Butterfly Survey: Iroquois County State Hildlife Area

Conducted by: Don Stillwaugh and Ron Panzer Northeastern Illinois University

1989-1990

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Net hods

The Iroquois County State Hildlife Area (ICSNA) was visited by 2 (occasionally 3) investigators on 10 occasions between 6-15-89 and 7-13-90. Aerial nets were employed to capture butterflies during each visit. Common, easily identified insects were captured, identified, and released. Uncommon species were sacrificed and retained for further examination; these are currently housed as voucher specimens at Northeastern Illinois University and in the collection of the junior author.

Specimens were identified using a variety of taxonomic manuals, keys, and field guides, most of which are listed in the attached bibliography. In the case of duskywing butterflies (*Erynnis* spp.), specimens were compared with reference specimens from the collection of the Milwaukee Public Museum.

An arbitrary butterfly census route, designed to traverse representative portions of the Hooper Branch Nature Preserve, was established in 1989 (Fig. 1). Four censuses were completed between 5-26-90 and 7-11-90 in accordance with the proceedures outlined by Pollard (1977). The following criteria were observed: The census taker (DS). . .

- (1) proceeded at a uniform pace (1 hour/census)
- (2) conducted surveys between the hours of 10 AM and 3 PM.
- (3) surveyed only on days with less than 50% cloud cover.
- (4) surveyed only on days with moderate to light winds.
- (5) recorded all species sighted within 6 meters
- (6) paused briefly to chase, capture, and identify fast-moving or illusive individuals. Returned to departure point to resume route.

Results

Forty-six butterflies were captured and identified to species. Sixteen of these were determined to be uncommon remnant-restricted species (Tables 1, 2, and 3).

Twenty-four species were recorded during the census portion of this study (Table 4). Relative daily population densities ranged from 1/hr to 12/hour; one hundred and thirty-four individuals were recorded along the census route this year.

Discussion

Iroquois County State Wildlife Area (ICSWA) supports an impressive butterfly fauna. The **prairie-restricted** butterfly fauna compares favorably with those recorded on the largest prairie remnants in the Chicago region, and far surpasses, in diversity, the faunas of the smaller prairie remnants in this area (Table 1).

Three of the prairie-associated species found at ICSWA, bimacula, E. martialis, and S. idalia, are known to occur on few sites in the Chicago region* and thus should be considered to be rare elements (S2). Several others, including *E. conspicua, P.* massasoit, S. acadica, B. selene myrina, and S. aphrodite are uncommon and tend to occur only on the larger remnants in this region. E. conspicua, A. delaware, T. bathyllus, S. cybele, and H. titus are somewhat uncommon and will likely become more so as shrinking habitat islands become more isolated extinctions accelerate. Four ICSNA prairie species, E. bimacula, E conspicua, P. massasoit, and S. idalia are listed as <u>watch species</u> in Illinois.

In addition to the rich prairie fauna described above, three notable **savanna-associated** species were found to occur on this site; Two of these, *A. vialis*, and *E. briza*, are uncommon in this region, due largely to the extensive destruction of their savanna habitats. *Hesperia sassacus* is very rare in both Illinois and Indiana (Threatened), and should be considered to be a rare element (S1).

The combined prairie-and-savanna-restricted butterfly fauna of BD&S ranks with the Hoosier and Clark and Pine Preserves (Indiana) in terms of species abundance (Table 2). However, most of the rare upland, sand savanna species of this region have yet to be encountered at ICSWA. The Cobweb skipper, Hesperia metea, the Ottoe skipper, Hesperia attae, the Dusted skipper, Htrytanapsis hianna, the Frosted elfin, Callephrys irus, the Karner blue,

Lycaeides melissa samuelis, the Edward's hairstreak, Satyrium edwardsii, and the Olympic marble, Euchloe olympia, seem conspicuous in their absence at ICSWA. It is possible that extensive grazing has resulted in the loss of several of these narrowly restricted upland species.

Survey Thoroughness

We have likely recorded 80-90% of the butterflies that occur on this site. An effort will be made in 1990/91 to locate additional species.

Recommendations

<u>Prescribed burning</u> . . . The remnant-restricted insects of ICSWA can be expected to benefit from the opening and recovery of the degraded upland prairie and savanna habitats on this site. In this regard, we would recommend that IDOC burn at least 25% (but no more than 50%) of the upland habitats of ICSWA each year.

