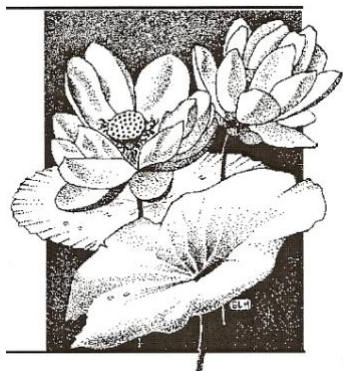




LONG POINT BUTTERFLY COUNT

Article by Adam Timpf, Norfolk Nature Member and Organizer

The 35th annual Long Point Butterfly Count was held on Saturday July 4th, 2026 under fairly ideal conditions. It was a very hot day similar to last year, but overcast through most of the morning. Although this made it comfortable for the counters, many of the butterflies didn't reveal themselves until the sun came out in the afternoon when there was a noticeable uptick in activity. We managed fairly good coverage despite a slight downtick in participation, with 23 people spread amongst 10 parties, logging 48.5 party hours and 52.5 party kms.

In contrast to last year's 57 species, we only found 48 species this year which is below the 10-year average of 54 and all-time average of 50.5. As for total individuals counted, our total of 1744 is lower than the 10-year and all-time averages of 2549 and 2586 respectively. With slightly fewer people looking, and no huge emergence of any one particular species, it's not terribly surprising we had a lower count, although perhaps we could have hoped for a few more species. Swallowtails were particularly scarce with 0 Black Swallowtail, 20 Eastern Tiger Swallowtail (2nd lowest ever and have to go back to 1996 when only 13 were found). and only 2 Spicebush Swallowtail which ties the all-time low.

Nevertheless, there are always highlights every year worth mentioning. Last year the newly reintroduced population of Mottled Duskywing was recorded on the count for the first time with 1 being found, and this year that was topped with 3 recorded on the count day. By all accounts this reintroduced population is doing well, successfully reproducing and expanding beyond some of the release sites. Our count day falls roughly between their two generations per year, so most of the population is flying in spring or a bit later in summer. We shouldn't expect to record many of these duskywings and could easily

miss them on future counts even if their population continues to grow.

This is only the second time that Variegated Fritillary has been found on the count with 4 being tallied (7 were found in 2012). It's probable a female came into the province in early spring and these 4 were the next generation as they were all found in the same area. Another southern immigrant, there was a single Buckeye which is only the 4th time it has been on the count. We set a new high for Crossline Skipper with 32 besting the previous high of 30 set in 2019. First recorded in 2020 and every year since, 3 Mulberry Wing skippers tied the high count for them (3 times). From looking at iNaturalist, this species is either expanding to new locations in Norfolk or people are just documenting them more. Monarchs are always of interest, and we had an excellent count of 96 which is our highest since 142 were tallied in 2018. This is higher than the all-time average of about 54.

Next year the count falls on Saturday, July 3rd, 2027 and I hope I can count on you all again! See page 2 for the complete list of species.



Eastern Tiger Swallowtail

Photo by Member, Bernie Solymar

Butterfly Count ...cont'd from P. 1

Black Swallowtail	
Giant Swallowtail	
Eastern Tiger Swallowtail	20
Spicebush Swallowtail	2
Pipevine Swallowtail	
Checkered White	
Mustard White	
Cabbage White	138
Clouded Sulphur	40
Orange Sulphur	60
Harvester	
American Copper	23
Bronze Copper	
Coral Hairstreak	21
Acadian Hairstreak	
Edward's Hairstreak	207
Banded Hairstreak	40
Hickory Hairstreak	
Striped Hairstreak	
Gray Hairstreak	2
Eastern Tailed-Blue	51
Summer Azure	15
Silvery Blue	
American Snout	
Variegated Fritillary	4
Great Spangled Fritillary	46
Silver-bordered Fritillary	
Meadow Fritillary	
Aphrodite Fritillary	
Silvery Checkerspot	37
Pearl Crescent	49
Northern Crescent	364
Baltimore Checkerspot	4
Question Mark	4
Eastern Comma	
Grey Comma	
Compton Tortoiseshell	
Mourning Cloak	1
Milbert's Tortoiseshell	
American Lady	1
Painted Lady	
Red Admiral	17
Buckeye	1
Red-spotted Purple	3

