

DCLS News

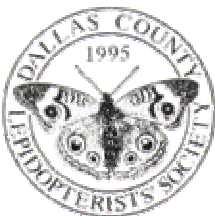
NUMBER 52

NOVEMBER, 2003

The Dallas County
Lepidopterists'
Society
Est. 1995

Purpose:
To provide a
forum where
people may gather
who share an
interest in
butterflies
and
moths,
whether that
interest takes the
form of
collecting,
gardening,
photography,
study or
casual
observation.

Admission is free.



Next DCLS Meeting Saturday, Nov. 8th.

The next meeting of the Dallas County Lepidopterists' Society will be this coming Saturday, November 8th, at 10:00 a.m. We will meet on the second floor across from the auditorium of the Dallas Museum of Natural History at Fair Park. Be sure to tell the person at the front desk that you are there for the DCLS meeting so you won't have to pay admission.

The subject presentation of the meeting will be: "The Year in Review". This has been a

particularly exciting year for butterflies with many unusual species making their way to north Texas (some recorded for the first time!). There will also be a brief presentation and a color handout on the two subspecies of Zebra Longwing we have in the US and how to tell them apart.

I'd also like to encourage anyone who has photos or specimens that they'd like to have identified to bring them as well.

Hope to see you on Saturday!

Monarch Migration Still Going Strong

This week has seen yet another "wave" of monarchs moving through north Texas. These individuals, the vast majority of them being extremely fresh and vibrant, are the offspring of the first migrants that moved into the area in late September. They've been feeding and "tanking up" for the trip ahead of them and leisurely heading in a south-southwest direction. That

pace should quicken with the cool front expected to come through the area this week.

There are still eggs, larvae and pupae in the milkweed patches and these will mature in the coming weeks with the majority of the monarchs being gone by the end of November.

A banner year for unusual species in north Texas

Every summer many species move up from southern Texas and Mexico to repopulate their respective ranges. One of the more exciting aspects of butterflying (whether you are watching or collecting), is to find a species that is not normally found in a particular location.

For the last couple of years the **Tropical Checkered Skipper** (*Pyrgus oileus*) has been creeping into our area with some regularity. Ten years ago the **Mallow-Scrub Hairstreak** (*Strymon istapa*) showed in Dallas for the first time (on record) and has been a regular visitor to north Texas every year since.

The **Orange-barred Sulphur** (*Phoebis philea*), while not as common a visitor as the **Large Orange Sulphur** (*Phoebis agarithe*), can be seen once or twice most years, as it was recently in Fort Worth and Dallas.

An very uncommon sulphur that surfaced in Fort Worth this past week was a **Tailed Orange** (*Pyrisitia proterpia*). Bill Edwards saw this species at the Fort Worth Botanic Gardens where it was later photographed by Joann Karges. While this species has been taken in north Texas in the past it is definitely an uncommon site here.

A photograph was also taken of a

Two-Barred Flasher (*Astrartes fulgerator*) in Duncanville this past July — a county record for this species which usually doesn't get any further north than the Austin area.

During the State Fair of Texas last year a **Meridian Duskywing** (*Erynnis meridianus*) was collected at the Texas Discovery Gardens at Fair Park. This species normally ranges in Mexico, New Mexico, Arizona and the Texas Hill Country.

The **Hammock Skipper** (*Polygonus leo*) was a surprise attendee at last month's DCLS meeting in Denton County — far from its normal breeding range of Mexico, the Rio Grande Valley, with occasional strays into the Hill Country, Arizona and New Mexico.

One can't help but wonder what is the reason for the increased number of sightings in recent years. Is it because there are more people looking or is there something environmentally more complex going on here? Whatever the reason, September, October and November (as long as the weather holds) are perfect opportunities to find unusual strays in our area before the first frosts hit so get out there and keep your eyes open, cameras flashing and nets swinging!

Take Attendance!

A fun, and productive activity for people to get involved in is to keep a record of what species come to your own yard. A small notebook by the window or on the deck with a daily or weekly listing of what species you've seen can not only provide you with a record of what is flying in your area (and when) but also will help you sharpen your identification skills. As you collect more "data" you can use it to compare from year to year and learn when to expect certain species to be on the wing. It can be kept as informal or as in-depth as you wish. A wealth of knowledge can be gained by just a few scribbled sentences

Some Unusual Summer Visitors to Dallas and Fort Worth in 2003.



Orange-barred Sulphur
(*Phoebis philea*)

**Below: Orange-barred Sulphur taking
nectar at the Fort Worth Botanic Gardens.**



Two-barred Flasher
(*Astrartes fulgurator*)



Meridian Duskywing
(*Erynnis meridianus*)



Tailed Orange
(*Pyrisitia proterpia*)



Hammock Skipper
(*Polygonus leo*)