<u>Butterfly monitoring</u> . . . Only 6 of the 16 remnant-dependent species of ICSUA appeared along our savanna census route during this study. We would recommend that IDOC consider adding an open prairie route at some point in the future.

An effort should be made to recruite a volunteer butterfly monitor for this important site. (Doug Taron coordinates volunteer butterfly monitoring for ITMC in northern IL)

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Table 1. Distribution of butterfly species abundance on 24 grassland remnants in northern Illinois and Indiana

Remnant:	irea (ha.):	Species	number:	
	Prair	rie-Restricted species*	Other species	Total species
Iroquois CSUA	600.0	13	33	46
Beaver Lake Prairie	250.0	12	24	36
Nachusa Grasslands	100.0	15	41	56
Lockport Prairie	75.0	11	22	33
Spring Hill Farm Fen	70.0	13	31	44
Romeoville Prairie	60.0	11	24	34
G. M. Prairie	60.0	15	35	50
West Chicago Prairie	60.0	16	26	42
Clark and Pine Prairie	50.0	14	33	47
Pratts Wayne Marsh	44.0	10	20	31
Toll-road Prairie	35.0	6	17	23
Sun Drop Prairie	28.0	8	24	32
Cook Prairie	16.0	13	26	39
Paintbrush Prairie	15.0	7	23	30
Somme Prairie	14.0	8	18	26
Buffalo Grove Prairie	6.4	6	16	22
I- 57 Prairie	4.5	3	17	20
Belmont Prairie	4.2	6	27	33
Chicago Ridge Prairie	3.6	3	18	21
Shoe Factory Hill Prair	ie 3.5	3	18	21
Santa Fe Prairie	3.0	5	17	22
Cary Prairie	2.0	3	19	22
Main Street Prairie	2.0	2	19	21
Vermont Cemetery Prairi	e 1.0	1	14	15

^{*} This category includes those prairie species that are seldom encountered outside native prairie remnants. This figure does not include savanna/woodland restricted species such as $\it E.~brizo,~T.~pylades,~etc.$

TABLE 2. The remnant-restricted butterflies of five sand savannas in Illinois and Indiana

Species: Site:	B'#ood	Tefft	Hoosier	C&P	iroq
Atrytonopsis hianna				(*)	
Euphyes dion	*			*	
Euphyes conspicua	X	X	X	X	Y
Euphyes bimacula	*				X
Pognes viator	*				. ••
Pognes massasoit			X		X
Problema byssus	*	*	••	*	~
Atrutone delaware	X	X	X	X	
Polites origines	Ÿ	X		Ŷ	X
Hesperia metea	••	(*)			^
Hesperia sassacus		(*)			(*)
Hesperia ottoe		` '		(*)	` '
Hesperia leonardus				(*)	
Amblyscirtes vialis	x	X			x
Erynnis icelus	Ŷ	Ŷ	x	X	ŝ
Erynnis brizo	^	X	^	^	? X *
Erynnis martialis		*	*		*
Thorybes bathyllus	x	X	•	X	X
Thorybes pyllades	î	^		ŷ	^
Euchloe olympia	^	(*)	4	^	
Harkenclenus titus	x	``x´	x	x	x
Strymon acadica	Ŷ	^	â	^	Ŷ
Satyrium edwardsii	^	X	â		^
Lycaena thoe	X	Ŷ	Ŷ	X	
Lycaena helloides	â	^	X X	^	X
Lycaena xanthoides	^		^	*	^
Callophrys irus		(*)			
Chlosume mycteis		X			
Chiosyne gorgone carlota	*	^			
Bolonia selene myrina	X	x	x		¥
Boloria bellona	â	^	^		•
Speyeria idalia	*				*
Speyeria aphrodite	x	x	×		x
Cercyonis pegala olympus	â	â	Ŷ	X	Ŷ
Lethe eurydice	Ŷ	^	â	â	^
	^	x	^	^	
Lethe portlandia anthedon		1			

B'wood = Braidwood Dune & Savanna; Tefft = Tefft Savanna; C&P = Clarke & Pine Nature Preserve; Hoosier = Hoosier Prairie, Iroq = Iroquois CSUA * = Very uncommon or rare species in this region. (*) = very rare prairie/savanna species (<10 sites in Illinois and Indiana

combined).

