



BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION SA Inc.

NEWSLETTER

No. 24: September, 2006.

THE DILEMMA OF BUTTERFLY SPECIES USING EXOTIC (WEEDY) PLANTS



Larva of *Polyura sempronius* Tailed Emperor Photo: RHFisher

At the Annual General Meeting Jill Davy-Warren tackled one of the more controversial issues facing members of Butterfly Conservation. Her message "The butterflies are in trouble and must be protected at all costs". As examples she used four species which use non indigenous plants as hosts for the larval stage.

The **Australian or Yellow Admiral** which has adapted to the introduced stinging nettle, the **Tailed Emperor**, a species from the eastern states, the larvae of which feed on eastern states trees such as Kurrajong, the **Caper White** which has adapted to caper trees in the suburbs and the **Wanderer** whose larvae feed exclusively on milkweed plants the cottonbush/swan plant considered a weed of native reserves.

Inside this issue:

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A summary of Jill's talk is on page four. The other perspective from Committee Member Maria Johns, who as a member of the weeds society is passionate about weed eradication and the need to provide education on the importance of weed removal. Maria's paper will be printed in the next newsletter.

Andy Young's comments regarding butterfly introductions is on page 5.

Editor

BUTTERFLY WATCH

The first tangible evidence of the 'Bring the Butterflies back to Adelaide' campaign will be the launch of **BUTTERFLY WATCH** at the South Australian Museum Biodiversity Gallery on Sunday 17th September at 11.00am — AND YOU ARE INVITED see invitation included with this newsletter.

Butterfly Watch is a joint initiative of Butterfly Conservation SA, the South Australian Museum at students from Flinders University. Results from Butterfly Watch will be received by staff at the Museum Discovery Centre and forwarded to Flinders University students as part of research projects associated with butterfly nectar feeding analysis.

Butterfly Watch will be web based with the website hosted by the SAMuseum. A simple key to identification of Adelaide butterflies has been devised using colour and size. Members of the public and school children will be asked to identify butterflies in their area and submit photographs of butterflies feeding. The best photos received will be featured on our own BCSA website and a selection will be exhibited at the South Australian Museum butterfly exhibition to be held during October and November 2007.

Results of the research will also feature in the exhibition.



BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION SA Inc. for membership enquiries and annual membership payments (\$10):
Treasurer, 9 Parkers Road, TORRENS PARK 5062

BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION SOUTH AUSTRALIA INC

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 2005 – 2006

Membership retention continues to be good at around 100 financial members and the finances of the society are healthy. I would like to thank all members for their continuing support, and in particular Lois Hasenohr our treasurer for the past 5 years who had to retire part term due to illness, and we thank her for her dedication. Her position was taken over by Rosemary Grund.

The society continues to provide community support with lectures on South Australian butterflies to other community groups. We also continue to provide information and help to other organizations and to provide advisory displays at the occasional environmental function. BCSA was fortunate to receive a grant from the Department of Environment and Heritage (Canberra) for the purchase of a digital projector to help with the lectures. The final compilation reports for the surveys of butterflies in the restricted Mt Bold Reservoir Reserve area and for the endangered Lycaenid *Ogyris idmo* on Kangaroo Island were completed during the year.

Most of the committee work for the year has been directed to the project, 'Bring the Butterflies Back to Adelaide' that was initiated in 2005. The aim of this project is to provide the general public, in particular those interested in gardening, with an easy guide to creating a 'butterfly garden' in the Adelaide area, comprising the metropolitan area, Mt. Lofty Ranges and the Adelaide coastal strip. This primarily involves the production of a book and a website. 40 butterflies will be represented in the book. The project is planned to be finished in 2007 along with a campaign launch of the book and website.

Other organizations have expressed an interest to help with the project and there are a large number of people involved. Jan Forrest is coordinating the project. A considerable amount of money will be needed to bring the project to complete fruition, which will be obtained through grants and from accumulated membership funds in the BCSA treasury. A large grant has already been received from the Norman Wettenhall Foundation that will cover production of the website, which will be supervised by Jason van Weenan.