Viceroy	8
Tawny Emperor	5
Northern Pearly-Eye	15
Eyed Brown	35
Appalachian Brown	9
Little Wood-Satyr	61
Common Ringlet	
Common Wood-Nymph	140
Monarch	96
Silver-spotted Skipper	55
Southern Cloudywing	4
Northern Cloudywing	23
Dreamy Duskywing	
Sleepy Duskywing	
Juvenal's Duskywing	
Columbine Duskywing	
Mottled Duskywing	3
Wild Indigo Duskywing	
Common Sootywing	
Least Skipper	22
European Skipper	8
Peck's Skipper	
Tawny-edged Skipper	21
Crossline Skipper	32
Long Dash	1
Northern Broken-Dash	21
Little Glassywing	2
Sachem	
Mulberry Wing	3
Delaware Skipper	11
Hobomok Skipper	5
Broad-winged Skipper	7
Dion Skipper	
Black Dash	
Two-spotted Skipper	
Dun Skipper	7
Common Roadside Skipper	
Common Checkered Skipper	
Total individuals	1744
Total species	48



Viceroy

Photo by Member, Jeff Hiebert

See last page for an article in the Simcoe Advocate by Norfolk Nature member, Lisa Timpf,

Norfolk Sand Plain Restoration Tour

Leader, Peter Carson, took participants four restoration sites in the western portion of Norfolk County that represent various habitats and stages of maturity. We started with his and Mary's property, then visited two sections of the Alton Family Nature Reserve and, finally, a restored Nature Conservancy of Canada site that they have worked on. Planning, execution and results were discussed and illustrated.

Peter and Mary's Property

When Peter and Mary acquired the 70-acre property, it was in agriculture with some wet forest. Their goal was to grow a long grass prairie. Before starting, Gray Dogwood was removed as it is thicket-forming. In the first years, they gathered seed and hand planted their property with some trees and plants. They created knolls and valleys to control run off. Gradually, the plants have spread. Some of the plants seen were Butterfly Weed, Indian grass, Switchgrass, Big Bluestem grass, Savannah grass (which will out compete European grasses), American Hazel, hickory and Dwarf Chinkapin Oak. It is better not to plant too closely initially as it gives plants a place to multiply. This type of habitat is good for many breeds of snakes. Many years up to 40 pairs of bobolinks made this property home. The property has been control-burned several times as many plants required this intervention to break seed dormancy. It also removes thatch and controls trees. Seeds are now gathered from this property to restore other properties.



Alton Meadow

Photo by Jan Grincevicius

Alton Family Nature Reserve – Established Meadow

This 100-acre property is across the road from the Jackson-Gunn Old Growth Forest, known for its many trees over 300 years old and a great place to go birding. The Alton property was in agriculture but has been restored in the last two years with over 100 species of plants and tree nuts. Peter noted that it is very important to prepare the land before planting. Seed is then distributed by machine and then the surface is rolled. Plants seen were Lupine, Brown-eyed Susan, Wild Bergamont, Primrose and Little Bluestem grass. Many Black Locust trees (an invasive) have been removed with continuing efforts to dig out new seedlings. Eventually, this property will be a forest.

Alton Family Nature Reserve – Newly Planted Moist Area

Clear Creek runs through this portion of the Reserve. It is in its first year of restoration with plants including Lamb's-quarters, Millet grass (which retains moisture and is a windbreak), Giant Ragweed, and Hickory tree nuts.



**Peter & Mary at Alton Wetland
Photo by Larry Monczka**

Nature Conservancy of Canada – Concession 6, Walsingham

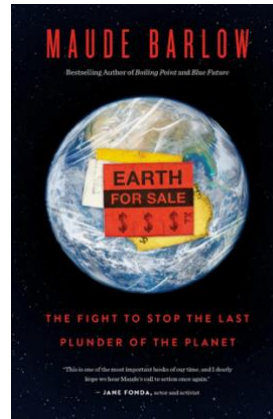
Restoration on this 186-acre property started in 2006 with the northern portion being completed first with a 85% success rate of direct seeding. Over 100 species were planted, including Black Oak, White Pine, Shagbark Hickory, Butternut and Chinkapin Oak. There is a great variety between the high and dry and lower and wet sections. Open areas were planted to attract Hognose snake. Bird species, Whip-poor-will, also live here.