TABLE 3. The wetland butterflies of five sand savannas in Illinois and Indiana

Species:	Site:	B'wood	Tefft	Hoosier	C&P	Iroq
Euphyes dion		•			*	
Euphyes conspicua		X	X	X	X	χ
Euphyes binacula		*				*
Poanes viator		*				
Poanes massasoit				X		X
Strymon acadica		X		X		X
Lycaena thoe		X	X	X	X	
Lycaena helloides		X		X		X
Lycaena xanthoides					*	
Chlosyne nycteis			X			
Boloria selene myrina		X	X	X		X
Boloria bellona		X				
Lethe eurydice		X	٠	X	x	
Totals:		10	4	7	5	6

B'wood = Braidwood Dune & Savanna; Tefft = Tefft Savanna; C&P = Clarke & Pine Nature Preserve; Hoosier = Hoosier Prairie; Iroq = Iroquois Prairie * = Very uncommon or rare species in this region.

TABLE 4. Butterfly census route data: Hooper Branch Nature Preserve

Seasonal summary (by Transpot)

Cerrous dates: May 26; June 4; June 17; July 9 (1990)

Species:	Transect:	٨	В	С	Total sightings
Polites coras		_	1	<u>.</u>	1
P. themistocles		-	i	-	i
P. origines		1	1	_	2
Pholisora catullus		8	11	7	- 26
Erynnis juvenalis		5	_	5	10
Hesperia sassacus		2	-	_	2
P. glaucus		3	1	2	6
P. triolus		6	4	1	11
Pieris protodice		ĭ	11	_	12
Colias eurytheme/philo	dice	2	6	-	8
Eurema lisa		4	-	-	
Harkenclenus titus		1	-	2	3
Lycaena phlaeas americ	ana	2	3	3	8
Everes comyntas		2	1	_	3
ycaena helloides		-	1	-	1
Cynthia virginiensis		2	ī	-	3
Cynthia cardui		1	1	-	2
Nymphalis antiopa		3	-	-	3
Polygonia interrogation	is	1	-	_	1
Phyciodes tharos		-	-	1	1
Speyeria cybele		1	-	-	1
Speyeria aphrodite		-	1	-	1
Danaus plexippus		6	9	1	16
Euptychia cymela		1	-	_	1
Cercyonis pegala olymp	us	3	-		

A = open savanna; B = old field; C = roadside (see route map)

TABLE 5

Butterfly Census Route Data: <u>Hooper Branch Nature Preserve</u> (**May 26, 1990**)

Observer: <u>D. Stillwaugh</u> Experience <u>6 yrs</u> Time 1:00 to 2:00

Temperature: <u>80 F</u> Wind conditions (underline one) relatively still <u>moderately windy</u>

Sky (underline one) <u>clear</u> (80-100% cloudless) partial clouds (50-80% cloudless)

Comments:

Polites coras Erynnis juvenalis Pholisora cattulus Papilio glaucus Papilio troilus Lycaena helloides Lycaena phlaeas	- 2	1	-	1
Pholisora cattulus Papilio glaucus Papilio troilus Lycaena helloides	2	_		
Papilio glaucus Papilio troilus Lycaena helloides		_	4	6
Papilio troilus Lycaena helloides	2	1	2	5
Lycaena helloides	2	-	1	3
	4	-	1	5
i vraena phiaeac	-	1	-	1
Lycaetta pittaeas	1	2	1	4
Cynthia virginiensis	1	-	-	1
Danaus plexippus	ī	-	-	1

A = open savanna; B = old field; C = roadside (see route map)

TABLE 6

Butterfly Census Route Data: <u>Hooper Branch Nature Preserve</u> (**June 4, 1990**)

Observer: <u>D. Stillwaugh</u> Experience <u>5 yrs</u> Time <u>11:00 to 12:00</u>

Temperature: <u>90 F</u> Wind conditions (underline one) <u>relatively still</u> moderately windy Sky (underline one) <u>clear (80–100% cloudless)</u> partial clouds (50–80% cloudless)

Comments:

Species:	Transect:	S	P	С	Total Sightings:
Polites origines		1			•
Pholisora cattulus		-	1	2	3
Erynnis juvenalis		1	_	_	1
Papilio troilus		2	1	-	3
Cynthia virginiensis		2	-	-	2
Nymphalis antiopa		3	-	-	3
Polygonia interrogation	is	1	-	-	i
Phycoides tharos		-	-	1	•
Danaus plexippus		1	1	_	2

A = open savanna; B = old field; C = roadside (see route map)

TABLE 7

Butterfly Census Route Data: <u>Braidwood Dunes & Savanna Nature Preserve</u> (**June-17-90**)