BCSA expresses its thanks to the Urrbrae Wetlands Resource Centre for continuing to provide its resources for our meetings, and to the South Australian Museum for their support. I would like to thank all the active Committee Members for their dedicated and untiring support of the society, in particular Jan Forrest (secretary), Rosemary Grund (treasurer), Trevor Rowe (webmaster), Jill Davey-Warren and Maria Johns, and also to our casual committee members, David Keane, Lois Hasenohr and Kevin Parken (auditor), and to those other members and people either directly or indirectly involved with the 'Bring the Butterflies Back to Adelaide' project that include Lindsay Hunt, Rowan Moore, Carolyn Prime, Lee Heard, Karen Lane, Bob Fisher, Hugh Kneebone, Ben Moulton, Adam Main, Peter McQuillan, Penny Paton, Chris Daniels, Andrew Crompton, Margaret Lee, Katrina Nitsche, Brendon Pike, Steven Riley, Simon Langsford, David Kerr, Darrell Kraehenbuehl, Zoe Drechsler, Bryan Haywood and Heather Whiting. Finally I would express thanks to those people who have contributed articles to the Newsletter throughout the year.

Roger Grund
Chairman August 2006

MEMBERSHIP REPORT—Jan Forrest

As at the end of the financial year we have 128 members, this includes 87 members paid up for the 2006/2007 financial year and 13 complimentary memberships. We presently have 43 members who have paid in advance for 2007 – 2008 and we are holding \$600 in advance fees.

A summary of advanced membership payments are as follows:

- 43 members paid for 2007 - 2008
- 14 members paid for 2008 - 2009
- 2 members paid for 2009 - 2010
- 1 member paid for 2010 - 2011



Carolyn Prime
Volunteer Project Officer
for the Bring the Butterflies Back
campaign

A small serving plate was left after the AGM—if it is yours please contact Jan Forrest 8297 8230

Summary of Powerpoint Presentation, AGM Butterfly Conservation SA 14 Aug. 2006

‘Managing the urban habitat for the Butterfly...and Us All. Jill Davy-Warren

The idea for the title came from hearing Jane Goodall, (internationally known for her chimpanzee research) say, ‘**the problems that face the Chimps is simply, ‘the unsustainable life style of the West’.** The butterflies also face the problems caused by human lifestyle - increasing urbanisation, pollution, unsustainable farming, habitat destruction and alteration, etc. An environment that enhances the butterfly’s survival would therefore enhance our own life style perhaps even our survival. Because the butterfly is universally loved and as worthy of protection (should the need arise) as the whale or the panda, providing for its survival should not be difficult. The butterflies, seen by me in my urban garden, provide ideas for enhancing life for us all.

The Monarch (*Danaus plexippus*)

- A global wanderer, first seen in Australia 1870s
- Best known of all butterflies, it is an ideal ‘life cycle’ educational tool for the classroom
- Nothing is known of its impact on local environment therefore a
- Need for a ‘precautionary’ stand on ‘weeding’ management
- It is not endangered, but what effect of global warning/climate change, genetic modifying of crops? etc
- The consequences of removing its larval foodplant (a noxious weed) is an ethical dilemma if viewed in a global context
- **Message-** the need to think global-bio-diversity conservation



The Tailed Emperor (*Polyura sempronius*)

- From Eastern Australia and in SA due to climatic conditions in 1973/4
- Continued existence due to exotic street trees as larval food
- Exotic, spectacular butterfly
- **Message:** a ‘wildlife experience’ is available to the urban dweller. Street trees could be for butterflies as well as shade and aesthetics

The Caper White (*Belenois java*)

- Larvae vulnerable to aerial spraying of crop pests in north of state
- Shows connection between country and city-farming practises impact on all
- A natural phenomenon causing much public interest

