

California Fires Affect Endangered Species and Habitat

The status of one imperiled and two federally endangered butterflies in California is in flux. The outbreak of wildfires in late October has threatened the Laguna Mountain skipper, Quino checkerspot and Thorne's hairstreak.



Harris Fire on Mount Miguel, San Diego County
Photo: David S. Roberts

Sources from the Carlsbad Field Office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which itself was closed for several days due to the fires, have indicated that little of the field damage has been verified due to the inaccuracy of fire perimeter maps and the fact that the perimeter maps do not yet account for unburned islands of remaining habitat.

The Laguna Mountains skipper inhabits montane meadows in a very restricted range within San Diego County. The skipper occupied habitat located on Palomar Mountain was impacted by the 50,000 acre Poomacha fire, a fire that has burned nearly 30 percent of Palomar Mountain State Park. As of Sunday, November 4, Poomacha was the last wildfire still burning in San Diego County.

The Quino checkerspot is locally distributed in sunny openings within chaparral and coastal sage shrublands in portions of Riverside and San Diego counties and northwestern Baja California, Mexico. At this time it appears that numerous Quino checkerspot sites, including the Otoy Mountain area south of San Diego County, have burned. According to Peter Sorensen, Division Chief of the Carlsbad Field Office, "We know that some of the Quino occurrences that have burned in the past have been seen in subsequent years, so a lot probably depends on how hot the fire was in the places of concern. And of course there is no way to determine that without post-fire butterfly monitoring, which has not yet occurred"

Thorne's hairstreak lives only in the Otoy Mountains near the U.S.-Mexican border, where its larval host plant, the Tecate cypress, is mainly found. It is feared that much of this area, devastated in the 2003 wildfires, has again burned.

According to the Carlsbad Field Office, post-fire assessments are planned for this winter in order to acquire a clearer picture of the status of both the species and the habitats.



Hillside blaze – Orange County Photo: Richard Smith
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BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION INITIATIVE

McGuire Center for Lepidoptera and Biodiversity, Florida Museum of Natural History,
UF Cultural Plaza, 308 Hull Road, P.O. Box 112710, Gainesville, FL 32611-2710

San Diego Zoo’s Wild Animal Park Sustains Fire Damage

BFCI member **San Diego Zoo’s Wild Animal Park** reopened to the public October 26 after several days of closures due to the recent wildfires. While no exhibit or public access spaces were lost, more than 600 acres of open buffer zone were burned.

Of the more than 3,500 animals that reside in the Wild Animal Park, one clapper rail (an endangered bird) and one kiang (a wild equine species) were lost due to complications from the fire.

Roger Williams Park Zoo’s Karner Blue Restoration Success

Founding BFCI member **Roger Williams Park Zoo** (RWPZ) continues its efforts to save the federally endangered Karner blue butterfly and its habitat.



Participants at work in the habitat restoration area
Photo: Roger Williams Park Zoo

On May 30 of this year, Zoo staff made their annual trip to the Karner blue butterfly restoration site in Concord, New Hampshire to assist in planting hundreds of lupine plants and to deliver 150 Karner blue butterfly larvae reared at the Zoo for release. Followed by another trip in August, this is just another series of steps in a project that began in 2002.



Lou Perotti, Roger Williams Park Zoo Conservation Coordinator, tends Karner blue larva in the Zoo’s laboratory.
Photo: Victoria Arocho

Working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the New Hampshire Department of Fish and Game, the Zoo rears Karner blue butterfly larvae and propagates wild lupine, the plant essential to the Karner blues’ survival.



Karner blue larva feeds on lupine leaves in lab
Photo: Victoria Arocho

Typically found in savannah and barren habitats with dry, sandy soils, wild lupine is now itself a threatened species. The plant thrives in areas that are periodically disturbed, as disturbances reduce or eliminate overhead canopy cover and plant competition. Fire suppression and development have been identified as the primary factors in the loss of wild lupine.



Established lupine planting
Photo: Roger Williams Park Zoo



Lou Perotti (center left in all blue) and The New England Zoo and Aquarium Collaborative team including New Hampshire Fish and Game
 Photo: Roger Williams Park Zoo

This season’s field work marks the first for the recently established New England Conservation Collaborative. The Collaborative members working on the Karner blue project include the **RWPZ**, BFCI member **Boston Museum of Science**, Beardsley Zoo, Buttonwood Park Zoo, Zoo New England, the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department and BFCI partner **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**. The group effort may help multiply the project’s impact by five-fold and expand the existing habitat restoration area.