Observer: <u>D. Stillwaugh</u> Experience <u>5 yrs</u> Time <u>12:30 to 1:30</u>

Temperature: <u>90 F</u> Wind conditions (underline one) <u>relatively still</u> moderately windy Sky (underline one) <u>clear</u> (80-100% cloudless) partial clouds (50-80% cloudless)

Comments:

Species:	Transect:	S	P	С	M	Total Sightings:
Pholisora cattulus		3	2	1		6
rynnis juvenalis		2	-	į		3
esperia sassacus		2	-	-		2
Papilio triolus		_	3	_		3
. glaucus		1	1	1		3
. eurytheme/philodice		1	1	-		2
ycaena phlaeas		-	1	-		1
ynthia virginiensis		_	1	_		1
ynthia cardui		1	ş	-		2
anaus plexippus		4	2	-		6
uptychia cymela		1	_	_		1

A = open savanna; B = old field; C = roadside (see route map)

TABLE 8.

Butterfly Census Route Data: <u>Hooper Branch Nature Preserve</u> (**July 9, 1990**)

Observer: <u>D. Stillwaugh</u> Experience <u>5 yrs</u> Time <u>11:00 to 12:00</u>

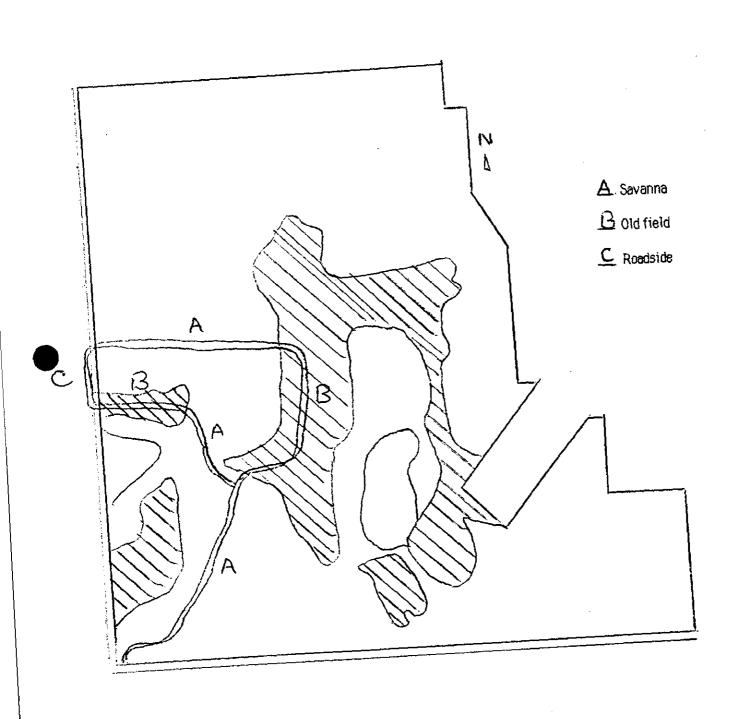
Temperature: <u>90 F</u> Wind conditions (underline one) <u>relatively still</u> moderately windy Sky (underline one) <u>clear (80-100% cloudless)</u> partial clouds (50-80% cloudless)

Comments:

Species:	Transect:	S	p	С	Total Sightings:
Polites themistocles		_	1	_	1
Polites origines		-	1	-	1
Pholisora cattulus		3	5	2	10
Colias erytheme		1	5	-	6
Eurema lisa		4	-	-	4
Pieris protodice		1	11	-	12
Everes comyntas		2	1	-	3
Harkenclenus titus		1	-	2	3
ycaena phlaeas		1	-	2	3
Speyeria cybele		1	~	-	1
Speyeria aphrodite		-	1	-	1
Danaus plexippus		-	6	1	7
Cercyonis pegala		3	-	1	4
Euptychia cymela		1	-	-	1

A = open savanna; B = old field; C = roadside (see route map)

Fig. 1 Hooper Branch Nature Preserve Butterfly Census Route



ANNOTATED LIST OF THE BUTTERFLIES OF THE IROQUOIS CONSERVATION STATE WILDLIFE AREA, ILLINOIS

Compiled by Don Stillwaugh & Ron Panzer Northeastern Illinois University 1989-1990

L = Listed as endangered, threatened, or as a "watch" species in IL.

* = Remnant-restricted species . . . species which occur very infrequently outside of natural area remnants in this region.

Dates = earliest records.