Message: Ecological phenomena can become sustainable tourist attractions (think of the whale). Concern for the Caper White’s wellbeing could bring more sustainable farming methods



The Admiral (*Vanessa itea*)

- Larval foodplant is the common nettle
- Visible in the garden if a weed is present

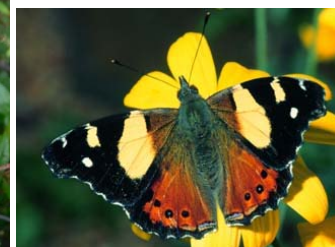
Message: The environment is **here**-not in a reserve or a park and one’s own actions(having a not so tidy garden for example) can bring this butterfly to your garden.

Top: Monarch larvae feeding on flowerheads of cotton bush
Photo RHFisher

Above: Wanderer butterfly
Photo: RHFisher

Left: Caper White butterflies
Photo: E.Steel-Collins

Below: Australian (Yellow) Admiral Butterfly
Photo: RHFisher



The British Blue (*Maculinea arion*) was used as an

example for conservation efforts to be based on intimate knowledge of larval needs, plants (ants too in this case) and the life history of the butterfly. Lessons learned from the Blue have been applied to management of Kondoolo Reserve the home of the Western Australian butterfly, **Western Jewel (*Hypochrysops halyaetus*).** Improving vegetative conditions does not necessarily suit this butterfly. Our only endemic South Australian butterfly **Lithocroa Blue (*Jalmenus lithocroa*)** is extinct from the Adelaide Plains, since 1960s . It’s life cycle also depends on a specific ant and acacia . If it was to be re-introduced successfully it would be an entomological coup demonstrating environmental understanding.

Conclusion: Urban modification and extensive clearing for farming, has altered habitat irrevocably.

Continued on page 3.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT 1/7/05 – 30/6/06		
Opening Balance		8891.96
CASH FUNDS		
Opening Cashbook Balance 1 July 2005		4948.32
Income		
Membership funds	1500.00	
Donations	116.00	
Fundraising	65.20	
Bank interest	<u>15.18</u>	1696.38
Expenses		
Postage	275.00	
Newsletter consumables	106.91	
Aust Plants Display	20.00	
Friends of Parks	<u>10.00</u>	411.91
Cashbook balance		6232.79
Liabilities - unrepresented cheque		<u>20.00</u>
Net Cash Funds (at bank) 30 June 2006		6252.79
<small>(includes Membership fees paid in advance 600.00)</small>		
GRANT FUNDS		
Funds carried over 1 July 2005	3943.64	
Grants in		
Dep Env & Heritage	2500.00	
Norman Wettenhall Foundation	<u>16000.00</u>	22443.64
Grants utilised		
Digital projector	2500.00	
Completion Mt Bold Project	<u>2463.00</u>	4963.00
Net Grant Funds (at bank) 30 June 2006		<u>17480.64</u>
TOTAL FUNDS in Bank at 30 June 2006		<u>23733.43</u>
<p><i>I have audited the financial statements & books of account of the Butterfly Conservation South Australia Inc</i></p> <p><i>I conclude that these records & statements of account represent a true & accurate record</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>L. L. Parker</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>10/8/06.</i></p>		

‘Managing the urban habitat for the Butterfly...and Us All.
Continued from page 3.

The butterfly has been referred to as ‘an umbrella species’, or as the ‘first family of the insect world’. Its universal appeal, to the public and the scientific community alike, could be capitalized upon, to provide sustainable economic, environmental and social outcomes. How this could be achieved is discussed, by using the Australian Admiral, The Caper White, the Monarch and the Tailed Emperor. Some lessons learned from the demise of the British Blue have been applied to conserving the Western Jewel. The examples show how knowledge of the ecology of the butterfly is crucial to successful butterfly conservation and to any campaign to ‘Bring back the butterflies’.