In *Earth for Sale: The Fight to Stop the Last Plunder of the Planet*, Maude Barlow discusses the “financialization” of nature and offers examples that show why this trend is problematic. Barlow discusses the impact of globalization, along with “the explosive growth of transnational corporations and the introduction of free trade agreements that limited the ability of governments to regulate and protect their forests, minerals, fisheries and water sources,” as part of an ongoing problem.

Critical of “carbon offsets” and similar practices that allow companies to buy their way out of their obligations rather than avoiding polluting in the first place, Barlow notes that these are often little more than “accounting exercises” that often overstate their positive impact on the environment.

More worrying is the fact that many of Earth’s resources, which, Barlow argues, ought to belong to all of us, have been financialized. The next frontier, she says, could be in the financialization of nature, which means putting a dollar value on specific living entities.

When you let the market rule, Barlow notes, the risk is that the market will decide it’s more economical to let nature expire than to keep it going. Furthermore, using the financialization of nature as way of offsetting polluting or damage to the environment removes the onus on corporations not to pollute in the first place.



Earth for Sale also discusses the risk of privatizing specific elements of the environment. Barlow gives a number of examples of municipalities that have privatized their water, only to later decide it’s better to keep control. Likewise, some municipalities, provinces, states, or countries may think it makes financial

sense to privatize parks or public lands. But privatization means loss of control, and it isn’t always the best way to keep nature intact.

Written with passion combined with a sound knowledge of the topic matter, *Earth for Sale* is an illuminating read that raises awareness of the importance of maintaining power and control over our resources, rather than handing that control over to corporations. Informative and insightful, *Earth for Sale* is an important read for those concerned about the future of the planet.

This is an excerpt from a review posted at <https://www.theseaboardreview.ca/p/earth-for-sale-by-maude-barlow>

Cooper’s Hawk Stops Traffic at the Cornell Feeders

Watch a Cooper’s Hawk disrupt a busy morning at the [Cornell Lab FeederWatch Cam](#). Watch feeder birds scatter upon sensing danger at the feeder. One unsuspecting Hairy Woodpecker, however, arrives for a bite of suet before realizing that a predator was nearby.

The woodpecker remains motionless for nearly 10 minutes before positioning itself behind the suet feeder, using it as a shield from the incoming hawk (watch it arrive at the 3:20 mark in the video). Eventually, the Hairy Woodpecker escapes unharmed, leaving the Cooper’s Hawk to search for a meal elsewhere, after giving us a spectacular close-up in front of the camera.



Whip-poor-will Walk

Audrey Heagy, Norfolk Nature member, lead our small but keen group as we searched for the elusive Eastern Whip-poor-will near Turkey Point. These birds are easy to hear at dawn and dusk and on moonlit nights. They are hard to see as their brindled plumage blends perfectly with the gray-brown leaf litter of the open forest where they breed and roost. Although we heard several birds calling, we don't think we were able to lay eyes on one, even though one of the birds was very close. As there were several bats flying about, one person thought one creature flying overhead could have a whip-poor-will. We'll never know for sure.

To hear the call and see a bird (not easy in the dark), go [here](#).



New Project Monitors Declining Butterfly Populations

By James Kamstra

The Ontario Butterfly Monitoring Scheme (OBMS) aims to track shifts in butterfly populations amid disturbing recent declines. Butterflies of North America are in trouble, with an average decline of 22 percent between 2000 and 2020 in the U.S. The situation in southern Ontario also seems bleak. Read more [here](#).



**Pearl
Crescent**
Photo by
Member,
Bernie
Solymár

Hoots, Toots, Whinnies, and Barks: Top Ten Owl Sounds



Great Horned Owl
Photo by
Rain Saulnier,
Macaulay Library

Cornell Lab has rounded up some stellar examples of owl sounds for you to take in. Sit back, relax, and see which ones are familiar and which ones you're hearing for the first time. [Watch and listen now](#).

Mothing in Norfolk

Photos by Member, Jan Grincevicius

On August 15, a large group joined Alan Macnaughton for a fun evening of mothing on the 4th Concession “dirt road” that intersects Backus Woods. Well, we had several mothing enthusiasts (i.e. ones with incredible knowledge) and some who came to learn. Attendees included many local residents, but this event also attracted people from Essex County and Toronto.



