-3
	Polites draco Draco Skipper	0	0	0	0	0	1
Papilionidae Swallowtails and Apollos	*Papilio zelicaon* Anise Swallowtail	0	2	1	1	1-2	0
	Parnassius smintheus Rocky Mountain Apollo	0	lots	lots	lots	lots	several
Pieridae Whites and Sulphurs	*Colias philodice* Common Sulphur	lots	lots	several	lots	A few	several
	Colias christina Christina Sulphur	lots	lots	a few	a few	A few	A few
	Colias meadii Mead's Sulphur	lots	lots	lots	lots	several	lots
	Colias nastes Labrador Sulphur	lots	lots	A few	several	lots	lots
	Anthocharis stella Stella Orangetip	1	0	0	0	0	0
	Euchloe creusa Northern Marble	0	1	1	0	0	0
	Pontia occidentalis Western Checkered White	several	several	several	lots	lots	lots
Lycaenidae Coppers, Hairstreaks and Blues	*Lycaena phleas* Small Copper	0	0	0	1	3-4	lots
	Lycaena cupreus Lustrous Copper	0	0	2	0	0	0
	Everes amyntula Western Tailed Blue	0	0	A few	1-2	0	0
	Glaucopsyche lygdamus Silvery Blue	1	0	2	1	0	0
	Lycaeides idas Northern Blue	0	0	A few	1-2	0	A few
	Plebejus saepiolus Greenish Blue	several	A few	several	A few	1-2	A few
	Plebejus icariodes Icariodes Blue	A few	1-2	several	A few	0	0
	Agriades glandon Arctic Blue	lots	lots	lots	lots	lots	lots

Nymphalidae Brushfoots	*Limenitis arthemis* White Admiral	0	0	0	1	0	3-4
	Boloria Eunomia Bog Fritillary	1-2	1	2	1	1-2	2-3
	Boloria astarte Astarte Fritillary	a few	lots	0	0	A few	0
	Boloria chariclea Purple Fritillary	0	0	2	5-6	1-2	0
	Speyeria edwardsii Edward's Fritillary	1	0	0	0	0	0
	Speyeria mormonia Mormon Fritillary	A few	A few	A few	several	several	several
	Aglais milberti Milbert's Tortiseshell	several	several	several	several	several	several
	Polygonia gracilis Hoary comma	0	0	1	0	1	0
	Euphydryas editha Edith's Checkerspot	lots	lots	A few	A few	1-2	0
	Euphydryas anicia Anicia Checkerspot	A few	0	lots	0	0	0
	Chlosyne damoetas Rockslide Checkerspot	0	0	A few	0	0	0
	Phyciodes cocyta Northern Crescent	0	0	A few	A few	0	0
	Phyciodes pulchella Field Crescent	A few	1-2	lots	A few	0	A few
Satyrinae Satyrs and Arctics	*Coenonympha inornata* Common Ringlet	several	A few	several	A few	A few	1-2
	Erebia epipsodea Common Alpine	A few	1-2	lots	several	A few	A few
	Oeneis Melissa Melissa Arctic	lots	2-3	0	0	Maybe 1	0
	Oeneis chryxus Chryxus Arctic	lots	A few	lots	lots	A few	several

Zac MacDonald chasing *P. smintheus* (photo by D. Lawrie)

Vic digging for *B. astarte* – High alpine butterflies that like boulder fields will often drop down between the rocks rather than fly away to escape Lepidopterists and other predators. Yes, he did get it! (photo by D. Lawrie)

"On July 27, 2018, Gerald Romanchuk and I travelled to Kananaskis Country to join the Alberta Lepidopterists' Guild's summer weekend field trip. On Sunday, when we hiked Plateau Mountain, the warm sun and calm weather conditions were excellent for finding butterflies, which was the main purpose of the event. Although Plateau Mountain can be climbed gradually by walking up along a roadway, Dave Lawrie and Gerry Hilchie led us on a shorter, more challenging route with steeper terrain. We found a nice list of butterflies there that day, including 5 or 6 species each that were exciting additions to our life lists. Big thanks to Dave for planning the trip, for his butterfly expertise and fine leadership. I feel like Gerald might agree that Dave, Gerry, Tyler and Zac helped us both enjoy a wonderful hike and educational Lepidoptera experience on Plateau Mountain!"

Colleen Raymond

C. Raymond

"A Visit from the Blue Wizard," or, A poetic retelling of a hike up the east peak of Pasque Mountain

By Tyler Nelson, with apologies to the author of 'Twas the Night Before Christmas'

'Twas the end of July, and all through the alpine,
There were butterflies stirring, disposition benign.
Aerial nets were held at the ready,
But during the trek, we were feeling unsteady;
This hike up Pasque Mountain, though scenery fine,
Involves bush-whacking through spruce and through pine;
Yet ahead of us waited many species uncaptur'd
By this fledgling collector, and I was enraptured.
Leading the way up the peak were lepidopterists brave,
First, Fizzy D, or as most know him, Physics Dave.
Boloria alberta was the species Dave sought,
It is rare in Alberta that it is caught;
Zac the ecologist was behind Fizzy D,
He identified plants and quoted philosophy;
"*Sphagnum*," our young philosopher noted,
He was right– the ground of the trail was coated.
But the third in our party promptly disagreed,
It was the esteemed entomologist, Gerald Hilchie;
"No," he said curtly, and he seemed almost enthrall'd,
While he explained how the "*Sphagnum*" wasn't *Sphagnum* at all.
Upwards we travelled, waxing philosophic,
Looking at plant life, and discussing scientific logic;
Glassine envelopes were tucked in our threads,
While visions of *Parnassius* danc'd in our heads;
When out of the trees we spilled with clatter,
Butterflies abound put an end to our chatter.
Away up the mountain I flew like a flash,
Swinging my net with attitude brash;
More rapid than darners the butterflies came,
Fizzy D whistled and shouted, and call'd them by name:
"Now! *Colias meadii*, now! *Speyeria mormonia*!
"On! *Agriades glandon*! *Erebia epipsodea*!
"To the top of the peak! to the top of east Pasque!
"To reach the top of the mountain is our current task!"
And they were there before me, those Swallowtails mysterious,
The high alpine Apollos, *Parnassius smintheus;*
I swung at a few of the white butterflies,
When met with an obstacle, they take to the skies;
But with persistence I captured of few of the leps,
(I'll admit that, at first, I had some missteps).

C. Raymond

So up to the mountain top each of us flew,
Envelopes full of Papilionids, Nymphalids, and Lycaenids too:
When at the summit, I felt rather proud,
But Zac had glanced upward at the gathering clouds;
"Looks like rain," he said, and looked rather worried,
But Fizzy D and Gerry remained completely unhurried.
And then in a twinkling, I felt on my arms,
A couple of raindrops- was this cause for alarm?
We heard from the next peak a huge thunder crack,
And humbly decided it was time to head back.
The trip back was frantic as the rain turned to hail,
Zac, Dave, and I ran ahead from the gale;
We approached the trail that had allowed our ascent,
Due to inclement weather, we were basically spent.
As we reached the trail, I turn'd with a whine,
To see a rain-soaked Gerry Hilchie, his mouth a hard line;
His net held above was drawn up like a bow,
And his beard was as white as new-fallen snow;
He was dressed in a poncho, made of bright blue plastic,
The scene was becoming something fantastic.
He was standing atop the peak of the place,
When a bolt of lightning flashed, illuminating his face.
He looked like some sort of legendary wild man,
Or perhaps a wizard from the realm of Tolkien.
The blue wizards were missing from the Lord of the Rings,
Perhaps one was among <u>us</u>, in a storm, of all things.
He came down the slope and approached with some care,
Bits of hail had nestled themselves in his hair;
The wizard looked dishevelled, and we stared at the sight.
He spoke to us clearly: "Don't tell my wife!"