In conclusion I used some imaginary ‘press releases’, set in the future, to show how the butterfly had benefited the environment and us all.

By the Year 2050 the Festival State now had a festival celebrating Caper White butterflies. Haigh’s Chocolate Flutterbye was as popular as the Chocolate Bilby; the Adelaide blue butterfly had been re-introduced, and Adelaide was the Southern Hemisphere Centre for Butterfly Conservation.

PHOTOGRAPHS REQUIRED

Work is progressing on production of the book and website for the ‘Bring the butterflies back to Adelaide’ campaign.

We have a wonderful range of butterfly life history photographs from Lindsay Hunt and Bob Fisher however what we do not have is appropriate photos of plants. If you have good quality close up and habitat photos of any of the plants listed as host and nectar plants please contact Maria Johns Phone: 8388 2135 Email. johnsm47@hotmail.com

Photographs of moth (and one wasp) adults and caterpillars are also needed for the chapter ‘These are not butterflies’. Contact Jan Forrest forrestjan@adam.com.au, Ph: 8297 8230.

For the book **original tiff files at minimum 300dpi** are required, lower resolution 75dpi and small files for the website. Colour negatives and transparencies can be scanned at high resolution so these will be most welcome.

Photographs used in the book and website will be acknowledged.

GRANT SUCCESS

Committee members would like to acknowledge with sincere appreciation the receipt of funds from the Norman Wettenhall Foundation to assist with the preparation of a dedicated website for the ‘Bring the Butterflies Back’ campaign.



BCSA display at Biodiversity Month at the SAMuseum All of September with free activities for families Sat 9th and Sun 17th 12noon to 4pm. Launch of Butterfly Watch takes place at 11.00am on 17th. All BCSA members welcome

Butterfly reintroductions

Many thanks to the various speakers and attendees who welcomed me at my first appearance at a “Butterfly Conservation S.A” meeting on Monday night. As was probably obvious to all, I was particularly stimulated by Jill Davy-Warren’s interesting and at times controversial talk on butterflies in urban environments.

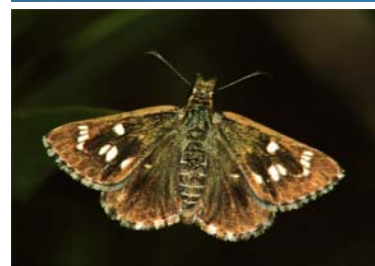
Firstly I’d like to thank Jill for braving the likes of myself in elucidating her viewpoints. While we may agree to disagree on certain points relating to the desirability of fostering pest plants in bushland environments, if they assist some butterfly species in maintaining a place in our environment, none the less I think some of the points, especially those relating to re-introductions into urban environs, were well made.

I believe the Lithochroa Blue may be somewhat difficult to use in such a project, simple because the current Mid-north race of the butterfly rely on large nests of a fairly aggressive and feisty ant to be able to establish a colony. There is also a question as to whether the former colonies of *Lithochroa* that did exist on the Adelaide plains were indeed the same species. Recent conversations with Dr. Ted Edwards at the A.N.I.C (the national insect collection in Canberra), revealed his opinion that the genetics of the currently recognised *Jalmenus* species (of which *J. lithochroa*, the Lithochroa blue is one), are a mess. The facts as were laid out by Roger Grund, in that the Adelaide butterflies apparently utilized *Acacia pycnantha* as a food plant, and that they were attended by a small species of black ant down here, may suggest that these butterflies were a morphologically (physically) similar species, but possibly genetically different.