Organizers set up mercury vapor lights and white sheets to attract moths into the open so we could enjoy their beauty. Alan discussed the biology and ecology of these insects, as well as their important role in the ecosystem. There are about a thousand species of moths in Norfolk with over 3,300 known in Ontario. When you're pretty new to this, it is very overwhelming as there are many species in a family which look very much the same. Before we spread out to visit the various locations, Alan showed us some moths found the previous night.



Luna (*Actias luna*)[f]

Pawpaw sphinx (*Dolba hyloeus*)



The Pink Steak (*Dargida rebipennis*)



Before leaving for the night, Alan set up two light traps to see what moths were found overnight on Saturday.



Black-rimmed prominent (*Pheosia rimosa*)

Sunday morning, a group gathered to see the unveiling of these two traps. One was located where we met on Saturday night and another was located at the entrance to a wind farm on Norfolk County Road 60.



Hawk Cliff Woods Migration Weekend

Partners — Hawk Cliff Raptor Banders, St. Thomas Field Naturalist Club, Thames Talbot Land Trust and Volunteers of Monarch Watch — hosted this event.

Eighteen of us attended the interpretive weekend which included:

- 1) seeing and hearing about various hawks that were banded earlier in the morning;
- 2) a presentation by the Canadian Raptor Conservancy about the natural history, size, prey species and range of various raptors, including

Harris Hawk, Great Horned Owl, American Kestrel, Red-tailed Hawk and Golden Eagle; and

3) information about Monarch butterfly migration and some of the great conservation work being done to protect our small but mighty friends.

While we didn't see many birds kettling over Hawk Cliff, see what has been counted as of September 28th [here](#).

See a list of other birds viewed at Hawk Cliff in October 2026 [here](#).



Sharp-shinned Hawk
Photo by member,
Charles Mitchell



American Kestrel
Photo by member,
Jan Grincevicius

Northern Harrier
Photo by member,
Len Grincevicius



Red-tailed Hawk
Photo by member,
Jan Grincevicius



Harris Hawk
Photo by member,
Len Grincevicius

Great Horned Owl
Photo by member,
Len Grincevicius



Golden Eagle
Photo by member,
Charles Mitchell



Species in Focus

Fast Facts About Opossums

- 1) Virginia Opossums (*Didelphis virginiana*) are from the southeastern United States. They traveled to Southern Ontario via trucks and trains and stayed, because with climate change the winters are milder and food sources more available.
- 2) Opossum, pronounced 'a possum', is not the same as a Possum, which is native to Australia, New Guinea, and New Zealand.
- 3) They are Canada's only marsupial. Up to 13 babies (joeys) are born furless, about the size of a dime, and blind. They continue to develop inside the mother's pouch and leave for short periods at about two months old.
- 4) Young Opossums ride on their mother's back, and after three months of age, they are fully weaned and independent.
- 5) They build dens in woodpiles, abandoned animal burrows, under porches, and in entry holes in buildings. They can use their tails to carry nesting material to their dens. After collecting leaves and other material with their mouths and feet, they transfer the collected bundle to their prehensile tail, which wraps around and helps hold the bundle while they move it to the den.
- 6) They are omnivores who forage at night. They will eat insects, such as ticks, worms, small mammals, woody plants, berries, and even scavenge for human food if garbage is not contained.
- 7) They are short-lived due to predators and being hit by cars.
- 8) Our winters are difficult for them, and they can easily develop frostbite, especially on their ears and tails. If you find an Opossum in distress, contact a local wildlife rehabilitation centre.
- 9) They have 50 teeth and will display them if they feel threatened, but they are not aggressive and are often shy of people.
- 10) They are famous for 'playing possum', i.e. they play dead. They can curl up on their side, hang their tongues out, and emit an odour from their scent glands similar to the smell of rotting meat to ward off predators. They can remain in this state for up to six hours. When the danger has passed, they get up and walk away.



Photo by Kelly Magowan



Photo by Okiepony

Online References:

[The Canadian Encyclopedia](#)

[Breakfast Television "Why Opossums are Canada's Most Understood Marsupial"](#)

Release of Mottled Duskywing Butterflies in Norfolk County

On August 11, 2026, Natalie, the field lead for Wildlife Preservation Canada's Mottled Duskywing project in Norfolk, released several captive reared Mottled Duskywing butterflies at the Manestar sand barren in the St. Williams Forest. The butterflies feed on New Jersey Tea, a native plant growing in abundance at this location. The butterflies are marked with a small dab on nail polish. The colour blue is used to represent the Manestar location. Females are marked on the

right wing, whereas males are marked on the left wing. The species was reintroduced to Norfolk County in 2024. Throughout eastern North America, Mottled Duskywings have experienced population declines, and it is designated as Endangered in Ontario.

