

Bright beautiful butterflies dapple the skies of Great Falls Park from March through October. This checklist contains the names, relative abundance, and months of occurrence for the 76 butterfly species recorded from Great Falls Park. The list is a compilation of records from the George Washington Memorial Parkway Wildlife Database, inventories conducted by Brent W. Steury, Harry Pavulaan, Richard H. Smith, and Mark S. Garland between 1973 and 2004, and on published records dating back to 1932. Nomenclature and taxonomic order follow the United States Geological Survey's 2004 list of the Butterflies of North America.

Of the 76 species recorded, four species (Confused Cloudywing, Cobweb Skipper, Southern Hairstreak, and Golden-banded Skipper) are known only from historic records and are considered to be extirpated from the park. Of the remaining 72 species, most are breeding residents, however some species such as the Ocola Skipper and the Cloudless Sulphur immigrate into our area from the south during the late summer and fall. Only one species, the Cabbage White, is not native to North America.

All butterflies have four stages of development that include egg, larva, chrysalis, and adult, however the duration of each stage varies between species.

Some, such as Mourning Cloak, Question Mark, and Eastern Comma may hibernate over winter as adults. Thus these species have been recorded in Great Falls Park on warm days in January and February.

Butterflies are attracted to Great Falls Park because of its diversity of plant life (over 700 vascular plants have been recorded) and the habitats that they comprise. Most butterflies seek specific host plants to oviposit eggs which the emerging larva will depend on for food. At Great Falls, host plants include trees, shrubs, herbs, grasses and sedges. An exception is the Harvester which has carnivorous larvae that feed on aphids.

Adult butterflies depend on a wide variety of flowering plants as sources of nectar. However some of the Brush-footed butterflies prefer tree sap, rotting fruit or dung. Butterflies are also often attracted to the edge of puddles where they ingest moisture and minerals.

Observations of rare butterflies observed at Great Falls Park can be reported to the park's Resource Management Office at brent_steury@nps.gov.

Species list compiled June 2004
by
Brent W. Steury

Checklist of the Butterflies of Great Falls Park



National Park Service
George Washington Memorial Parkway
Turkey Run Park
McLean, VA 22101



Red-banded Hairstreak nectaring on
Blue False Indigo (*Baptisia australis*),
Great Falls Park, Virginia

Cover illustration by Catie Drew

NAME	MONTHS OBSERVED											
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Swallowtails (Papilionidae)												
Pipevine Swallowtail (<i>Battus philenor</i>).....	-	-	-	R	R	R	-	R	R	-	-	-
Zebra Swallowtail (<i>Eurytides marcellus</i>).....	-	-	R	C	C	C	U	U	-	-	-	-
Black Swallowtail (<i>Papilio polyxenes</i>).....	-	-	-	R	R	-	-	R	-	-	-	-
Giant Swallowtail (<i>Papilio cressphontes</i>).....	-	-	-	R	U	-	R	R	-	-	-	-
Eastern Tiger Swallowtail (<i>Papilio glaucus</i>).....	-	-	-	U	C	C	C	C	U	-	-	-
Spicebush Swallowtail (<i>Papilio troilus</i>).....	-	-	-	R	U	U	U	C	U	-	-	-

Whites and Sulphurs (Pieridae)

Cabbage White (<i>Pieris rapae</i>).....	-	-	R	U	U	C	C	U	U	U	-	-
Falcate Orange-tip (<i>Anthocharis midea</i>).....	-	-	-	R	U	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Clouded Sulphur (<i>Colias philodice</i>).....	-	-	R	R	U	U	U	C	U	R	-	-
Orange Sulphur (<i>Colias eurytheme</i>).....	-	-	-	R	U	U	U	C	U	U	-	-
Cloudless Sulphur (<i>Phoebis sennae</i>).....	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	R	-	-	-
Little Yellow (<i>Eurema lisa</i>).....	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	R	-	-	-	-