“This is a great first step for [the Collaborative].” Lou Perotti, Conservation Programs Coordinator at RWPZ, explains. “Hopefully we can duplicate our partnership on this project in many other efforts in the future.” The Collaborative plans to have a presence at the Northeast Fish and Wildlife Conference in Mystic, Connecticut in April 2008 where they hope to form new working relationships with federal and state biologists.



Karner blue
 Photo: Mitch Magdich/
 USNewswire

Perotti, credits the “great support” that Steve Fuller, Heidi Holman and Lindsay Webb of the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department have given to the zoo community and the restoration project. Says Perotti, “They are the role model all Fish and Game Departments should look at; they truly see the value in partnering with zoos to make good conservation happen.”

Project leaders have already noticed a measurable positive impact. According to Laura Dunn, the RWPZ’s Public Relations Manager, “Monitoring of the reintroduced KBB population at the site is ongoing, but progress toward bringing back the endangered Karner blue butterfly at the restoration site continues. More and more Karner blues are being observed flying free there, a sight not seen since the early 1900’s.”



Carla Dudley and other members of New Hampshire Fish and Game and National Wildlife Federation brief children from the Concord, NH school district at the restoration site.
 Photo: Roger Williams Park Zoo

For more on this project visit
http://www.rwpzoo.org/conservation/BFCI_KBB.cfm.



Naples Zoo Donates Wishing Well Funds to BFCI

Many thanks to BFCI member **Naples Zoo** for their recent donation of funds collected from their wishing well!



Photo: Naples Zoo

As many of you know, in 2006 **The Butterfly House**, whose wishing well has raised thousands of dollars for BFCI, offered a free revenue-generating wishing well to a BFCI member committed to sharing the earnings with BFCI. The **Naples Zoo** in Florida accepted the challenge and their well has provided close to \$1,000 to BFCI.

National Forest Foundation Offers Matching Awards Program

The National Forest Foundation (NFF), a private, nonprofit 501(c)(3) chartered by Congress, is offering a matching awards program for on-the-ground conservation and restoration projects.

The NFF accepts applications from non-governmental, nonprofit 501(c)(3) organizations and Native American tribes working on or adjacent to National Forests and Grasslands throughout the United States.

Interested organizations are encouraged to position their projects into at least one of the NFF's areas of programmatic emphasis: **Wildlife Habitat Improvement**, Recreation, Community-Based Forestry, and Watershed Health and Restoration.

Applicants must first submit a pre-proposal. Pre-proposals will be evaluated, and a subset of the organizations submitting pre-proposals will be invited to submit full proposals. Submission deadlines for the 2008 Matching Awards Program are as follows:

Round 1: Friday, December 15, 2007

Round 2: June 6, 2008

For more info visit

http://www.natlforests.org/consp_04_map.html

Anyone interested in applying for a project with BFCI, please contact Stephanie Sanchez at ssanchez@flmnh.ufl.edu.

BFCI joins American Public Gardens Association

Through an individual membership, BFCI is proud to join the American Public Gardens Association. Founded in 1940 as the American Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboreta (AABGA), the American Public Gardens Association (APGA) has emerged as one of the premiere associations for public gardens in North America.



APGA strives to serve and strengthen public gardens throughout North America by supporting and promoting their work, value and achievements in horticultural display, education, research and plant conservation.

BFCI has submitted a proposal which highlights the mission and accomplishments of BFCI and its members for the APGA Annual Conference to be held June 2008 in Pasadena, California. BFCI looks forward to expanding its community and spreading its mission of butterfly and habitat conservation.



Policy Update: Federal Register

The Eastern New York Chapter of the Nature Conservancy has applied to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for an Enhancement of Survival Permit. The permit, which is for a period of 50 years, includes a draft Safe Harbor Agreement (SHA) for the Karner blue butterfly in portions of Albany, Saratoga, Schenectady, and Warren Counties, New York.