For more information, go [here](#) and [here](#).

All photos by member, Len Grincevicius



Dive into the fall 2026 issue of [ON Nature](#), the award-winning quarterly magazine. This edition is packed with powerful stories and stunning photography from award-winning journalists, photographers and leading conservation experts.

Read about:

- Imported [golden oyster mushrooms](#) spreading from farms and home-grow kits into the wild, where they threaten native species.
- An oasis of life that thrives at a [remote underwater mountain](#) in Lake Superior. The shoal's unusual currents are helping to regenerate the Great Lake and its trout population.
- The reasons why [environmental education](#) rarely goes beyond the classroom walls.
- The federal government's proposed [Alto high-speed train](#).

To receive selected information by email, you can sign up:
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Welcome New Members

2026 - 2027 Season

Bianca Bourne, Deborah Brooks, Greg and Deborah Dufton, Ward and Sandra Fletcher, Sally Gable, Duncan James, Gene and Christine Patterson, Janet Steel and Debra Winter

We look forward to meeting you and hope you will participate in and enjoy all the indoor presentations and field outings.

Thank You!

**From Norfolk Nature to
Will & Morgan Partridge
Guardian Computing
For hosting our website**

Well, it's fall already and your real president is nowhere in sight so here is your past VP (Bernd Mueller) writing the president's message. We recently had our Annual Meeting, and we have a full slate of officers again this year. A big shout out to our departing board member Elizabeth Duckworth who has been a great asset to our board in taking over the publicity portfolio.

The new board of directors met on September 15th to elect its officers and coordinators for the new fiscal year. See this issue's contact list on page 11, plus we welcomed John Sparks to the board.

It has been a busy year for the NN, lots of interesting talks, many outings and much planning for the coming year. Again, this year we had many applicants for scholarships from our Harry Barrett fund. This year we had enough funds to give three students \$2000 each to further their studies with the stipulation of course that they do some of their research in the Norfolk County area. The earnings available from the fund should allow us to do the same next year.

On a personal note, I just came back from the Algonquin black bear petting zoo. Unfortunately, no bears were available once again. But paddling in the park gave me a renewed appreciation for what we have right here in our backyard. Whether you want to paddle, camp, explore, stargaze or just enjoy nature we have it all here all around us. Speaking of which it's going to be an exciting year with our NFN 65 Year anniversary coming up in 2027. Plans are already underway for Nature Fest — a celebration of everything that Norfolk has to offer in a nature related way of course. There will be an opening night dinner with a keynote speaker and lots of activities for everybody at a level that suits you. For instance, there will be guided nature walks, paddling, stargazing, nature art and a variety of talks. Stay tuned for more details and if you are looking to help out, let any of the board members know and we will find something for any volunteers willing to step up.

Bernd Mueller

Upcoming NN Events

Spectacular Fall Leaves –

October 23, 2026

Nocturnal Owl Prowl –

December 13, 2026



[Long Point Bird Observatory
Newsletter](#)

NATURE

“We who are gathered here may represent a particularly elite, not of money and power, but of concern for the earth for the earth’s sake.” ~ Ansel Adams

Tell a friend about us.

The benefits of membership, membership forms and payment options are available at www.norfolknature.org

We welcome new members.
Don't keep us a secret.

Norfolk Nature Meetings

Norfolk Nature meetings are held the second Tuesday of the month from September to May.

Meetings take place at the **Simcoe Recreation Centre, 182 South Drive, Simcoe**. The meetings are free and visitors are always welcome. Doors open at 6:30 pm, programs begin at 7:00 pm.

