

Maritimes Butterfly Atlas

Photo by Denis Doucet

2015 Newsletter

Highlights from the 2014 field season

The final field season of the Maritimes Butterfly atlas has arrived...again! An additional field season has been added to the project for reasons explained below, so don't hang your net up just yet!

We got great results in 2014, the fifth year of the MBA. In total, 6,978 records were submitted, the second highest yearly total (only 2012, the year of a massive migration, had more records). To date, 27,033 records have been submitted by over 400 participants!

Notable records

New to the Maritimes records

In 2014 there were two species recorded in the Maritimes for the first time - Ocola Skipper (*Panoquina ocola*) and European Peacock (*Inachis io*).

An Ocola Skipper was photographed on Campobello Island on August 19 by Marcy



Ocola Skipper - Photograph by Marcy Wagner

Wagner of Maine. Ocola Skipper is a southern species with a permanent range that covers much of Latin America and the extreme southern United States. Some migrate north annually, and it regularly occurs as far north as Virginia. In Canada this species is extremely rare, having only been recorded in southern Ontario. The nearest records to the Maritimes are from Massachusetts, about 400 kilometers from Campobello Island! The Campobello record is the furthest north the species has ever been recorded.



European Peacock - Photograph by Peter Payzant

A European Peacock was discovered by Duff and Donna Evers at their home just outside Halifax. This species is widespread and common in much of Eurasia. In North America, the species is introduced, but it is rarely recorded and many records are thought to represent stowaways from across the Atlantic. An established population likely exists in the Montreal area - the species was first recorded there in 1997, and several occurrences have been documented since. The provenance



Banded Hairstreak - Photograph by Angus MacLean

of the Halifax European Peacock is impossible to know with certainty, but it seems unlikely to be a natural occurrence. The individual in the Evers' garden was extremely fresh, suggesting that it did not fly there from Montreal. It was most likely brought into the Halifax area as a pupa on a shipping container. There is a remote chance that a population could become established in the Halifax area; however, that too seems unlikely, as the species' host plant, Stinging Nettle (*Urtica dioica*), is not common in the region.

Other significant finds

Early Hairstreak (*Erora laeta*) was found by Roy LaPointe about 20 km northeast of Saint Leonard, New Brunswick, on June 8, 2014. This is the first record of the species for the Atlas, though the species is known to occur in all three Maritimes provinces. It is associated with mature American Beech (*Fagus grandifolia*), and its larvae feed on beech nuts (though it is possible other hosts are involved, including Beaked Hazel [*Corylus cornuta*]). Early Hairstreak is considered a rare and highly localized species throughout its range. The loss of mature beech forest to beech bark disease and forestry are potential threats to this species in the Maritimes.

Richard Mash found a Two-spotted Skipper (*Euphyes bimacula*) in Guysborough County about 20 km northeast of Sherbrooke on July 22, 2014.

This is just the second record for Nova Scotia. The first was found in 2013 by Ken McKenna. As mentioned in last year's newsletter, Two-spotted Skipper is a difficult to detect species that is likely widespread in Nova Scotia. It can be found mid-June to mid-July in sedge-dominated marshes and fens.

Eastern-tailed Blues (*Cupido comyntas*) continue to be found in Nova Scotia. In 2013, the year it was first discovered in there, it was recorded in four Atlas squares. In 2014, it was again found in four squares. Three of these were new squares, and one, square 20LQ38, was a repeat. In that square David Colville photographed Eastern-tailed Blue on two different dates in 2013 and on four different dates in 2014, strongly suggesting a colony persisted there over the winter. During the MBA the species has also been found in many areas of New Brunswick where it had never been recorded before. Will the first PEI record be recorded before the MBA is done?

2014 was a really good year for our other hairstreak species. Of the 81 MBA records of Acadian Hairstreak (*Satyrrium acadica*), Striped Hairstreak (*Satyrrium liparops*), Banded Hairstreak (*Satyrrium calanus*), and Gray Hairstreak (*Strymon melinus*), 39 were recorded in 2014. The abundance was most notable in Acadian Hairstreak – 14 of the 20 records of that species are from 2014. The species is now recorded in 10 squares – prior to 2014 it had



Acadian Hairstreak - Photograph by Phil Schappert

only been found in three! Participants who found the species in new squares in 2014 are Scott Makepeace, Dwayne Sabine, Phil Schappert, Gabriel Gallant, and Derek Bridgehouse.

