

Oakland Owlets' August 15, 2020 Field Trip in Search of Insects

The Oakland Audubon Young Birders' Club gathered on a warm and partly sunny summer day at Indian Springs Metropark. Eleven young birders families and friends along with a few experts wandered along the trails in search of the park's insects and birds. Indians Spring has an extensive restored prairie along with a demonstration native plant garden. Both places provide habitat for many pollinators. Veteran butterfly expert, Doris Applebaum, said that Indian Springs is the best place to see butterflies in Oakland County. Doris along with Susanne Greenlee led this field trip. Sue studied Orthoptera species, grasshoppers, and their relatives for the Nature Conservancy in the Midwest.



Sue and Doris introduced the group to several butterflies and many insects on the hike. It was partially sunny at the beginning of the hike but became mostly sunny. Clearly, butterflies are creatures of sunshine and more butterflies were seen later. The most numerous species observed were Clouded Sulphur and Common Ringlet. **Thirteen species of butterflies** were observed, and 43 individuals were counted.



Insects were everywhere and kept Sue busy. Sue captured and displayed several bugs to the group so everyone could see their unique features. In addition, to seeing insects, insect signs were abundant. Fall webworms, were active and obvious along with gall insects like the Goldenrod Fly. The insect orchestra was in full chorus as well. Sue pointed out several insect calls including the Carolina Ground Cricket, Meadow Katydid, and the Dog-day Cicada. Sue's expertise helped everyone learn some of the common insect calls of late summer.

Families socially distanced and young birders were able to see some of the beautiful places at the park. Young birders club hikes encourage participants to develop a sense of wonder and curiosity about nature.

Prairie Plant flowers were magnets for bumblebees and butterflies. Overall, Sue and Doris were able to identify **33 species of insects** during the hike. The field trip was like a mini Bio Blitz where everyone was able to see some of the insect and bird biodiversity at Indian Springs. Checklists were kept and submitted to



eBird and the park. **Twenty-five species of birds** were tracked along the trail. Checklists are listed below. The hike concluded at the Environmental Discovery Center which is a great place to see nesting Barn Swallows. The swallows did not disappoint.

A special thank you to Doris Applebaum and Sue Greenlee for sharing their time and expertise with the young birders club. One young birder said that the field trip was FUN which is a compliment to Sue and Doris who made learning about insect exciting and interactive.

The OAS field trip committee has instituted some health guidelines during the pandemic which includes socially distancing on the trail, wearing face masks and pre-registering in advance to limit the group size.



Butterfly Checklist:

Giant Swallowtail
Eastern Tiger Swallowtail
Cabbage White
Clouded Sulphur
Orange Sulphur
Eastern Tailed-Blue
Pearl Crescent
Red-spotted Purple
Common Ringlet
Common Wood-Nymph
Monarch

Silver-spotted Skipper
Wild Indigo Duskywing



Insect Checklist:

Black Saddlebags
Common Whitetail
Widow Skimmer
Blue Dasher
Allard's Ground Cricket
Allegheny Mound Ant
Bumblebee
Carolina Grasshopper
Carolina Ground Cricket
Common Meadow Katydid

Dog-day Cicada
Fall Field Cricket
Fall Webworm
Goldenrod Gall Fly
Honeybee
Shining Flower Beetle
Soldier Beetle
Spur-throated Grasshopper nymph
Two-spotted Tree Cricket
Two-striped Grasshopper

Bird checklist:

Mallard
Mourning Dove
Great Blue Heron
Turkey Vulture
Red-bellied
Woodpecker
Downy Woodpecker
Northern Flicker
Eastern Phoebe
Eastern Kingbird
Blue Jay
American Crow
Black-capped
Chickadee



Barn Swallow
European Starling
Gray Catbird
American Robin
Cedar Waxwing
House Sparrow
American Goldfinch
Chipping Sparrow
Field Sparrow
Eastern Meadowlark
Red-winged Blackbird
Common Grackle
Northern Cardinal

Photo Credits: Kathleen Dougherty & OAS Photo Gallery