NN Mailing Address

**Norfolk Nature
PO Box 995, Simcoe, ON
N3Y 5B3**

Next Lotus Issue:

December 2026

Input dead line:

**Friday, November 24,
2026**

About Norfolk Nature

Norfolk Nature members participate in meetings and field outings, many of which are family-friendly. **Membership fees are \$30 Individual and \$50 Family.**

Donations are eligible for income tax credits. Charitable registration # 11905869RR00001

Guest speakers present programs on interesting and relevant natural history and conservation topics. Club members receive the Lotus newsletter with articles on local natural history and club activities. Copies of the Lotus are available at meetings, by mail or by email and posted on the Norfolk Nature web site. Articles published in the Lotus reflect the views and opinions of the authors, but not necessarily those of NN.

www.norfolknature.org

2026-27 Directors and Coordinators with Project Information

Email: info@norfolkfieldnaturalists.org

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Butterfly tally dips below 10-year average

Long Point Butterfly Count provides population snapshot, swallowtails scarce

LISA TIMPF

Advocate Contributor

Weather patterns, the timing of when new generations emerge, and other factors can play a role in the results of the annual Long Point Butterfly Count, which means year to year tallies for any specific species can show a lot of variation. This year's count, held Saturday, July 4, was no exception.

Like last year's count, the event took place under what count organizer Adam Timpf calls "fairly ideal conditions."

The weather was warm, though overcast in the morning. Once the sun came out in the afternoon, "there was a noticeable up-tick in activity," Timpf noted.

Unlike last year's count of 57 species, only 48 species were found. This, Timpf says, is below the 10-year average of 54 and all-time average of 50.5. As well, the total of 1,744 individual butterflies spotted is lower than the 10-year average (2,549) and the all-time average (2,586).

Still, there were some bright spots, says Timpf.

"Monarchs are always of interest, and we had an excellent count of 96."

This was the highest number since 2018, when 142 were tallied, and is also higher than the all-time average of around 54.

The 2026 count marked only the second time that Variegated Fritillaries have been found on the count. Four were tallied, lower than the seven found in 2012.

Participants found a Buckeye butterfly, marking only the fourth time it has been seen on the count. A new high for Crossline Skippers was recorded, with 32 besting the previous high of 30 set in 2019. First recorded in 2020 and every year since, three Mulberry Wing skippers were found, tying the high count for them.

In addition, the newly reintroduced population of Mottled Duskywings was re-



(SUE DROTOS PHOTO)

Though swallowtails like this Eastern Tiger Swallowtail were scarce in the 2026 Long Point Butterfly Count, that may have been a matter of timing.

corded for the first time last year with one being found. This year, three were recorded on the count day.

Timpf says this means the reintroduced population "is doing well, successfully reproducing and expanding beyond some of the release sites."

On the negative side, swallowtails were particularly scarce with no Black Swallowtails tallied. Only 20 Eastern Tiger Swallowtails were found, the second-lowest

number ever. Two Spicebush Swallowtails were sighted, tying the all-time low.

Still, this year's swallowtail results aren't an immediate cause for concern. Sometimes, Timpf notes, the count falls between broods, meaning fewer butterflies are seen at the time of the tally.

"A week after the count, it did seem like there were more swallowtails. Sometimes the count falls between generations, and sometimes it comes at the right time."

Considering the overall results, he added, "I thought we would have had more species."

Though he hasn't seen the results from many other counts, he did talk to someone from the Ottawa count, who also reported low species diversity.

This year marked the 35th year for the Long Point Butterfly Count. Sponsored by the Norfolk Field Naturalists, the count focusses on a 15-mile-diameter circle centered on Long Point Inner Bay.

Information from the Long Point Butterfly Count has been collected since 1993, the year the North American Butterfly As-

sociation (NABA) kicked off the count for the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

Data from around 450 annual counts, each within a 15-mile assigned count circle, flows into the NABA totals. While numbers can vary from year to year, with some species showing boom or bust cycles, it's the long-term trends that matter.

"Collectively, continent-wide, over time, that's where you see the picture," Timpf says. As the NABA website states, keeping tabs on butterflies matters.

"As pollinators they are critical to our shared environment, and as indicator species they give us early warning of environmental peril," the website says, adding that butterflies have an important role to play as "a key link in the food chain."

Next year's Long Point Butterfly Count falls on Saturday, July 3rd, 2027. In the meantime, those looking for more information about steps that can be taken to help butterflies can find information about establishing a butterfly garden at the North American Butterfly Association website <https://naba.org/>.



(SUE DROTOS PHOTO)

This year's Long Point Butterfly Count recorded three Mottled Duskywing butterflies. According to count organizer Adam Timpf, it's a sign that this reintroduced population is doing well.



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