The Nature Conservancy plans to implement an SHA on non-Federal and non-Nature Conservancy lands in Eastern New York to promote the recovery of the Karner blue on enrolled private lands. The conservation measures will improve and maintain pitch-pine scrub oak barrens, oak-pine savannahs and tall grass prairie openings through mowing, tree clearing and grubbing, removal of debris, prescribed burning, limited use of herbicides and planting seeds or seedlings by hand or mechanical equipment. The Nature Conservancy may also employ captive-rearing and translocation methods to enhance butterfly colonization of sites.

Under an SHA, a participating property owner voluntarily undertakes management activities on their property to enhance, restore, or maintain habitat benefiting species listed under the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

Safe Harbor Agreements encourage private and other non-Federal property owners to implement conservation efforts for listed species by assuring property owners they will not be subject to increased property use restrictions if their efforts attract listed species to their property or increase the numbers or distribution of listed species already on their property.

Xerces Society Offering Lepidoptera Conservation Research Awards

The **Xerces Society** is now accepting applications for the Joan Mosenthal DeWind Award, two \$3,750 grants for research on Lepidoptera conservation.

The DeWind awards are given to students who are engaged in research leading to a university degree related to Lepidoptera conservation and who intend to continue to work in this field. All proposals must be written by the student researcher. Proposed research should have a clear connection to Lepidoptera conservation and must be completed within one year from receipt of funds. Applicants may be graduate or undergraduate students; however, please note that all but one awardee, to date, have been pursuing graduate research.

The submission deadline for the 2008 Awards is as follows: Friday, December 21, 2007 at 5:00 PM EST. Award winners will be announced by March 31, 2008, with the awards given by May 2008. For more info visit: <http://www.xerces.org/dewind.htm>

Oregon Zoo Announces 2008 Wildlife Conservation Lecture Series

Xerces Society entomologist Scott Hoffman Black will present "What Good Are Bugs? The Case For Invertebrate Conservation" on April 29, 2008 at the **Oregon Zoo's** Banquet Center. The lecture is a part of the Zoo's 2008 Wildlife Conservation Lecture Series

Black will shed light on the tremendous impact insects have on our lives. The direct benefit of insects to Americans is about \$57 billion a year, and people can thank insect pollinators for one third of every mouthful of food they eat.

The motivation for this series is the hope that community knowledge will be raised in the areas of wildlife conservation, environmental problems and ecological systems.



Florida Agencies Work Together to Save Butterflies

By Jaret C. Daniels

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (<http://myfwc.com/>) has formed a new *Imperiled Butterflies of South Florida Workgroup* (IBSWF) to directly address the significant declines experienced by multiple south Florida butterfly taxa. Composed of local, state, and federal agencies, the North American Butterfly Association and the University of Florida, the IBSWF was borne out of an initial stakeholder forum developed to deal with conservation and management issues surrounding the state-endangered Miami blue (*Cyclargus thomasi bethunebakeri*) including habitat management, mosquito control pesticide application, and captive breeding and reintroduction. Important lessons have been learned in the process and valuable partnerships have been established. The IBSWF hopes to build on these accomplishments in order to facilitate the regular exchange of information between agencies, identify research priorities and educational needs, and catalyze the development of additional critical partnerships that are needed to assist with organism recovery.

Great Idea! Oregon Zoo's "Dine & Discover"

The Oregon Zoo is offering a feast for the senses with a series of three intimate food-and-wine experiences representing regions from around the world along with lectures on fascinating animals.

The first event features zookeeper Mary Jo Andersen and "Native Butterfly Conservation at the Oregon Zoo: Just How Hungry Are Those Caterpillars?" Zoo chef Paul Warner compliments the event with a multi-course gourmet meal specifically designed for the program.

Says chef Paul, "This tropical banquet is a fusion of aromatic floral scents and essences that would make our guests be reminiscent of butterflies as they enjoy their appetizing meal."

The Oregon Zoo has been rearing endangered Northwest butterflies in its conservation lab since 1999. Along with the federally listed Oregon silverspot, the zoo is working to save the Taylor's checkerspot and Mardon skipper.

The series concludes on February 14, 2008.

*BFCI Wishes You A Very
Happy Holiday Season!*

BFCI REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

The Butterfly Conservation Initiative (BFCI) is pleased to announce the following Request for Proposals (RFP) for research, recovery, and education projects through the 2008 Butterfly Conservation Mini-Grant Program.