Gossamer Wings (Lycaenidae)

Harvester (<i>Feniseca tarquinius</i>).....	-	-	-	-	R	R	R	R	-	-	-	-
American Copper (<i>Lycaena phlaeas</i>).....	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	R	-	-	-	-
Banded Hairstreak (<i>Satyrrium calanus</i>).....	-	-	-	-	-	U	-	-	-	-	-	-
Southern Hairstreak (<i>Fixsenia favonius</i>).....	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-
Henry's Elfin (<i>Callophrys henrici</i>).....	-	-	-	R	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Eastern Pine Elfin (<i>Callophrys niphon</i>).....	-	-	-	R	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Juniper Hairstreak (<i>Callophrys gryneus</i>).....	-	-	-	-	R	R	-	-	-	-	-	-
White-M Hairstreak (<i>Parrhasius m-album</i>).....	-	-	-	-	R	-	-	-	R	-	-	-
Gray Hairstreak (<i>Strymon melinus</i>).....	-	-	-	-	-	-	R	U	R	-	-	-
Red-banded Hairstreak (<i>Calycopis cecrops</i>).....	-	-	-	-	R	R	-	U	-	-	-	-
Eastern Tailed-Blue (<i>Everes comyntas</i>).....	-	-	-	U	U	U	C	C	U	R	-	-
Spring Azure (<i>Celastrina ladon</i>).....	-	-	R	U	R	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Summer Azure (<i>Celastrina neglecta</i>).....	-	-	-	-	U	U	U	C	U	-	-	-
Appalachian Azure (<i>Celastrina neglecta-major</i>).....	-	-	-	-	R	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Brush-footed Butterflies (Nymphalidae)

American Snout (<i>Libytheana carinenta</i>).....	-	-	-	-	R	-	R	-	-	-	-	-
Variegated Fritillary (<i>Euptoieta claudia</i>).....	-	-	-	R	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Great Spangled Fritillary (<i>Speyeria cybele</i>).....	-	-	-	-	-	-	U	U	-	-	-	-
Silvery Checkerspot (<i>Chlosyne nycteis</i>).....	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	R	-	-	-	-
Pearl Crescent (<i>Phyciodes tharos</i>).....	-	-	-	U	C	U	C	C	C	C	-	-
Question Mark (<i>Polygonia interrogationis</i>).....	R	R	R	U	U	U	U	U	U	-	-	-
Eastern Comma (<i>Polygonia comma</i>).....	R	R	R	U	C	C	C	U	U	R	-	-
Mourning Cloak (<i>Nymphalis antiopa</i>).....	R	R	R	U	U	R	-	R	-	R	-	-
American Lady (<i>Vanessa virginiensis</i>).....	-	-	-	R	R	R	R	U	R	R	-	-
Painted Lady (<i>Vanessa cardui</i>).....	-	-	-	R	R	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Red Admiral (<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>).....	-	-	-	-	U	U	U	U	R	-	-	-
Common Buckeye (<i>Junonia coenia</i>).....	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	U	-	R	-	-
Red-spotted Purple (<i>Limenitis arthemis astyanax</i>).....	-	-	-	-	C	U	U	C	U	R	-	-

NAME	MONTHS OBSERVED											
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Viceroy (<i>Limenitis archippus</i>).....	-	-	-	-	R	-	-	R	R	-	-	-
Hackberry Emperor (<i>Asterocampa celtis</i>).....	-	-	-	-	U	C	U	U	R	-	-	-
Tawny Emperor (<i>Asterocampa clyton</i>).....	-	-	-	-	-	R	R	-	-	-	-	-
Northern Pearly-eye (<i>Enodia anhedon</i>).....	-	-	-	-	U	C	C	C	-	-	-	-
Appalachian Brown (<i>Satyrodes appalachia</i>).....	-	-	-	-	-	U	-	-	R	-	-	-
Little Wood-Satyr (<i>Megisto cymela</i>).....	-	-	-	-	U	C	U	-	-	-	-	-
Common Wood-Nymph (<i>Cercyonia pegala</i>).....	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	R	-	-	-	-
Monarch (<i>Danaus plexippus</i>).....	-	-	-	R	R	-	R	U	R	R	-	-

