
CHRYSALIS

The Occasional Newsletter of the Vermont Butterfly Survey
Vol. 1 No. 1

This is the first issue of CHRYSALIS, an irregular e-mail newsletter about the Vermont Butterfly Survey. You're getting this because you have signed on as a VBS volunteer. We'll be using CHRYSALIS to report on the progress of the survey and to offer advice to participants. If you'd rather not receive this newsletter, please reply to this e-mail and let us know. Thanks for joining the survey.

Bryan Pfeiffer
VBS Field Staff and Newsletter Editor

Contents:

1. VBS E-mail Discussion Group is Active
 2. On-line Maps Are On The Way
 3. Clarification on Priority Blocks
 4. WingTips - Advice for the Field
 5. Permit Progress
 6. Featured Web Site
 7. Calendar of Events
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1. VBS E-MAIL DISCUSSION GROUP IS ACTIVE

One way to stay in contact with the survey and its participants is the VBS e-mail discussion group. By joining the group you can get up-to-date news of butterfly sightings, post your own sightings, ask questions, get answers, hear about field trips, and discuss butterfly conservation. We also hope participants will use the e-mail group to ask general questions about the survey. To sign up visit <http://list.uvm.edu/archives/vtleps.html>.

2. ON-LINE MAPS ARE ON THE WAY

VBS Project Director Kent McFarland is chained to his computer cranking out maps of priority blocks as fast as he can. (Good thing it's not good butterflying weather.) We apologize for the delay but hope to have all the maps available on the web site (www.vinsweb.org/conservation/vbs) by May 15. As of now, maps are available for roughly the southern one-third of the state. (Please note that on the web site all the links to maps are active; but at this point only some of them will actually give you a map.) These are color, topographic maps of the survey's 184 priority blocks, with the block boundaries clearly in red. They are Adobe Acrobat Reader files (pdf). So you'll need the free Adobe Acrobat Reader (www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html) software to open them. The maps can be used in a number of ways -- either directly in the field or at home to locate survey sites on your Vermont Gazetteer, which includes road names.

3. CLARIFICATION ON PRIORITY BLOCKS

Speaking of priority blocks, we'll take this opportunity to clear up what may be confusing a few folks. It is not at all mandatory that you survey only within priority blocks. VBS will accept butterfly records from absolutely

anywhere in this state. The 184 priority blocks (each about 9 square miles) represent the minimum area that we must cover in order to be assured of a valid survey sample for the project. So if you have a choice, we ask that you do indeed survey within a priority block. But don't feel you must survey within a block. For example, the homes of VBS staff do not happen to fall within priority blocks, but you can be sure that we will be surveying there regularly. The good news is that no Vermonter lives far from a priority block. Details about priority blocks are on pages 2 and 3 of the VBS Manual for Participants.

By the way, if you do survey within a priority block, don't feel that you must sample there regularly throughout the season. While we certainly hope that you do, even one visit to a priority block will help us tremendously.

4. WINGTIPS - ADVICE FOR THE FIELD

This will be a regular newsletter feature offering field advice to volunteers. If you've developed something that makes your survey work easier, please forward the suggestion to Bryan Pfeiffer (Bryan@VermontBirdTours.com). We'll include it in the next issue and give you credit.

a) GPS Your Vouchers

Allow Global Positioning System satellites to pinpoint the locations of your VBS vouchers. Fine handheld GPS units range from \$100-\$200. So when you collect or photograph that Bog Elfin, its latitude, longitude and altitude will be available with the press of a button for your Voucher Data Card. GPS units are easy to learn and use. Two sites to consider a purchase include www.onlinemarine.com or www.gpsc.com but you should shop around.

b) Make Your Vouchers Waypoints

GPS users can save the coordinates of each voucher location as a waypoint with the voucher number as its name. If you happen to stop by the VBS office in Woodstock, we can even download your voucher coordinates into our database.

c) Select NAD83 as the Map Datum

GPS users participating in the survey should set the map datum in their units to North American Datum 1983 (NAD83).

5. PERMIT PROGRESS

As you may know, VBS participants require a state permit to visit and survey on lands owned or managed by the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources. We're pleased to report that our permit is almost in hand. It will give us access to most (not all) wildlife management areas, state parks, and state forest land, as well as the Green Mountain National Forest. Once the permit is ready, we'll send a copy to all VBS participants. It would be wise to carry it with you in the field. To survey on US Fish and Wildlife Service land, such as the Conte National Wildlife Refuge or Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge, contact the VBS office at 802-457-2779 Ext. 124.

6. FEATURED WEB SITE: THE BUTTERFLIES OF NORTH AMERICA

www.npwrc.usgs.gov/resource/distr/lepid/bflyusa/bflyusa.htm

The Butterflies of North America web site is a fine general resource. It

features distribution maps for verified (vouched) butterfly species as well as photographs of the adult and caterpillar (when available). The species accounts include information on size, identifying characteristics, life history, flight, caterpillar hosts, adult food, habitat, species range, conservation status, and management needs. The site will also generate species checklists for each county in the U. S. and state in northern Mexico. The data are noticeably incomplete, however, as the site is still collecting information from states. (The VBS will help round out Vermont data.) Users looking to identify an unknown butterfly can browse the collection of thumbnail photos and jump to a particular species account and distribution map.

7. CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Ascutney Mountain Wildlife Festival

Rockingham, VT

May 5 / 11am-4pm

Celebrate wildlife diversity at Herrick's Cove Recreation Area. Contact Acutney Mtn. Audubon Society at <http://www.sover.net/%7Emwalsh/>.

Vermont Entomological Society Field Trip

Northfield, VT

May 18 / 10 a.m.

Mary and Doug Burnham will host this VES insect excursion at 120 acres of forest, fields, an orchard and a pond. Meet at the I-89 Exit 5 commuter lot. Contact Mary at 229-9578 for more information.

Butterfly Gardening Workshop

Montpelier, VT

May 23 / 4-6pm

Learn to attract beauty on four wings to your garden. VINS North Branch Nature Center. \$5 for members, \$7 for nonmembers, \$1 for kids. Call 229-6206 to register.

VBS Field Trip and Training

Woodstock, VT

June 15 / 11am-2pm

Learn about butterflies and the Vermont Butterfly Survey at the VINS Bragdon Nature Preserve. Contact Kent McFarland (457-2779 Ext. 124 or kmcfarland@vinsweb.org) for details.

VBS Field Trip and Training

Montpelier, VT

June 23 / 10am-2pm

Learn about butterflies and techniques for participating in the Vermont Butterfly Survey at the VINS North Branch Nature Center. Contact the nature center at 229-6206 to register.

Robert Michael Pyle - Lecture and Field Outings

Lecture - June 28 / 7-9 pm / Montpelier

Field Outings - June 29 and 30 / Woodstock area

The Vermont Butterfly Survey is proud to sponsor a rare appearance in Vermont by this noted author, conservationist and lepidopterist. Pyle will offer free public lecture in Montpelier from 7-9 pm (location to be announced). He will conduct a two-day field course in butterflies in the Woodstock area on June 29 and 30. Contact Bryan Pfeiffer (Bryan@VermontBirdTours.com) for more information.

North Montpelier Butterfly Count Montpelier, VT

July 6 / All Day

Join novice and expert butterflyers alike for the third annual Fourth of July Butterfly Count. We'll count every butterfly we see as part of a nationwide effort sponsored by the North American Butterfly Association. For more information contact Chip Darmstadt at 229-6206 or cdarmstadt@vinsweb.org.