I. Organization Overview: The **Butterfly Conservation Initiative (BFCI)** (www.butterflyrecovery.org) was established in 2001 as a result of conversations between the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Office of Partnerships and Outreach. At that time, it was recognized that many AZA zoos and aquariums, particularly smaller facilities, were actively seeking opportunities to contribute to North American conservation efforts. By demonstrating a commitment to local wildlife, these institutions could position themselves as community conservation leaders. Butterfly conservation and recovery offers a unique opportunity for zoos and aquariums of all sizes to participate in field conservation in a meaningful way. Hands-on efforts, including habitat restoration and creation, native plant propagation, captive rearing, education and outreach, and population monitoring, offer participants a chance to connect directly with species and habitats in need while helping to inform their visitor base.

BFCI is a national coalition of 42 accredited zoos and aquariums and seven partner organizations: the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Wildlife Federation, Environmental Defense, McGuire Center for Lepidoptera and Biodiversity, Xerces Society and the North American Pollinator Protection Campaign. Together, BFCI is dedicated to "*the conservation of threatened, endangered, and vulnerable North American butterflies and the habitats that sustain them, with a focus on recovery, research, and education.*" BFCI strives to empower its members and partners to work individually and collaboratively to affect butterfly conservation and offer opportunities for engagement suitable to diverse interests and strengths.

II. Program Overview: With funding provided from the Sophia M. Sachs Butterfly House, the Butterfly Conservation Initiative will provide competitive mini-grants to conservation organizations for programs related to the core mission of BFCI. Funds may be used to help support scientific research, conservation activities, and education programs focused on butterflies. Priority will be given to efforts targeting imperiled butterfly species.

The Butterfly Conservation Initiative will provide five (5) awards of \$500.00 each. **Grants are limited to nonprofit conservation organizations with approved IRS 501(c)3 status for projects in the 50 U.S. states.** BFCI is unable to make grants to individuals or for-profit corporations.

III. Instructions for Submission: The proposal is limited to a total of 5 pages. All proposals should provide the following:

1. A cover page with the following information:
 - Institution Name
 - Title of Project
 - Name of project director, job title, email address, phone
 - Physical mailing address
 - Other principal individuals involved (include name, title, institution, email, phone for each)
 - Brief summary of request (no more than 2 lines)
2. Proposal Narrative: 2-4 pages of explanatory text that addresses the following components:
 - Project Background including a statement of overall need
 - Project objectives
 - Scope of work
 - Timeline
 - Proposed Budget (including how funds will enhance existing program support)
 - Biographical Sketches
 - References

IV. Proposal Evaluation Procedure: All proposals received by BFCI will be reviewed to determine that all of the submission requirements described in the RFP have been met. The BFCI Steering Committee will evaluate and rate all proposals under consideration. Decisions will be made by March 1, 2008. All submitters will be notified of their final submission status.

V. Proposal Submission: Proposals must be received by 5:00 pm (EST) on January 15, 2008. Proposals must be submitted electronically. Please attach a PDF of your proposal to an email addressed to ssanchez@flmnh.ufl.edu with the SUBJECT heading: **BFCI Proposal Submission** An email confirmation of receipt will be sent when the proposal has been downloaded by the BFCI office.



Current Members

** Founding Member

- | | |
|---|---|
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Contributors

- Brandywine Zoo
- Brevard Zoo
- Chesapeake Chapter of the American Association of Zoo Keepers – Salisbury Zoo
- ** Oregon Zoo
- ** San Antonio Zoological Gardens and Aquarium
- Steinhart Aquarium

Partners

- Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA)
- Environmental Defense
- McGuire Center for Lepidoptera and Biodiversity
- National Wildlife Federation
- North American Pollinator Protection Campaign (NAPPC)
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation

Thanks to Our Supporters! As always, we thank our members, contributors, donors and partners for their dedication to BFCI's mission and goals.

Announce your butterfly efforts and activities in *BFCI News* by contacting the BFCI Program Coordinator at: ssanchez@flmnh.ufl.edu

To learn more about the BFCI, please visit our Web site (www.butterflyrecovery.org).