

Butterfly Conservation Course in Colorado

The second offering of the AZA Board of Regents' "Techniques for Butterfly Conservation & Management" course will be offered 23-27 June 2007 in Florissant, CO, just west of Colorado Springs. Course topics include natural history and identification, captive propagation, host plant care and needs, field/lab research techniques, permitting/recovery planning basics, population monitoring, habitat restoration, butterfly exhibitry, education and outreach, and more.

Last year's class was a great success and we encourage anybody interested in butterfly conservation to participate. Visit www.aza.org/prodev/ButterflyCon/ or contact Geri Noland (azatraining@aza.org or 301-562-0777 x238) for more information and/or to register for this course.

Island Marble Butterfly Not Listed

On 14 November 2006, the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) issued a 12-month finding that the Island marble butterfly (*Euchloe ausonides insulana*) was not to be listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). After observations of the butterfly in 1908, the butterfly was not seen again until 1998. Surveys in 2005 and 2006 uncovered the butterfly at 26 locations on the San Juan and Lopez islands, suggesting that up to five populations may live on the two islands. The finding is in the Federal Register 71(218): 66292-66298 (<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/>).



Mitchell's satyr larva.
Credit: Mitch Maedich

Two Butterflies Become Candidates for Future Listing

The Florida leafwing butterfly (*Anaea troglodyta floralialis*) and Bartram's hairstreak (*Strymon acis bartrami*) are listed as Candidate species for listing under the ESA. Both are found in pine rocklands with populations of pineland croton, their hostplant. Both are under pressure from habitat fragmentation, fire suppression, and mosquito spraying, among other factors. More information can be found in the 12 Sept. 2006 FR 70(176): 53755-53835.

Rallying for Karner Blue Recovery in Michigan

The Detroit Zoo is taking on a new role in the recovery of the endangered Karner blue butterfly (*Lycaeides melissa samuelis*). The Zoo is working with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to restore the oak savanna habitat through controlled burns and plantings at the Petersburg State Game Area, a site absent of Karner blues for almost 20 years. The Zoo plans to begin a trial breeding program at the Zoo in 2007 and is targeting 2008 for release of captive-reared Karner blues at the restored site. Contact Laura Palombi (lpalombi@dzo.org) for more information.

Endangered Satyrs Slumber in Ohio

By: Peter Tolson, PhD, Dir. of Conservation & Research, The Toledo Zoo

Although wintry weather has shriveled our sedges to dry tufts, our Mitchell's satyr (*Neonympha mitchellii mitchellii*) larvae cling to their perches, waiting to break their winter diapause and begin feeding again. This is the first year the satyrs have over-wintered at the Toledo Zoo.

Our 2007 summer research will focus on satyr host plant selection. Working with botanists from the Michigan Natural Features Inventory, we have experimented with newly hatched satyr larvae, offering them a variety of potential host plants and recording their feeding selections. The predominant host plant for the satyr was believed to be the tussock sedge, *Carex stricta*, but early experiments show that they preferentially

select other grasses and sedges over *C. stricta*, most notably panic grass, *Panicum* sp., marsh grass, *Poa palustris*, and the sedges *C. sterilis* and *C. leptalea*. Knowledge of which plants are selected by satyr larvae will ensure that areas chosen for their conservation have the proper mix of host plants to maintain their populations.

Editor's note: Congratulations to the Toledo Zoo for winning a \$76,000 Institute of Museum and Library Services grant for Mitchell's satyr work and to develop educational curricula.

Understanding the Mardon skipper's Life History

By: Scott Hoffman Black, Executive Director, The Xerces Society

Mardon skippers (*Polites mardon*), small, tawny-orange butterflies, were likely more widespread prior to large-scale loss of their open, grassland habitat and mountain meadows to agricultural and residential sprawl, fire suppression, livestock grazing, and introduction of exotic species. Now they are listed as a Candidate species under the ESA.

Last spring the Xerces Society initiated a project to better understand the life history of this butterfly and its habitat needs. With funding from the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service, Xerces staffer Loni Beyer conducted surveys in Oregon and Washington to identify the plants they use for laying eggs. She also observed adult nectar usage and conducted population censuses. Results indicate that the skippers use a wider variety of plants for egg-laying than previously thought. We returned to one site for intensive surveys focused on Mardon skipper caterpillars, the first study on these larvae in the wild and one that should help us learn how these butterflies live through the winter.

Editor's note: The Oregon Zoo raises Mardon skippers in captivity to complement these conservation efforts.

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