C. Raymond

A Selection of Photos from the ALG Mountain Adventure

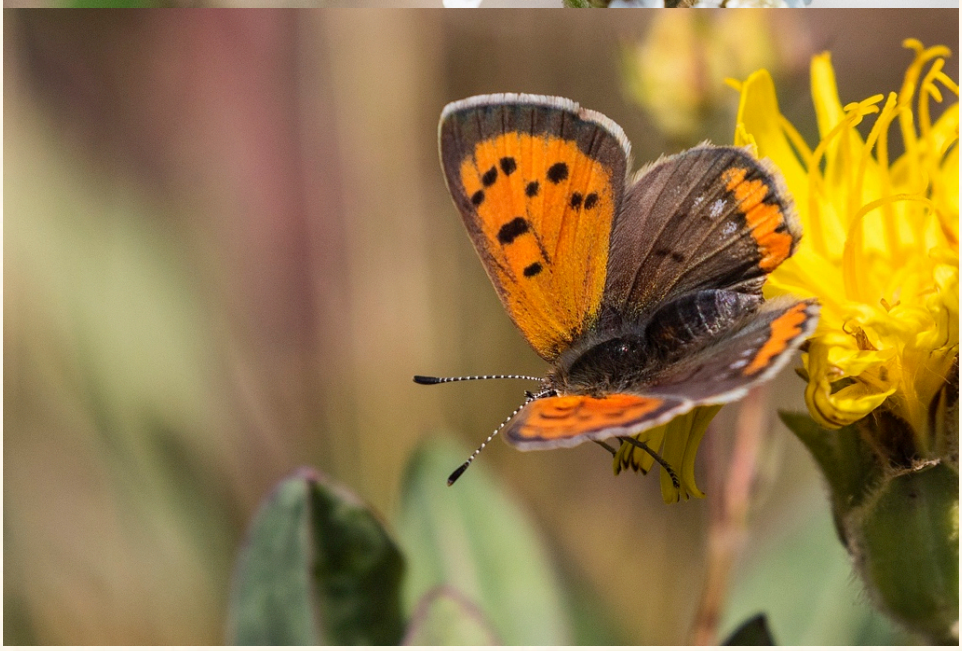
Clockwise from top left: Vic Romanyshyn indicating the cutline that gives access to the East Peak, *Colias nastes* mating, *Boloria astare* male basking. Photos by D. Lawrie

"This was not only a successful collecting trip but a great of social event with lots catching up with friends while exploring new areas and new stories to tell. Thank you Dave and Vic for scouting out a most successful trip."

Bruce and Helen Christensen

Chryxus Arctic (*Oeneis chryxus*). Whenever we approached, the butterfly flushed and flew short distances before landing again. It also leaned sideways after landing, which is thought to minimize shadow for better camouflage and, more importantly, thermoregulation.

The Arctic Blue (*Plebejus glandon*) was another interesting insect, and the butterfly pictured here is likely female because of the obvious forewing cell-bar and brownish dorsal (upper) wing colour.



The first American Copper (*Lycaena phlaeas*) we saw was gorgeous with its shiny orange dorsal forewings and bold black spots. The brown hindwing sports a bright orange submarginal band. Ventrally (below), the hindwing is gray with small black spots and a thin orange submarginal band. (Photos this page by G. Romanchuk, captions by C. Raymond)

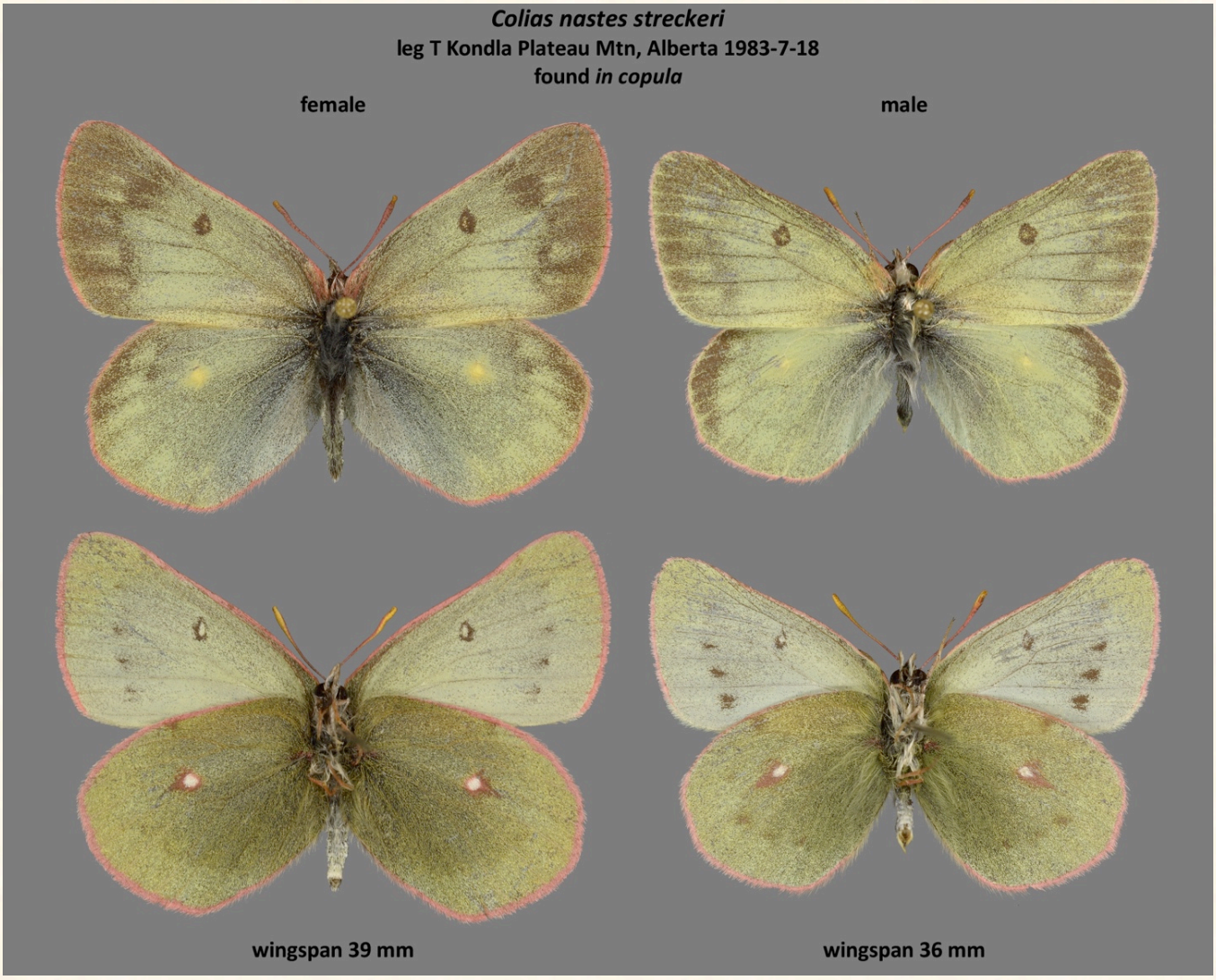
The Mead's Sulphur (*Colias meadii*) was one of my favourite sights over the weekend. It is a colourful butterfly that shows off its lovely deep orange dorsal wings during flight.

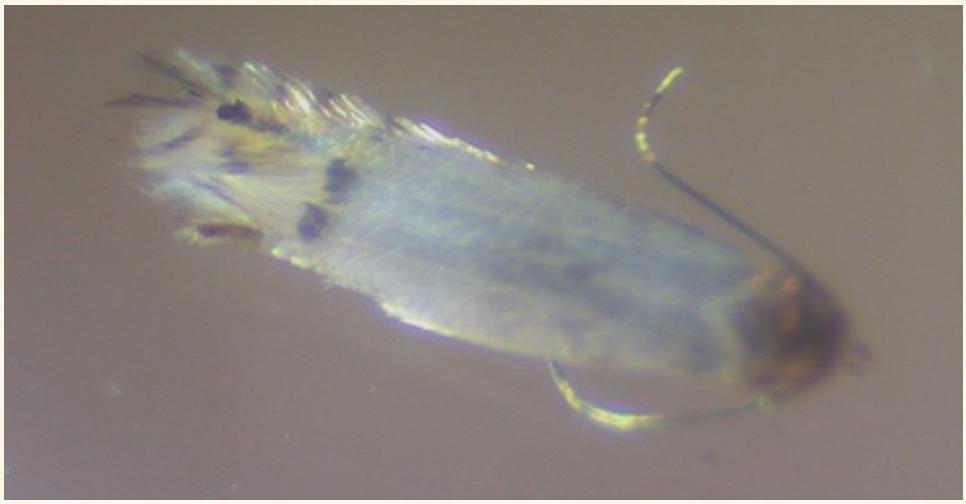
Draco Skipper (*Polites draco*)—another lifer for the weekend. Because it shows an orange dorsal wing - compared to the mostly brown dorsal wing seen on females - and the presence of a visible stigma (black scent patch) I think this butterfly is a male.