The second Atlas record of Hoary Elfin (*Callophrys polios*) for PEI was also recorded in 2014. Mark Arsenault found it May 21, 2014, near Milton Station, just northwest of Charlottetown. This is just the third ever record of Hoary Elfin for PEI.

Another field season added and a new partnership established

The Maritimes Butterfly Atlas was originally slated to have five field seasons (2010-2014). Over the winter, we held discussions with the Maine Butterfly Survey about publishing the results of the two projects collaboratively. There are many benefits in producing a book that depicts the results of the two projects side-by-side: it prevents the projects from simultaneously publishing something that would contain much of the same information, savings with print costs, savings in time and resources spent preparing separate books, etc. Most importantly, however, it puts the results of both projects in a broader context, which should result in a whole that is greater than its two halves. Because the Maine Butterfly Survey had their final field season scheduled for 2015, we decided that an additional season should be added to the MBA so that the two efforts share a common end date.

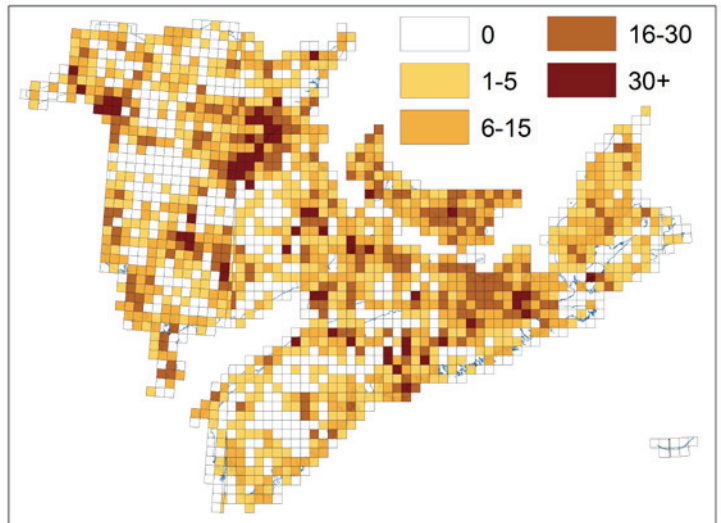
For more information on the Maine Butterfly Survey, see mbs.umf.maine.edu.

Filling in the gaps

Feel like adding a species to a square this afternoon? Well you probably can without travelling too far! The species that have been recorded from 2010-2014 in any Atlas square can be viewed on an interactive map¹ at ontarioinsects.org/maritimessbutterflyatlas/atlas_online_mba.html (they can also be accessed through the MBA website). I encourage everyone to examine these maps and use them to plan outings. You might be surprised to see what common species still haven't been recorded from your home square, and you probably don't have to travel too far to get to a square that has received little to no attention.

¹ As of date of publication (26 June, 2015) the interactive maps have not been updated with 2014 data. They will be updated shortly.

accdc.com/mba/index-mba.html



Map showing number of species recorded per square during the Atlas. Many squares remain lightly sampled.

With only one field season left for the MBA, now is the time to fill in those gaps!

It's not too late to submit old data

Any butterfly records you collected in the past that are supported by either a photograph or a specimen are of interest to the Atlas! This includes data from the first five years of the Atlas, or from previous years. If you have questions about how to submit your data, contact John Klymko at jklymko@mta.ca or (506) 364-2660.

Maritimes Butterfly Atlas Funders and Partners

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The Maritimes Butterfly Atlas is a partner of eButterfly, a North America-wide butterfly records depository (visit eButterfly.ca for more information). All Maritimes records submitted to eButterfly along with a photograph or specimen are incorporated into the MBA.

2010-2014 Atlas Participants - Thank You!

*= more than 50 records, **= more than 100 records, ***= more than 250 records, ****= more than 500 records, *****= more than 1000 records

Marie Abgrall	Cecil Brown	Joan Czapalay	Graham Forbes	James R. Hirtle**
Darrell Abolit	Linda Brown**	Vicki Daley	Celia Ann Forsyth	Beth Hoar
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David Bell	David Christie	Geri Dohm	Sal Gallant	Leila Killen
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MacCormick	Mark McGarrigle	Kimberley Pitts	Sue Ross*	Cliff Thornley
Christopher	Harold McGee	Laura Pitts	Karen Roy	Stu Tingley*
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Charles McAleenan**	Mike Parks**	Sarah L.	Kevin M. Sullivan	Terry Wyman
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