

# Butterflies of Capulin

Capulin Volcano  
National Monument

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior



In the summer when the wildflowers are blooming, numerous butterflies can be seen flitting from flower to flower or stopping to rest a moment on top of a tree branch. While best seen in the prairie grasses and flowers near the base of the volcano, occasionally butterflies will also be spotted at the top of the volcano or feeding from the flowering shrubs in the crater. The following butterflies are commonly seen along the trails at Capulin Volcano and help pollinate the numerous wildflowers that grow here.



## Painted Lady (*Vanessa cardui*)

Large butterfly with orange patterned wings with black tips on the forewings and white markings. Commonly seen in the prairie here.



## Acmon Blue (*Plebejus acmon*)

Small butterfly colored blueish brown above with orange border on hindwing, gray with orange border on hindwing below.



## Black Swallowtail (*Papilio polyxenes*)

Large, mostly black butterfly with yellow borders on its wings. One of the most commonly seen butterflies at Capulin Volcano.



## Common Wood Nymph (*Cercyonis pegala*)

Large brown butterfly with two distinctive eye spots on the forewing. Can be found on the forested sides of the volcano and in gambel oak.



## Spring Azure (*Celastrina ladon*)

Small butterfly that is a bright blue above gray with black markings below. Commonly seen in the crater of the volcano.



## Pipevine Swallowtail (*Battus philenor*)

Large black butterfly with iridescent blue hindwings with rows of white crescent-like mark. Can be found in the gambel oak thickets.



## Two-tailed Tiger Swallowtail (*Papilio multicaudatus*)

Large butterfly that is mostly yellow with a black border and black tiger stripes on its wings.



## Red Admiral (*Vanessa atalanta*)

Large dark butterfly with wide bright orange/red slanted bands across the forewings with white spots towards the forewing tip.



**Orange Sulfur (*Colia eurytheme*)**  
 Small, yellowish orange butterfly with black edges on its wings, underside is greenish yellow. Commonly seen flitting about the prairie grasses.



**Checkered White (*Pontia protodice*)**  
 Small white butterfly with gray markings. Can be found in open areas near plant of the mustard family.



**Dainty Sulfur (*Nathalis iole*)**  
 Small canary yellow butterfly with black markings, underside is gray and orange. Enjoys open dry places such as prairies.



**Satyr Comma (*Polygonia satyrus*)**  
 Medium large orange butterfly with ragged wing edges and mottled brownish underwings. Occasionally seen in the prairie grasses.



**Weidemeyer Admiral (*Limenitis weidenmeyerii*)**  
 Large black butterfly with broad white diagonal bands across upper forewings. Can be seen in the forests on the sides of Capulin Volcano as well as near cottonwood trees.



**Marine Blue (*Leptotes marina*)**  
 Small butterfly colored light violet blue above, marbled gray with eyespots below. Can be seen in open areas such as the prairie near the base of Capulin Volcano.



**Melissa Blue (*Lycaeides melissa*)**  
 Small butterfly. Both males and females have an orange border on both wings below, females also have orange borders above, males do not have any orange above.



**Monarch (*Danaus plexippus*)**  
 Large mostly orange butterfly with black and white spotted borders on both wings below and above. Only rarely seen at Capulin Volcano.

In addition to the common butterflies seen here, Capulin Volcano is also home to an endemic butterfly subspecies first identified on the crater rim in 1969. The Capulin Alberta Arctic Butterfly (*Oeneis alberta capulinensis*) has only been found only at Capulin Volcano National Monument and other nearby areas around the Raton Mesa complex in Union and Colfax counties in New Mexico. Described as small and having variable coloration from light to darker grayish-brown, the butterfly's underside is lighter than the upper side, and the female may appear brighter in color than the male. Found mainly in the Arizona fescue-mountain muhly grassland near the top of the volcano, this butterfly has been identified here a total of 6 times since it was first discovered and was last observed here in 1996.

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