The Rocky Mountain Parnassian (*Parnassius smintheus*) was also a delightful new find. Although the sources I used did not distinguish sexes by colour necessarily, they did indicate the butterflies can be darker at higher elevations. On site we decided this slightly darker butterfly is a female because her abdomen appeared to be swollen with eggs (Photos this page by G. Romanchuk, captions by C. Raymond)

“Nearer the summit we were treated to fantastic views of a bowl-shaped land formation. I consulted an expert to learn more about the fascinating earth structure. According to Martin Sharp, Plateau Mountain summit itself is not thought to have been glaciated during the last glaciation peak 18,000 years ago. This idea stems from the presence of periglacial patterned ground features that would supposedly not be there if the plateau had been covered with ice at that time. Even though the summit itself was not ice-covered, it is possible but not certain, that the “bowl-shaped” features cut into the east facing scarp of the mountain were caused by cirque glaciers (Martin Sharp, email on August 28, 2018).” Colleen Raymond

photos by C. Raymond





"I was short on energy and stayed in camp while the rest went UP. I found a really tiny little moth at camp that none of us had any idea about and thought might be good. Greg Pohl had seen it before, and so it was not a real rarity: the Aspen Serpentine Miner, *Phyllocnistis populiella*." Gary Anweiler

"On July 29 Helen and I took off from the rest of the group and drove out to the junction gas station to fill the car, and to watch the barn swallows and hummingbirds for a while. We stopped at the junction of Highways 40 and 532 and collected a *Colias christina*, a *Boloria chariclea*, and two *Speyeria mormonia*. We travelled the rest of Highway 40 south to Coleman, where we picked up a moth that I believe might be *Protoboarmia porcelaria*. Before travelling back north on July 30, Helen and I filled up on waffles and coffee in a pancake restaurant, started heading north on Highway 40, stopping at a mature, almost over grown slough (N 49 44' 14" W 114 28' 23"), netting a*Syngapha ignea*, a*Boloria eunomia* (a first for me), and one *Oeneis chrysus*, before stopping for rain showers. The next stop was the beginning of a logging road (N 49 44' 58" W 114 29' 15") where we netted a pair of *Colias philodice*, a*Speyeria atlantis*, and a*Cercyonis oetus*. Stop number 3 (N 49 51' 16" W 114 23' 49") was a flat area grazing area with a creek along one side where we netted a *Plebejus saepiolus*, a pair of *Euptoieta claudia*, and one light green female *Colias philodice*. The next stop was a wet pine disturbed area (N 49 51' 16" W114 23' 49") where we managed to net a *Speyeria zerene* (another first for me), a *Speyeria mormonia*, a *Cercyonis oetus*, and a female *Phycoides pulchella* for Brittany Wingert. It was getting late with many miles to travel, so we packed up and headed for home. At about 12 km S of the junction of Highways 40 & Hwy 532 I spotted a female *Phycoides cocyta* for Brittany. This was not only a successful collecting trip but a great of social event with lots catching up with friends while exploring new areas and new stories to tell. Thank you Dave and Vic for scouting out and arranging a most successful trip."

Bruce and Helen Christensen

Thicket Hairstreaks in Kananaskis Country

Bob Brown

Three years ago, on June 27, 2015, I hiked Baldy Pass Trail in Kananaskis country in the company of four grandchildren and their parents. It was a Saturday, the temperature was 30° C and the place was very busy with other hikers. We did not complete the hike to the pass, a 5 km distance, due to heat and waning enthusiasm.

There were butterflies there in spite of the human traffic but not many that I could investigate to my satisfaction. My granddaughter pointed out a butterfly that I had missed and it turned out to be a Thicket Hairstreak. I photographed it and later submitted this to a butterfly expert. Here's the photo:

This year, 2018, I decided to take another look at Baldy Pass to see if I could find these hairstreaks again and pay more attention to the other butterflies there. I went on June 13, a Wednesday. The temperature was in the low 20's, and there was a mix of sun and cloud with a forecast of showers, which didn't happen. In fact my trek was sunny most of the time that I was there. (I hiked from 11:00 to 14:30, round trip to the pass.) I met only eight other people on the trail.

The trail trends southerly from the trailhead and turns east at 0.7 km at an intersection of sorts. A less-travelled trail continues south from here to Wasootch Creek. Don't take it. Follow the well-traveled trail to the east. This part of the trail was once an old road. It is level, easy-walking terrain that goes through a forest of mixed conifers. After a few hundred meters more, the trail enters a sparsely treed rocky outflow. On this stretch of trail, from the intersection to the rocky area, I found many elfins and six Thicket Hairstreaks, most of which were sitting on the trail in the sunlight. Success with minimal effort— perfect!

I continued to the pass. After traversing the rocky outflow, the trail narrows and heads up a narrow valley, climbing relentlessly to the pass, for a total elevation gain of 490 meters. The view from the pass is OK but not spectacular. Following the trail south from the pass leads to a mountain of scree rising above the tree line. I climbed that about 20 years ago. It adds a few hundred meters of additional elevation gain to the hike and the view is worth the effort, but on this trek, I didn't think there would be many butterflies up there. Maybe mid-July would be a better time for that scramble.

I retraced my steps down the up-track and I hadn't gone far when a Chryxus Arctic passed me, came back, sat on the trail, and then flopped over on its side. I took some photos before it flew onto a boulder beside me. Here is a photo of it on the rock; the shadow was minimal at this time of year and at this time of day, 12:30 MDT.

In all, I saw four Chryxus Arctics on this hike. Other sightings included eight Grizzled Skippers, a Meadow Fritillary, a Hoary Comma, various Blues, and three species of Elfins. The Grizzled skippers were mostly in the rocky area. The elfins were found up to the summit of the pass.

If you go:

Baldy Pass Trail is not to be confused with Baldy Mountain Trail , which is a scramble to the summit. There is also Old Baldy in Kananaskis ,which is a different adventure entirely.

To access the trail described here, take the Trans Canada Highway #1 to Highway 40, the Kananaskis Trail. Drive south to the trailhead, which is 10.3 km south of the Kananaskis Country boundary and information centre. The parking area is on the west side of the highway. The trailhead is on the east side of the highway.

Summer in general, and weekends in particular, are very crowded times in the mountains. Aim for mid-week. In summary, if you want to see Thicket Hairstreaks in Alberta, this is an accessible place to look for them.

C. Raymond

Cat Country

Doug Macaulay

You can't help but get excited every time you see a big 'cat.' I'm actually not referring to a furry predator, or your overweight kitty, but a much smaller species of animal. In fact, it is a moth in the genus *Catocala,* hence the nickname. Funny enough, cats are pretty big moths, however, these dollar-bill sized moths tend be ignored by most until they flash their brilliantly red or orange hindwings.

Alberta is home to several species of cats: fifteen species of these beauties reside here. And even better news, you don't have to go far, as virtually anywhere you set up in Alberta on a mid-summer night will put you in good position to find their favourite habitats. The only key is to find a wooded area, especially when it has members of the willow family, such as aspen, balsam poplar, or willow.

Finding them isn't too hard either. Underwing moths don't take a great deal of skill to attract, but there are some interesting approaches to hunting for these moths. Light traps will bring you bounty, but there is also the lesser known technique of 'sugaring.' This involves the creation of a special brew of fermented fruit, beer, sugars and other secret ingredients that, once fermented, become irresistible to night flying cats. Then, on a hot, cloudy August night at dusk, you'll need to find a series of smooth tree trunks. My favourites are aspens, along a wooded trail, and with paintbrush in hand, begin smearing the brew along their trunks at breast height. Then, not long after the sun sets, grab a headlamp, some children, a camera, and a net, and head out to check the line. And if conditions are perfect, the bait will be covered in moths feeding on your special brew. A great place to learn about this technique is in Theodore Sargent's classic book "Legion of Night: The Underwing Moths," in which he goes into substantial detail on the art of sugaring. This book is a must for cat lovers.

C. briseus (D. Macaulay)

C. Raymond

Catocala unijuga (D. Macaulay)

Once you've perfected your techniques it's time to check out an Alberta hotspot or two. There are many places to find a plethora of these moths but I have a few spots that are a must if you really get the bug.

My first two favourite spots are the cottonwood groves of Dinosaur or Writing-on Stone Provincial Parks. These parks have rich woodlands that contain a nice mix of cottonwoods, poplars and willows along with a few other unique shrubs such as hawthorn and cherries. They are fantastic places to hunt for these jewels. Some of the favorites to look for are cottonwood and willow specialists such as the Hermia Underwing (*C. hermia*) and very similar Shining Underwing (*C. luciana*). A little tough to differentiate the two, but the Hermia Underwing has clay-colored forewings followed by a pair of striking bright red orange underwings. Its close cousin the less common Shining Underwing has sandy grey-brown forewings and brilliant pink-orange underwings. Another beauty to watch for is the very rare Joined Underwing (*C. junctura*) known only from the dry cottonwood groves of Oldman and Milk Rivers. This gorgeous beast has blue-grey forewings and beautiful salmon colored hindwings. It's a real treat is you spot the beauty!