Order Lepidoptera: Butterflies

family Hesperiidae: The Skippers

Amblyscirtes vialis (Edwards)*

Roadside skipper
This is a very uncommon sand savanna species in this region. Recorded visiting *V. pedata* on 5-20-90 through 6-4-90.

Euphyes conspicua (Edwards)*

Uncommon in met prairies and sedge meadows. Host plants are sedges (Carex spp.). 7-10-89 & 7-13-90

Euphyes vestris metacomet (harris)

A common, wide ranging species with a wide ecological amplitude.
6-7-90

Fuphyes bimacula (Grote and Robinson)*

Host plants of this very uncommon wet/mesic prairie species are reported to be sedges. Recorded on mountain mint on the large wet prairie to the south of Hooper Branch. 7-13-90

Pagnes massasoit (Scudder)*
Uncommon in northern sedge meadows. Host plants are sedges (Carex spp.). 7-5-89 & 7-13-90

Hesperiidae, continued

Hallengrenia egeremet (Scudder)

A common, wide ranging species with a wide ecological amplitude.
7-13-90

Polites coras (Cramer)

R common skipper that occurs with regularity in both prairie and degraded habitats. Host plants are grasses. 5-26-90

Polites themisticles (Latreille) Tawny-edged skipper A common, wide ranging species with a wide ecological amplitude. 6-7-90 through 7-13-90

Palites origines (Fabricus)* Cross line skipper This species exhibits a high fidelity for upland prairie in this region. Host plants are grasses. Recorded visiting Lithospermum on 7-13-90 & 6-4-90.

Hesperia sassacus Harris* Indian skipper
This is a <u>rare</u> sand savanna species in Indiana (Threatened) and
Illinois. Recorded in Hooper Branch and in the savamnna to the south
on 6-7-90.

Pholisora catullus Fabricius Common sooty wing
This is a common, wide ranging species that occurs along roadsides and
other degraded habitats where it is reported to feed on Chenopodium
album, an exotic weed. It is very likely that presettlement
populations fed on C. basicianus, C. Leptophyllum, etc. in sand
savanna habitats similar to ICSUA. 6-20-90 through 7-13-90.

Erynnis briza (B. & L.)*

Sleepy dusky wing
This savanna species appears to be uncommon in northern Illinois. Host
plants are oaks. Two individuals captured on 5-20-90.

Erynnis baptisiae (Forbes)

Baptisia dusky wing
This once rare upland prairie and savanna species has recently begun
to feed on crown vetch and is becoming more common. 7-13-90

Erynnis martialis (Scudder)* **Nottled dusky sing**This is a rare prairie/savanna species in Indiana (Threatened) and
Illinois. Host plant is *Ceanothus americanus*. Recorded in Hooper
Branch and in the savamnna to the south on 5-6-90.

Hesperiidae, continued

Erynnis juvenalis (Scudder & Burgess)

Juvenal's dusky wing
This common spring savanna/woodland species feeds on oaks, including
Quercus velutina. Nector plants at ICSUR include Lithaspersum, Phlax
bifida, and Linaria canadensis. 5-20-90 through 6-7-90.

Thorybes bathy//us (J. E. Smith)* Southern cloudy wing This prairie/savanna species is somewhat common in this region. Leguminous host plants include fluorpha and Lespedeza, 7-10-89 & 7-13-90

Epargyreus clarus (Cromer)

Silver-spotted skipper
This is a common, wide-ranging skipper that feeds on *Amerpha*,

Lespedera, Besmodium, and other legumes, including Robinia

pseudo-acacia, an introduced southern species. 7-5-89 & 6-7-90

family Papilionidae: The Swallowtails

Papilia polyxenes asterius Stoll **Black swallowtail** Host plants are members of the family Umbelliferae and include *Zizia aurea* and the exotic *Baucus carata*. This is a common, wide ranging species. 5-20-90

Papilio glaucus Linnaeus

Tiger swallowtail
This is a wide ranging, common ecotonal/savanna species. Host plant
species include *Prunus* spp. 5-20 through 6-7-90.

