

Last summer I made a calendar that shows 10 months on one page, and made copies of it. Then, as I see a species, I write its name along the top and record the site, number seen, and sex if I can tell it. This shows population numbers and sex ratios.

If that weren't enough, I note feeding and basking positions, nectaring records, behaviors, egg-laying times, and caterpillar host plants. Then I enter the data into a computer data base.

The National Audubon Society sponsors the Christmas Bird Counts; the North American Butterfly Association sponsors the Fourth of July Butterfly Counts. The count area covers a 15-mile-diameter circle, and the rules are basically the same for both.

Six counts took place in Illinois in 1996 (Beardstown, LaSalle County, McDonough County, McGraw Wildlife Foundation, North Park Village and Shawnee Hills). I'm the compiler

for the Shawnee Hills Count. Our highest tally was 42 species in 1997, and the lowest was 26 in 1992.

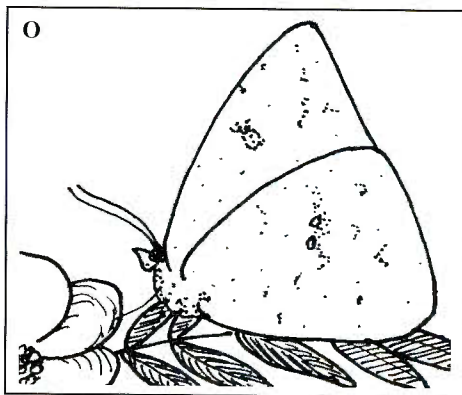
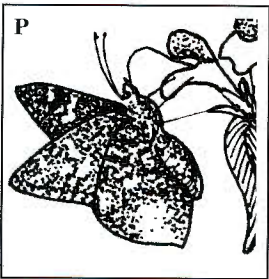
Identifying Butterflies

If you want to get even more involved with butterflies, there's always rearing caterpillars and watching the adults emerge (which I find frustrating because more times than not, a parasitic wasp emerges instead). For identifying caterpillars, I recommend "A Golden Guide to Butterflies and Moths."

Butterflying requires basically the same equipment as birding: binoculars, field guide, and notebook. I use my birding binoculars for butterflies; some people use close-focus binoculars. I carry the "Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Butterflies" with me in the field. "The Butterflies and Moths of Missouri" (published by the Missouri Department of Conservation)

stays close by in the car.

The disadvantage to the Audubon field guide is that it has butterflies of the whole United States; the Missouri book has only species recorded in Missouri. "Butterflies of Indiana" has the best plates for identifications, showing several specimens of each



species. It's also limited to Indiana species and gives a distribution map for each. I figure basically what occurs in Missouri and Indiana, occurs in Illinois. "Butterflies East of the Great Plains" by Paul Opler and "The Butterflies of North America" by James Scott offer more technical information.

Obviously I don't complain about butterflies any more. I start my mornings with the birds and switch to butterflies. The progression seem like a natural one for any birder.

-- Kathy Phelps

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- A. Spicebush Swallowtail
- B. Great Spangled Fritillary
- C. Zabulon Skipper
- D. Pearl Crescent
- E. Eastern Tailed Blue
- F. Buckeye
- G. Tawny Emperor
- H. Hackberry Emperor
- I. Question Mark
- J. Red-spotted Purple
- K. Gemmed Satyr

- L. Snout
- M. Monarch
- N. Cabbage White
- O. Cloudless Sulphur
- P. Hoary Edge