Another great place to hunt for Cats is Waterton Lakes National Park. This immensely biodiverse region is home to seven of Alberta's underwing moths, with two rare Alberta species only known from within its borders. There is extremely rare species known as the Western Underwing (C. *californica*). This moth has dark 'gritty' grey forewings and dark red hindwings. It is considered a species of dry

C. Raymond

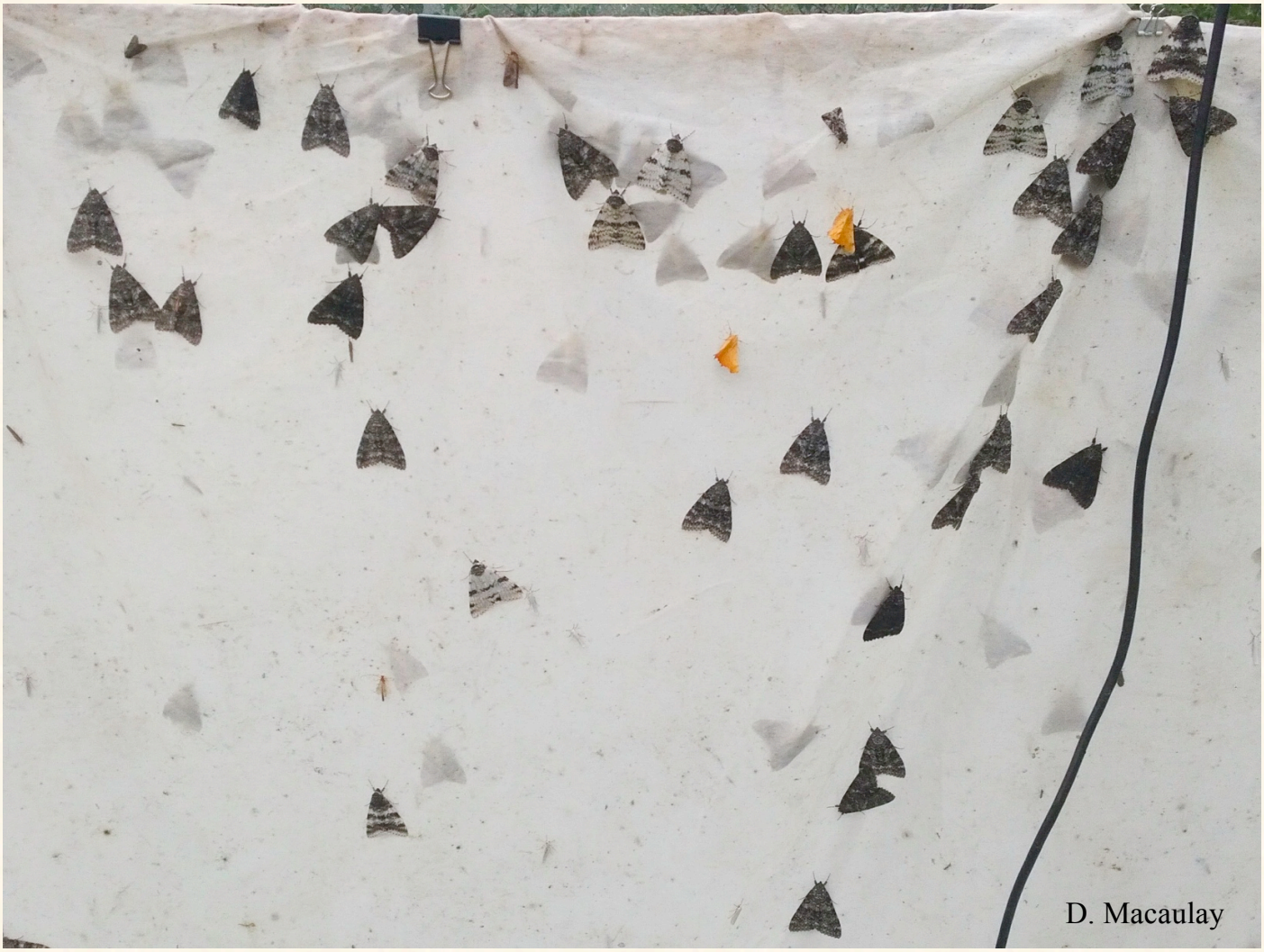
desert like regions, and just sneaks into Alberta from the southwest. It is easily mistaken for a dark Briseis Underwing (*C. briseus*) so be sure to take plenty of photos and bring some literature if you are looking to confirm any observations. Then there is the elusive Grote's Underwing (*C. grotiana*). The species also resembles the Briseis Underwing but has more extensive white markings on the forewing. Again you need to be well prepared to spot this fellow.

But the king of cats is Dillberry Lake Provincial Park; home to ten species. This park, is a true oasis for underwings, with its rolling sandy hills loaded with aspen and cherry trees, and other shrubs, as well as other tree species such as balsam poplar, hawthorns, willows, and birch bordering its many wetlands. On a warm, dark August night your sheet trap could be be blackened with hundreds of delectable underwings. The most commonly found are the White Underwing (*C. relicta*), Once-married Underwing (*C. unijuga*), Briseis Underwing (*C. briseis*), and the Semirelict Underwing (*C. semirelicta*). These species will be regulars at sheet and bait traps. Then sporadically you will run across one of my favorites; the gorgeous Pink Underwing Moth (C. *concumbens*) whose bring pink hindwings easily steal the show and will have you fumbling for a camera. True story.

Catocala concumbens (D. Macaulay)

Then there are the other uncommon species including Meske's Underwing (*C. meskei*) and the Mother Underwing (*C. parta*). The Meske's Underwing will be hiding amongst the C. s*emirelicta* and will require a keen eye to look for the somewhat distinctive hindwing that lacks a discal lunule. Not an easy trait to learn to recognize— I guess that's why we have such long winters to help with studying moth features. On the other hand, another rare species, and Alberta's largest, the Mother Underwing, has distinct black forewing streaks, and is easy to spot when it makes its appearance. Then there are the smaller underwings. These include the locally-common Praeclara Underwing Moth (*C. praeclara*) and the much scarcer Charming Underwing (*C. blandula*) and Ultronia Underwing (C. *ultronia*). All of these are a treat to spot.

So that covers all of our Alberta cats. Hopefully this wets your appetite a little as we settle in for a long cold winter. But all is not lost, as it is never too early to start concocting a sugary brew in preparation for next summer's visits to Cat Country.



C. Raymond

Clockwise: *C. ultronia*, *C. briseus*, *C. parta*, *C. relicta* (photos by D. Macaulay)

Cadomin and Cardinal Divide: July 25-29, 2018

Bob Parsons

I always look forward to the end of July, when I am ready and able to participate in the annual Cadomin/Cardinal Divide butterfly count organized by the Hinton Whisky Jack Club. Now that I am retired, I was able to be in the area by mid-week, and as usual I camped at the Watson Creek Campground.

I tend to concentrate on the Whitehorse Creek— plenty of mud puddling and a nice open area about two miles in from the parking area. Quite a "horsey" area, and great trails to the falls and Fiddle Pass. From the creek, one can drive up to Cardinal Divide on a rough road. From the parking lot, at around 2000 ft, one can either hike up to the East Ridge or go westwards towards Tripoli Mtn, where last year I spotted a wolverine. I try to make it up to the distant scree slopes but this year I ran out of gas! Artic and Mormon Fritillaries were quite abundant, as usual, plus I managed to find a Mead's Sulphur mixed in with hordes of Christina Sulphurs (a species I am especially keen to study). Hiking up to the East Ridge was not quite as productive, but the trail is good, steep, and with beautiful views wherever one looks. I was unable to find any Bog Fritillaries this year, which is a pity, finding them in such an isolated area.

The weather for the count on Sunday was good, and the attendance numbered close to 40, with many children and their families. Nets were provided by the staff from Switzer PP, and the children were keen to catch and learn about the various species netted, then released. My highlight of the Wildhorse Creek trail was a Mariposa Copper, but I also found some late-flying Freija Fritillaries, quite a few Arctic Blues, and over 100 Mormon Fritillaries! After lunch, we all drove up to the Divide, and ventured westwards through the pine, keeping eager eyes open for reported bears. More Mormon frits were found, and many of us found identifying the female Christina Sulphurs quite challenging! Nastes Sulphur was notable by its absence, and only one Rustic Blue was observed. All in all, a great count, and I look forward to returning again next year.

I would like to give a mention to Hwy 40, that goes northeast from Cadomin to Hinton, an hour's drive, and paved most of the way after reaching the huge Luscar Mine. There are quite a few unproductive logging roads west of the highway, but on the eastern side, there are some excellent trails that can be driven with care: no-name Gregg River Trail, Antler Creek, Mary Gregg Creek Trail, plus a few others with good vegetation. In most locations I found many Atlantis Fritillaries, as well as more Arctics and Mormons. Skippers were abundant, and it is an area I am keen to return to in future excursions!

C. Raymond

Dry Island Butterfly Count: 8 July 2018

Charley Bird

Location: Dry Island Buffalo Jump Provincial Park, Red Deer River Valley, east of Huxley.