Skippers (Hesperiidae)

Silver-spotted Skipper (<i>Epargyreus clarus</i>).....	-	-	-	U	C	C	C	C	U	-	-	-
Golden-banded Skipper (<i>Autochton cellus</i>).....	-	-	-	-	X	X	-	X	-	-	-	-
Hoary-edge Skipper (<i>Achalarus lyciades</i>).....	-	-	-	-	R	R	-	R	-	-	-	-
Southern Cloudywing (<i>Thorybes bathyllus</i>).....	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	R	-	-	-	-
Northern Cloudywing (<i>Thorybes pylades</i>).....	-	-	-	-	R	R	-	-	-	-	-	-
Confusing Cloudywing (<i>Thorybes confusus</i>).....	-	-	-	-	-	X	X	-	-	-	-	-
Hayhurst's Scallopwing (<i>Staphylus hayhurstii</i>).....	-	-	-	-	-	R	-	-	R	-	-	-
Dreamy Duskywing (<i>Erynnis icelus</i>).....	-	-	-	U	U	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Juvenal's Duskywing (<i>Erynnis juvenalis</i>).....	-	-	-	C	C	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Horace's Duskywing (<i>Erynnis horatius</i>).....	-	-	-	R	U	-	R	-	-	-	-	-
Wild Indigo Duskywing (<i>Erynnis baptisiae</i>).....	-	-	-	-	R	-	-	R	-	-	-	-
Common Checkered-Skipper (<i>Pyrgus communis</i>).....	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	R	-	-
Common Sootywing (<i>Pholisora catullus</i>).....	-	-	-	-	R	-	-	R	-	-	-	-
Swarthy Skipper (<i>Nastra lherminier</i>).....	-	-	-	-	-	U	-	U	U	R	-	-
Clouded Skipper (<i>Lerema accius</i>).....	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	R	-	-	-
Least Skipper (<i>Ancyloxypha numitor</i>).....	-	-	-	-	R	R	R	C	C	-	-	-
Fiery Skipper (<i>Hylephila phyleus</i>).....	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	R	R	-	-
Cobweb Skipper (<i>Hesperia metea</i>).....	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Peck's Skipper (<i>Polites peckius</i>).....	-	-	-	-	R	-	U	C	U	R	-	-
Tawny-edged Skipper (<i>Polites themistocles</i>).....	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	R	-	-	-	-
Crossline Skipper (<i>Polites origenes</i>).....	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	U	U	-	-	-
Northern Broken-dash (<i>Wallengrenia egeremet</i>).....	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	R	R	-	-	-
Little Glassywing (<i>Pompeius verna</i>).....	-	-	-	-	R	R	R	C	R	-	-	-
Sachem Skipper (<i>Atalopedes campestris</i>).....	-	-	-	-	-	R	-	U	U	-	-	-
Hobomok Skipper (<i>Poanes hobomok</i>).....	-	-	-	-	C	U	-	-	-	-	-	-
Zabulon Skipper (<i>Poanes zabulon</i>).....	-	-	-	-	C	U	-	C	U	-	-	-
Dun Skipper (<i>Euphyes vestris</i>).....	-	-	-	-	-	U	-	U	R	-	-	-
Pepper and Salt Skipper (<i>Amblyscirtes hegon</i>).....	-	-	-	-	R	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ocola Skipper (<i>Panoquina ocola</i>).....	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	R	-	-	-	-

Relative Abundance Rankings

C = Common, likely to be seen.
 U = Uncommon, present in low numbers.
 R = Rare, not always observed during month indicated.
 X = Extirpated, historically documented but not seen in the last 20 years.