Fapilie trailus Linnaeus Spicebush swallowtail
This savanna/woodland species is somewhat common in this region. Host
plant species include Sassafras (Sassafras albidum) and prickly ash
(Xanthexylum americanum). 5-26-90 through 6-7-90.

family Pieridae: The Sulfurs and Whites

Pieris protodice Boisduval & LeConte Checkered white
This is a somewhat common species in sandy areas of all types. 6-27-90

Pieris rapae Linnaeus Cabbage butterfly
This is a ubiquitous, wide ranging exotic species. 7-5-89 & 6-5-90

Pieridae, continued

Colias eurytheme Boisduval A very common, wide ranging species. 5-30-90 Alfalfa

Colius philodice Godart Common sulphur Another very common, wide ranging species. 5-30-90

Eurema lisa (Boisdaval & LeConte)

Host plants are legumes and include Cassia. This uncommon species apparently migrates northward regularly from stable populations to the south. 7-13-89

family Lycaenidae: The Gossamer-Winged Butterflies

Harkenclenus titus (Fabricius)* Coral hairstreak
This species exhibits a high fidelity for upland prairies in this
region. *Titus* seldom occurs in old field situations, despite its
reported reliance on members of the genus *Frunus* as host plant
species. 6-27-90

Strymon melinus humuli (Harris) Gray hairstreak
This uncommon southern hairstreak migrates into this area regularly
but is apparently unable to overwinter at this latitude. 7–10–89

Strymon acadica (Edwards)*

Readian hairstreak
This uncommon wet prairie species is at the southern edge of it's
range in northern Illinois. 7-5-89 & 6-30-90

Lycaena helloides (Boisduval)* Purplish copper
This increasingly uncommon wet prairie/sedge meadow species feeds on smartweeds (Polygonum spp.). 7-5-89

Lycaena phlaeas americana Harris American copper
The reported food plant of this common species is Rumex acetacella.
This species occurs throughout Europe and ranges into North Africa and Asia, and may be an introduced species. 6-27-90

Everes comunitas (Godart)

Host plants of this very common species are legumes and include

Lespedeza, Desmodium, Baptisia, and the exotic Trifolium.

family Nymphalidae: The Brush Footed Butterflies

Limenitis arthemis astyanax (Fabricius) Red-spotted purple
This somewhat common, woodland species is reported to feed on a wide
variety of woody host plant species. 7-7-89

Limenitis archippus (Cramer)

Host plants for this common species include Salix and Populus. 7-13-90

Cynthia cardui (Linnaeus)

The host plants of this very common, migratory species are composites.
7-13-89

Cynthia virginiensis (Brury) finerican painted lady
The host plants of this common, wide ranging species include pussy
toes (fintennaria spp.). 5-26-90 through 7-13-90

Frecis coenia (Hubner)

This is an uncommon, southern grassland species that is apparently unable to survive the harsh winters at this latitude. 7-11-89 & 7-13-90

Hymphalis antiopa (Linnaeus)

This common, wide ranging species feeds on willows (Salix) and overwinters as an adult. 7-13-89

Polygonia interrogationis (Fabricius) Questionmark
This is a common woodland species. 6-4-90

Phycoides thares (Brury)

The host plants of this very common species are asters, especially fl. novae-angliae. Ubiquitous on 7-5-89 & 5-20-90

Boloria selene myrina (Cramer)* Silver bordered fritillary
The host plants for this uncommon, wet prairie species are violets.
7-10-89 & 6-4-90

Speyeria idalia (Drury)*

Regal fritillary Land This prairie species is uncommon/rare throughout its entire range and is certainly rare in the Chicago area. Host plants are violets and include *V.pedata*. Two individuals sited within Hooper Branch on 7-10-89.

Nymphalidae, continued

Speyeria cybele (Fabricius) Great spangled fritillary
The host plants of this savanna/prairie edge species are violets.
7-11-89

Speyeria aphrodite (Fabricius)* Aphrodite
The host plants of this uncommon, prairie species are violets.
Recorded on the large wet prairie to the south of Hooper Branch.
7-11-89 and 7-13-90.

family **Baniidae**: The Monarchs

Danaeus plexippus (Linnaeus)
This is a very common, migratory species.

Monarch

family Satyridae: The Satyrs and Wood Hymphs

Euptychia cymela (Cramer)

Little wood satyr
This butterfly of the prairie/woodland ecotone feeds on grasses.
6-7-90 through 7-11-90

Cercyonis pegala alympus (Edwards)*

Hood nymph
This inhabitant of the prairie/woodland ecotone is less restricted to edges than the preceeding species and in fact ventures well out into open prairies. Host plants are grasses. 7-11-89 & 6-30-90

^{*} Order and nomenclature follow Irwin, R. R. and Downey, J. C. 1973. <u>Annotated Checklist of the Butterflies of Illinois</u>. Illinois Hatural History Survey. Urbana, II.