This was the 19th annual Butterfly Count in the Park. As previously, it was cosponsored by the Alberta Lepidopterist's Guild and the Buffalo Lake Nature Club. We gathered at the Upper Viewpoint/Parking Lot at 10 AM. As folks arrived, a registration list and waiver forms were filled in with the help of Tyler Nelson, Alison Dent and Tim Schowalter, and a checklist showing the results of all previous counts was handed out. After an introduction by Brian Orr from Parks, and various introductions, we drove down to the picnic area where folks scattered and got familiar with the area and its butterflies and skippers. We gathered for lunch at 12. This was followed by talks by Charley Bird, John Acorn, David Lawrie, Tim Schowalter and Dianne Pachal. We then we had our traditional group photograph. Afterwards, we divided up into four groups and headed out to continue our count. John Acorn's group headed up the hill to the northwest, Tim Schowalter's group went along the lower badlands to the northeast then looped back along the edge of the trees above the river, David Lawrie's group went all the way to the "Dry Island", and Charley Bird's group headed west along the lower badlands and came back along the river. We gathered around 3.30 to add our lists together and we then headed to our respective homes. The forecast was good and we had light overcast

intermixed with clear skies and the temperature only reached 28. Mosquitoes were seldom a problem. Kilometers on foot estimated to be around 10.
The participants (49) were Benny Acorn, John Acorn, Elizabeth Bagdan, Kurt Bagdan, Gerry Bennett (Parks), Ryan Bergen (Parks), Charles Bird, Amanda Brown, Robert Brown, Shannon Brown, Wayne Brown, Bruce Christensen, Helen Christensen, Alison Dent, Marc De Cnodder, Simone De Cnodder, Les Dobos, Destinee Doherty, Sarah Doherty, Savannah Doherty, Sarah Elmeligi, Savannah Foged, Rebecca Hohnsbein, Wayne Kinsella, Grace Kwong, Meagan Lacoste (Parks), David Lawrie, Karin Lindquist, Linda Lindquist, Zachary MacDonald, Tyler Nelson, Chris Olsen, Sharon Olsen, Brian Orr (Parks), Dianne Pachal (Waterton Park), Karina Paloyan, Chantal Payne, Marie Payne, Thomasina Payne, Bob Parsons, Kayleen Sandrowski, Tim Schowalter, Dave Tibbie, Brodie Vale, Brooklyn Vale, Sheila Vale, Tracey Vale, Sydney Vandermeer and Oksana Vernygora.


S. Sullivan-Olsen

SPECIES OBSERVED – Thirty-one were seen. The names and order follow that of G.R. Pohl et al., 2010, An Annotated List of the Lepidoptera of Alberta, Canada (ZooKeys 38, 1-549, Special Issue).

Epargyreus clarus (Silverspotted Skipper) - 1
Pyrgus communis (Checkered Skipper) - 2
Oarisma garita (Garita Skipper) - 9
Thymelicus lineola (European Skipper) – 30
Polites themisticles (Tawny-edged Skipper) - 4

Polites mystic (Long Dash Skipper) - 1
Anatrytone logan (Delaware Skipper) - 1
Euphyes vestris (Dun Skipper) – 3
Papilio machaon dodi (Dod's Old World Swallowtail) – 44. Most were hill-topping on Dry Island.
Papilio canadensis (Canadian Tiger Swallowtail) – 1
Colias alexandra christina (Christina Sulphur) - 1
Colias philodice (Clouded Sulphur) – 37
Pieris rapae (Cabbage Butterfly) – 5
Pontia (*Pieris*) *occidentalis* – 13
Satyrium (*Harkenclenus*) *titus* (Coral Hairstreak) - 7
Satyrium liparops (Striped Hairstreak) – 8
Cupido (*Everes*) *amyntula* (Western Tailed Blue) - 2
Plebejus melissa (Melissa Blue) – 8
Aricia (*Plebejus*) *saepiolus* (Greenish Blue) - 17
Aricia shasta (Shasta Blue) – 2
Limenitis arthemis rubrofasciata (White Admiral) – 19
Euptoieta claudia (Variegated Fritillary) – 1
Boloria bellona (Meadow Fritillary) – 5
Speyeria cybele pseudocarpenteri (Great-spangled Fritillary) – 10
Speyeria hesperis (Northwestern Fritillary) – 55
Speyeria callippe (Callipe Fritillary) - 8
Speyeria aphrodite or *hesperis* – 24
Polygonia progne (Grey Comma) – 2
Phyciodes cocyta (Northern Pearl Crescent) - 16
Phyciodes batesii (Tawny Crescent) – 1
Cercyonis pegala (Meadow Brown) - 28
Coenonympha tullia inornata (Common Ringlet) – 50

John Acorn kept track of the Odonates. Three dragonflies were observed again: *Aeshna interrupta* (Variable Darner), *Ophiogomphus severus* (Pale Snaketail) and *Sympetrum internum* (Cherry-faced Meadowhawk). Two damselflies were seen: *Enallagma annexum* (Northern Bluet) and *Lestes disjunctus* (Northern Spreadwing), the latter for the first time.

General Comments: We had an excellent turnout with 49 observers (39 last year and 47 the year before that). Thirty-one species of skippers and butterflies and 413 individuals were seen (last year we had 37 species and 285 individuals). We had no new records this year. As this was a Provincial Park, we practiced catch, identify and release. David Lawrie provided an observation cage into which we put single

specimens of various species in for the group to have a close look at. Again, the scenery was spectacular, wildflowers were in abundance and many photographs were taken.

They were Prickly Pear Cactus (*Opuntia polyacantha)* , Bergamot (*Monarda fistulosa),* Northern Bedstraw (*Galium boreale),* Fringed Loosestrife (*Lysimachia ciliata),* Wild Blue Flax (*Linum lewisii),* Yellow Flax (*Linum rigidum),* Umbrella-plant (*Eriogonum umbellatum),* Wild Rose (*Rosa acicularis),* Fleabane (*Erigeron pumilus),* White Sweet Clover (*Mellilotus alba),* Yellow Sweet Clover (*Melilotus officinalis),* Lilac-flowered Beard-tongue (*Pentstemon gracilis),* Scarlet Mallow (*Sphaeralcea coccinea),* Scarlet Butterfly-weed (*Gaura coccinea)* - very appropriate for a Butterfly count!, Buckbrush (*Symphoricarpos occidentalis), Prairie Coneflower (Ratibida columnifera) and* Western Wood Lily (*Lilium philadelphicum).*

Five hundred and eighty-nine species of moths and 25 butterflies and skippers are reported from Dry Island Buffalo Jump Provincial Park, exclusive of the Tolman Bridge area, by Bird (2011). If all species in the undetermined categories were named, the actual total would be around 650. The vast majority of these were not reported from Area 5 by Bowman (1951). Many are known, however, from Tolman Bridge about 15 km downstream (see Bird 2006). It is felt that the overall total can be brought to over 700 by further study. The large number of species found in the Park to date indicates that it may be more biodiverse than any other area in Alberta and this provides strong support for the setting aside of the area as a Provincial Park where it receives special protection from agricultural and other commercial activities.

Bird, C.D. 2011. Lepidoptera of Dry Island Buffalo Jump Provincial Park, 1999-2011. Report prepared for Alberta Parks and Protected Areas. 52 pp.
http://www.albertaparks.ca/media/3796414/Lepidoptera_Dry%20Island%20Buffalo%20Jump%20PP_Report%201999-2011.pdf

Bob Brown

Ellis Bird Farm Bug Jamboree: 11 August 2018

Charley Bird

Bug Jamborees have been held every year since 2000 at the Ellis Bird Farm on the first Saturday after the August long weekend. The event began with introductions from Myrna Pearman, followed by a number of entertaining bug related songs by John Acorn. Bug oriented displays were set up by Dave Lawrie, Ken Frye, John Acorn and Charley Bird. Adrian Thysse had a bug oriented photographic display. Charley Bird also had a mushroom display. Howard Oudman had a display about honey bees while Rosemarie Ferjuc and Jessy Rajan had one about the Red Deer River Watershed Alliance. Nature Alberta was represented by Zoe McDougall while Amanda, Natasha and Tim Lasiuta were with Red Deer Nature Kids. There was also a station where participants could make leaf-cutter bee nest boxes.

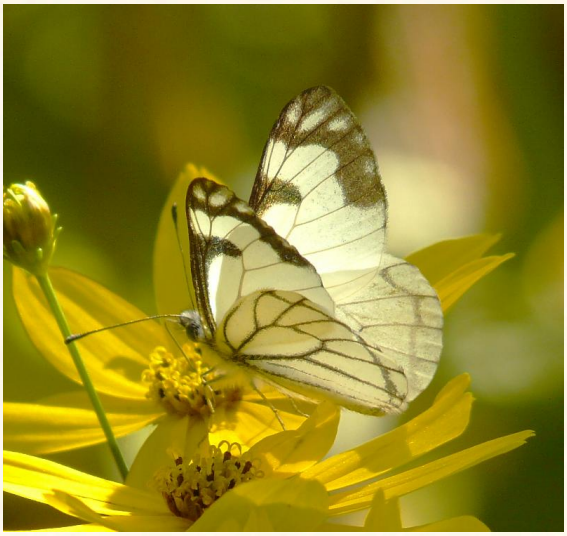
From 3 PM to 3:30 there were three Butterfly and Bug Counts. Charley Bird led one, John Acorn another and Dave Lawrie the third. Mateya Bluett, Payden Johnson and Murdoch McKinnon came along as scribes. The participants were Benny Acorn, Kirstin Bousema, Doug Burden, Malachi Burden, Mathew Clarke, Virginia Clarke, Ellie de Andrade, Jayken de Andrade, Joel de Andrade, Kristin de Andrade, Marco de Andrade, Rhett de Andrade, Carden Elder, Bethany Gentles, Toby Gentles, Kayle Havanka, Daegan Kovacs, Navya Pandya, Beverley Rose and Jessica Wanner. Participants whose last names were not recorded, were Aimee, Cadence, Cooper, Danika, Daysha, Hannah, Havannah, Hudson, Jacob, Jaidya, McKenna, Mira and Shanya.

It was an overcast day with smoke from fires in British Columbia. As a result, the counts were down but all participants had fun. Butterflies seen were Common/Clouded Sulphur – 19, Cabbage White – 17, European Skipper – 4, Western Checkered White – 2, Northwestern Fritillary – 2, Great Spangled Fritillary – 1, Meadow Brown – 1 and Long Dash Skipper 1. Other insects recorded were Cherry-faced Meadowhawk – 4, *Chrysoteuchia topiarius* moth – 1, *Crambus perlella* moth – 1, Grasshoppers – 4, Horsefly – 1 and Leafhopper -1.

C. Bird

Miracles of Flight

High up amidst the Douglas firs
what rides the smokey air?
A lazy breeze, a branch that stirs;
what mysteries live there?
I shield my eyes from hazy glare
to search the skies for sights
and then I see, so heavenly,
the ones known as Pine Whites.
They drift about atop the trees
where most their life they live,
and only flutter down to sip
on nectar flowers give.
My luck is with me as I turn
and there next to my face,
two pairs of lovely wings of white
all trimmed in fine black lace,
land innocently close to me
land only there to feed,
as I turn loose my camera,
to fill my hungry need
to capture them in my own way
while letting them be free,
so I can take them when I go,
and bring them home with me.
Then they lift off to spiral up,
upon the lazy breeze,
two tiny miracles of flight
that dwell up in the trees...



"I am a beekeeper in the Elk Point area northeast of Edmonton, and spend my days working with insects. Early this morning, while I was working in the bee yard, I spotted a monarch butterfly— something which, as far as I understand, doesn't generally come this far north."

Stephen Lind

Bottles for Butterflies

Kevin Stewart

Life takes an odd course. Shortly after finishing my zoology degree, a genetic disorder robbed me of my ability to see fine detail. . Within a decade, I was legally blind. One day, my sister from a different mister, Michelle, showed me the macro setting on my digital camera. My life changed. I could see fine details. People loved my photos and started asking if I was a professional photographer. My photos serve a dual purpose. First, is to show people how I see the world. Second —and more importantly — is to "speak for the trees, for the trees have no tongues," as the Lorax said in Dr. Seuss' classic.

About the fund: This endowment fund is part of a strategy to protect the remnants of Aspen Parkland in the Vegreville-Lavoy area. The fund focuses on the creeks, wetlands and the invertebrates that live in them. A major goal is to turn my favourite photography spot into a butterfly sanctuary. The fund is needed to provide a permanent revenue source for expenses such as insurance, taxes, transportation, tools and materials.

Bottles for Butterflies: Collect beverage cans and bottles your friends, your family, your neighbors, your enemies and your friend's family's neighbor's enemies. Cash them in at your local bottle depot. Donate the funds via the webpage or by cheque (put "VEGR Fund" in memo) or credit card to Edmonton Community Foundation.
https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/the-edmonton-community-foundation/campaign/vegreville-creek-and-wetlands-fund/

Bob's Excellent Adventure

Bob Brown

There is a butterfly that lives in the mountains that I wanted to see. It prefers moist mountain meadows and clearings, swampy moist in some cases, in the front ranges of the Alberta Rockies south of Nordegg and into Idaho. In the book *Alberta Butterflies* by Bird, Hilchie, Kondla, Pike, and Sperling it is states, "Lepidopterists visit Alberta from across North America to collect this species." I researched this, and found two reports of sightings. One was at the meadows near Engadine Lodge, which I searched on two occasions unsuccessfully. The other location was at Elk Lakes, just across the border into B.C. There are two ways to access Elk Lakes. One is by road: drive to Crowsnest Pass, through to Sparwood, then north to Elkford. Then follow 87 km of deteriorating gravel road (according to Gillean Daffern in the Kananaskis Country Trail Guide) to the Elk Lakes Provincial Park entrance. Park there and begin walking. Or, park at the Kananaskis Lakes Elk Pass trailhead and walk or bike about 10 km to the same spot. I chose the latter. The trail is about 6 km of ascent to the pass and then 4 km of descent.

I haven't done much biking for years now. I ride a bit around town but I haven't been mountain biking for years and I should be in much better shape. My

bike at Harvie Heights is still in pristine condition, or so I thought. Others have been riding it at times. I filled the tires with air and stuffed the bike into the trunk of our Corolla, which took some doing. I put the back seats down and passed the bike in through the trunk, but if some of the bike's dimensions had been even a centimetre more it wouldn't have fit. I didn't test drive the bike to check its condition, or mine. Next morning I was off to Kananaskis. It was cold, 6 degrees, and so smoky I couldn't see the mountains across the valley. I got to the parking area, extracted my bike from the Corolla and rode a bit around the lot to check the seat height. What I discovered is that the front derailleur was trashed. It would only allow the chain to sit on the smallest front gear, i.e., the lowest speed. I debated abandoning the trip, but the butterfly only flies in July, so today was the day. I debated walking, but decided that I could at least use the bike on the downhill sections to coast. As it turned out, lowest gear was what I needed for most of the trip anyway. So I put my water, apple, hat, jacket and bike lock in the backpack, my helmet on my head and set off.

The trail begins with a long, gradually steepening, uphill section. It defeated me at the outset. I was soon pushing the bike all the way to the crest. A woman started up the hill behind me but when I got to the crest and looked back, she was gone. Then I rode down an even longer downhill section, which settled to a lower grade of steepness for several hundred meters, then eventually to a bridge across a creek. I thought to myself, I'm really going to enjoy this hill on the return, if I'm already feeling burned out, but I'll cross that bridge when I get there. After the creek, the trail divided. To the left was a steep climb to a power line, then straight uphill to Elk Pass. The right fork (recommended and signed as the way to go) is a gentler, pleasant, winding trail that gradually gets near the pass, at which point it continues more steeply to the powerline which it meets at the pass. A hiking trail, not suitable for bikes, begins where the road gets steep and branches off through a wet meadow (swamp). I thought I could look for the butterfly there if the trip to the pass defeated me. So I rode on until I got to that hiking trail, but I didn't see much of a meadow. The trail took off through dense forest. (When I got home I checked this on Google maps, on the satellite view and saw that after a short bit through the forest, I would have entered a larger meadow area.) Anyway, it was still quite cool and I knew the butterflies wouldn't be moving until it got a lot warmer. So I had time to get to a lower and warmer location and I wanted to see it anyways. I carried on and pushed my bike uphill about another km to the pass. It was downhill after that.

As I descended, more and more flowers showed up along the power line. Quite beautiful, actually! Then, as I descended, butterflies appeared. I photographed a few of them. I eventually got to the bottom of the run, where it joins the road from Elkford at the park entrance. I stopped and a butterfly flew in front of me and landed

on a tall flower by the road. I started to carry on, but then decided I'd better check out that butterfly. It turned out to be the one I came to find. What luck! So I got my photos and my mission was already a success. The day was going to have a happy ending.

I then carried on into the park. It is densely forested with creeks, swampy in a few places, but not much that is wide open. I didn't get to the lakes, which are said to be quite spectacular. There is an Alpine Club cabin there which was built about 20 years ago but which I didn't know about until recently. My guidebook by Daffern was printed in 1985.

I checked along the wet meadows by a creek and the power-line right-of-way for about an hour. When I returned to my bike, another butterfly, of the species that I came to see, landed on a shrub right beside my bike. So my visit started and ended with sightings of my target species. I ate my apple, put the core in a plastic bag in my pack, then started the long trudge uphill for 4 km to the pass. I photographed butterflies along the way, was able to ride some sections, and came to the pass in only one hour. I surprised myself.

I realize this tale is likely quite boring so far, but bear with me.

I descended from the pass to the creek and bridge in 20 minutes. There was a group of bikers there that were about to take the other trail to the power line and up. I pointed out the way I just came down, the recommended and signed trail, and suggested they go that way, as one of their riders appeared to be old as me. They looked at their map and said that my route wasn't on the map. (The way I had travelled is in Daffern's book from 1985.) So I wondered how old their map was and should I look at it. However they kept expressing doubt about the arrow and sign pointing the way to go so I didn't pursue my efforts to help them. Some questions don't need to be asked and patience isn't my strong point. I looked at my watch and realized this had consumed 10 minutes so I departed and didn't look back so I don't know which way they went.

I knew my long uphill stretch was approaching so I wanted to get going. I rode on gradually increasing steepness for several hundred meters and finally reached the beginning of the up-climb. I looked up the hill with trepidation. The trepidation suddenly increased. There, coming down the hill, was the largest grizzly bear I have ever seen. That is no exaggeration. It occurred to me that maybe the day wasn't going to end well after all.

He was plodding downhill on my side of the road, a point that I felt didn't merit mentioning to him. His front feet were in-pointing and he leaned from one side to side with each step which gave him a swagger. My camera was in my pack so I didn't feel this was a good time to rummage for it. I gave out a loud yell in case it hadn't seen me, unlikely as that seemed. It didn't change pace or direction. The brush was thick on both sides of the road so I didn't think that was a good place to

I slowly rode back. Around one turn, no bear. Slowly around the next turn-- yikes!! There he was., right in my face, and coming around the bend. He was undoubtedly the largest bear I have ever seen and he was still coming right down the road. I turned and once again rode like a man possessed, down the road, this time across the bridge to the fork in the road. Which way should I go? If I rode hard I could pass that group I just left and let them socialize with the bear. Except... I didn't know which way they went. So I decided to go the way I came down, as the grade was less steep, in case I had a long ride ahead of me. I hoped the bear would decide to go up the other fork. If it came my way…well I would cross that bridge when I got there.

I rode another hundred meters to a turn in the road. I decided to tuck myself behind some convenient foliage, where I could still see the bridge. So I waited there. No bear. I listened and watched. And waited, and waited, and waited. No bear. Finally, I decided to go back slowly. I went to the bridge, stood in the middle and waited. I yelled and listened. The water running in the creek made a lot of noise. The wind in the trees made cracking sounds. I yelled again. No bear. I moved halfway to the next turn in the road. I stood there. I yelled twice more. I listened and gazed intently into the trees. No bear. So I slowly moved up to the turn in the road. I slowly looked around the corner. This time, no bear. I stood there and waited. I listened to the cracking in the forest. I yelled. More listening and watching. I yelled again and listened again. Nothing. I stared into the forest. What was that? Something moved. I was standing next to a spruce tree and the shrubbery around it was thick so the visibility into the forest wasn't great, but I thought I saw something move. Then I saw it again, about ten meters from me. Movement. Something there and it was covered with brown hair. The bear was right there. Was it lying in wait? An ambush? Then it lifted its head and looked at me. There was an orange tag in its left ear and it was munching on something. Then it put its head down again. It was having lunch.

Several thoughts crossed my mind simultaneously. Who or what was it eating? Some matters don't need to be investigated. The most prominent thought in my head, though, was that this was ludicrous. I've spent a lot of time standing here, yelling, listening, looking, when the whole time, the bear I was trying to avoid was right there on the other side of the tree. The bear appeared to be unconcerned with my presence. I didn't affect its behaviour one little bit. Should I be offended or relieved? I chose the latter. This whole encounter thing lasted half an hour by my watch. Since the bear was no longer on the road, I decided to get out of there.

I rode on and quickly came to the long uphill stretch. I pedalled on. I came to the steep stuff that would have defeated me earlier. I pedalled on, much to my surprise. Finally I had to push the bike uphill. Still a long way up. I covered it in no time with frequent shoulder checks. Then down the other side, over level ground, through the gap in the trees and onto the paved parking lot. Five minutes from bear to car. I unlocked the car and opened the door to flip the trunk latch. There on the

passenger seat was my bear spray.

I loaded my bike and began the drive back to Harvie Heights, dodging trailers and motor homes for more than an hour, arguably the most dangerous part of this whole day.

Bear thoughts: That trail gets a lot of use so the bear is probably used to people. I wouldn't bet my life on that, though. Even if I was riding with bear spray in my hand, I wouldn't have had time to aim it if that bear had decided to rush me. Bears can cover ground in a hurry. I was also amazed at how the bear was invisible in the trees in spite of its size. Did I mention that it was a very large bear? Earlier in the season, a sow and cub encounter could have had a bad ending. Perhaps a return to using bear bells is in order so that the grouchy bears can get off the trail if warned.

The good news: Everything ended well, I found what I was after, and had an interesting and invigorating bike ride. And I didn't have to launder my pants that evening.

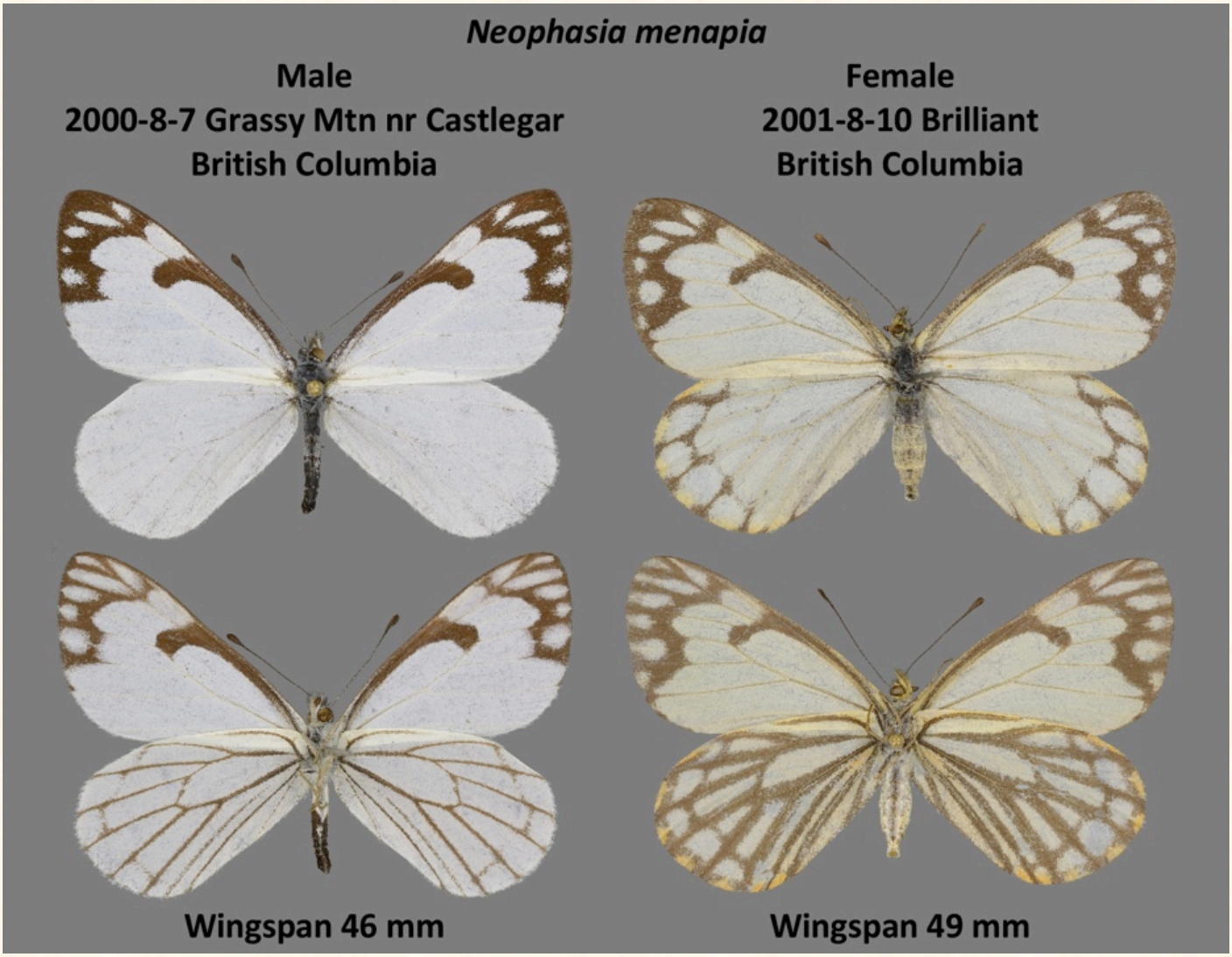
So, at the end of all this, I can't show you a photo of the largest bear in the world because I didn't take that photo. Instead I'll resort to old habits and show you a butterfly photo; and so, I present to you the guy (or girl) that instigated this adventure in the first place: Gillette's Checkerspot.

A few excellent photos from ALG members, taken in 2018. Clockwise from top left: Square-dotted Blues, Lupine Blue, Ringlet (al by Bob Brown, and taken in British Columbia), Hummingbird Clearwing (Don Delaney).

A Selection of Norbert Kondla's Pierid Photographs

Continuing a projet begun in the last issue, I am borrowing here from Norbert Kondla's work at the flickr site: https://www.flickr.com/photos/118126948@N03/, with a selection from his album, "Whites." Norbert has given me permission, and I consider this a fine opportunity to share some of Norbert's images. I am grateful to Norbert for allowing me to share these photos, and I do hope we can continue in this regard in future Newsletters.

John Acorn, Editor



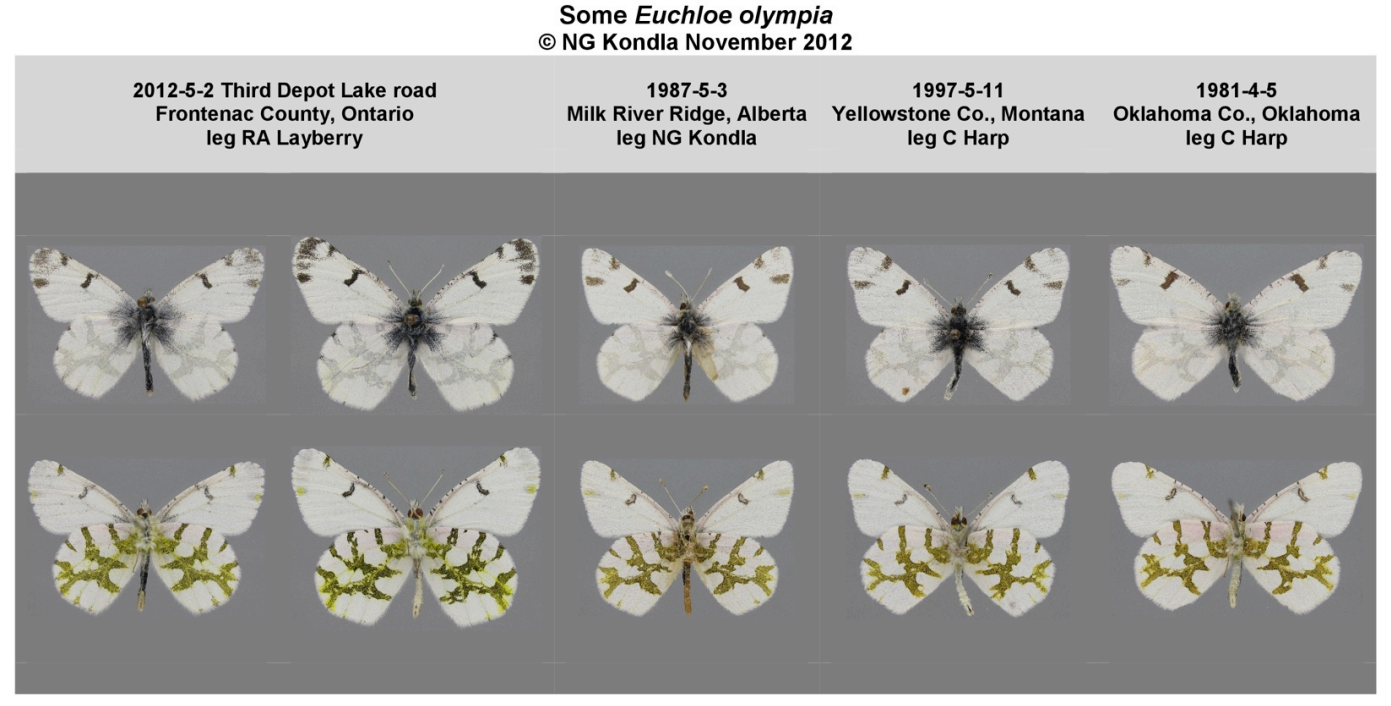
Anthocaris julia (aka *A. stella*), South Castle River, Alberta

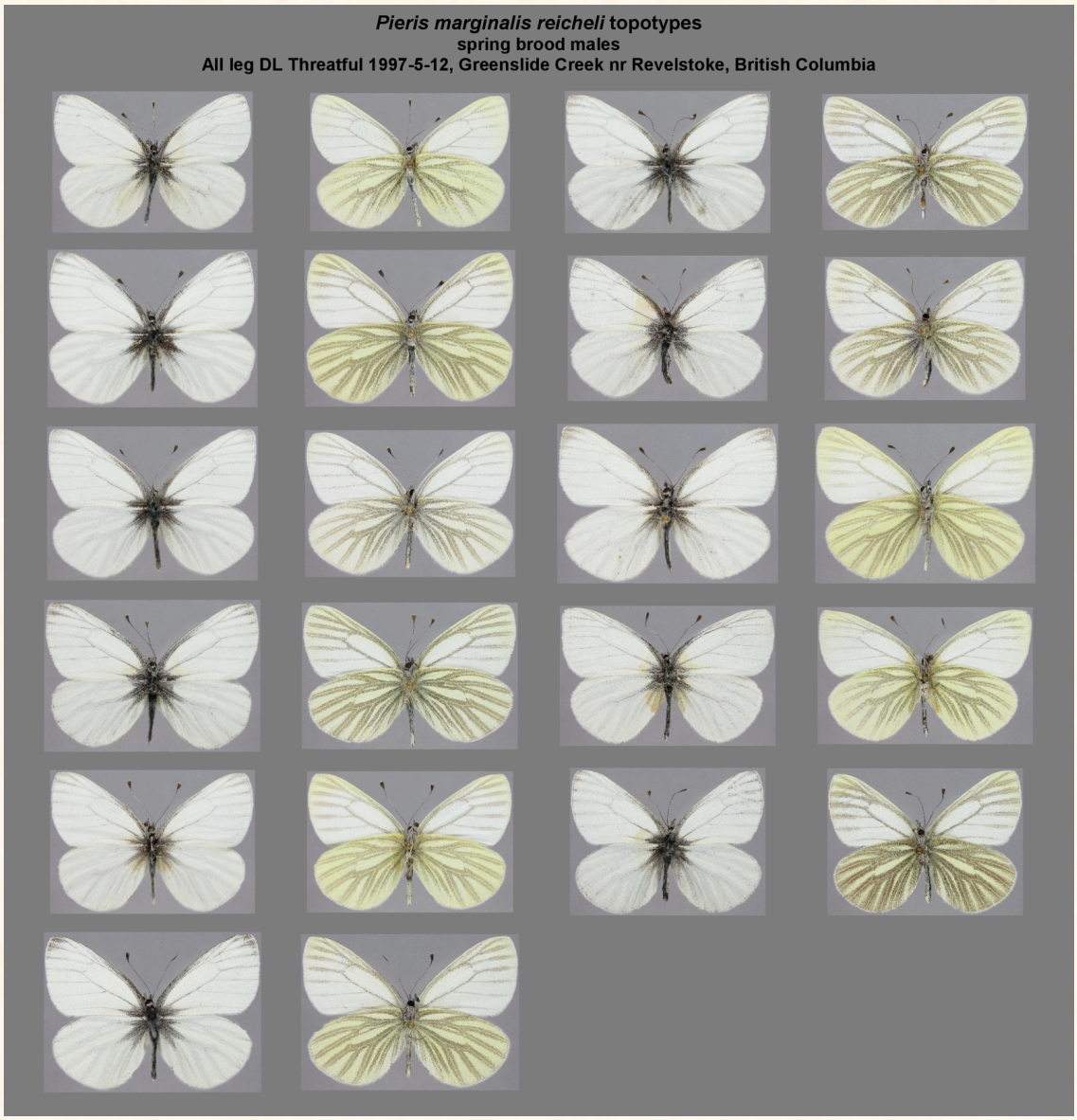

male *Euchloe ausonides mayi*
2009-6-2 Redwater sand dunes, Alberta
NG Kondla
wingspan 37.5 mm


female *Euchloe ausonides mayi*
2009-6-2 Redwater sand dunes, Alberta
NG Kondla
wingspan 38 mm


male *Euchloe creusa*
2010-5-11 nr Exshaw, Alberta
NG Kondla
wingspan 33 mm


female *Euchloe creusa*
2009-7-7 Moose Mtn,, Alberta
NG Kondla
wingspan 34 mm


Some *Euchloe olympia*
© NG Kondla November 2012
2012-5-2 Third Depot Lake road
Frontenac County, Ontario
leg RA Layberry
1987-5-3
Milk River Ridge, Alberta
leg NG Kondla
1997-5-11
Yellowstone Co., Montana
leg C Harp
1981-4-5
Oklahoma Co., Oklahoma
leg C Harp


Pieris marginalis reicheli topotypes
spring brood males
All leg DL Threatful 1997-5-12, Greenslide Creek nr Revelstoke, British Columbia


female *Pieris oleracea*
1980-4-30 Buck Lake, Alberta
NG Kondla
wingspan 40 mm


female *Pieris oleracea* summer form
1979-7-21 nr Redwater, Alberta
NG Kondla
wingspan 43.5 mm


male *Pieris rapae* spring brood
2005-5-14 nr Standard, Alberta
wingspan 42 mm

***Pieris rapae* – spring brood**

Specimens leg NG Kondla, Rosebud, Alberta 2010-5-10

Male **Female**

Two female *Pontia occidentalis*

2017-9-6 Range road 184 N of Battle River, Alberta

leg NG Kondla

wingspan 47 mm **wingspan 46 mm**


Pontia occidentalis occidentalis
spring brood – leg NG Kondla
2018-5-14 Battle R. at Secondary Road 854, Alberta
female
male
wingspan 43 mm
wingspan 42 mm


male *Pontia sisymbrii flavitincta*
1987-5-7 South Castle River valley, Alberta
NG Kondla
wingspan 40 mm


female *Pontia sisymbrii flavitincta*
1979-5-21 Kootenay Plains, Alberta
NG Kondla
wingspan 36 mm