I would suggest that the possibility of some of the rare South Australian skipper butterflies as being prime re-introduction targets should be explored. *Trapezites lutea*, the Rare White-spot Skipper, is a butterfly that was present on the Mt. Lofty foothills and adjacent plains areas during the early days of colonisation. No records of the butterfly have been obtained in the Adelaide region for over a hundred years, and in fact it is regarded as a very rare butterfly in this state. During field work with Mr. Michael Moore and Mr. David Moore in the Mid-north of the state in the last two years, large and robust colonies of the butterfly have been found breeding on *Lomandra multiflora* ssp *dura* in areas between Burra and Peterborough. As *Lomandra* species have become a bit of an urban “fashion plant” in the last few years (in fact one could describe it as the “new Mondo-grass”) the ideas of encouraging extensive plantings of *L. dura* in the parklands and adjacent urban interface may not be out of the question. If extensive areas of this plant could be established, then re-introducing the former resident, *T. lutea*, may well prove to be possible. Other species of relatively local provenance, such as the Cynone Skipper, *Anisynta cynone* and the Black and White Skipper, *Antipodia atralba* may be other species that could respond to similar treatment.

As a final note, I’d like to mention an interesting example found in Altona, Melbourne, in which a very rare skipper species, the Yellowish Skipper, *Hesperilla flavescens*, has become an “icon” species in the Cherry Lake environmental project. Cherry Lake was set up as part of an agreement with a petrochemical company, in which the company had to set up an extensive green space in order for permission to be given for it to be able to build a petrol refining facility. The large lake, drainage channel and surrounding weed beds host one of the few remaining colonies of *H. flavescens*. The local council and environmental groups have taken advantage of this situation by re-naming the skipper the “Altona Skipper” and have large public information notices about the butterfly, its preservation and in fact it has become a minor tourism attraction. The butterfly is wholly protected by law and there are large fines for anyone found interfering with the butterfly or its habitat. Perhaps it’s a template we in “Butterfly Conservation S.A” should think about in relation to future actions, local species and possible re-introductions.

Andy Young



From top:
Trapezites lutea Photo: R.Grund
Antipoda atralba Photo:R.Grund
Anisynta cynone Photo L.Hunt

Help on the BCSA display roster is needed at the:

Australian Plants Society sale Wayville Showgrounds: Sat 7th Oct. 10—5 and Sun 8th Oct. 10—4

State Flora Nursery in Belair Nat Park, 120 Anniversary: Sat 21st Oct.10—5 and Sun 22nd Oct. 10—4

CONTACT Secretary Jan Forrest 8297 8230 or forrestjan@adam.com.au if we can rely on your support.

**EXCURSION to MORIALTA and VALE PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL (and adjacent areas)
10th December 11.00am at Morialta car park then to Vale Park at around 2.00pm**

11.00am meet Morialta falls car park. Following our butterfly walk we plan to have lunch then proceed to Vale Park Primary school at around 2.00pm. So, if you can't come in the morning then meet us at Vale Park Primary School carpark on the corner of Ascot Avenue and Arundel Street, Vale Park. (entry from Arundel Street). The schools address is 40 - 56 Ascot Avenue on 5th November from 2pm to 4pm

During the visit to Vale Park we will look through the school's large established Butterfly Garden, and the other themed native gardens around the school (Tirkandi Wirra Aboriginal Garden, Blue Garden, Rainbow Garden, Oval Garden, Vista Garden), all of which attract native butterflies. The Butterfly Garden has more than 40 species of butterfly attracting plants, most of which have informative plant labels which also include butterfly host plant information. The plants in this garden can theoretically attract at least 21 species of butterfly (and at least 2 types of moths). Heather Whiting, B.Sc., will be on hand to explain the garden and show the associated educational resources she has developed. Heather is a Biodiversity Specialist employed by the school to supervise a Work for the Dole team revegetating sections of River Torrens riverbanks in Vale Park etc. and has designed the school gardens.

Afterwards, the group can visit 2 nearby revegetation sites with Heather, both very different to each other.

- The first is the nearby Vale Park Our Patch adjacent to the Ascot Avenue Road Bridge over the River Torrens. This site has been revegetated by different groups for the past 9 years, with Heather coordinating revegetation activities since 2000. This area and the nearby revegetated areas now have approximately 110 species of locally native plants, some semi-landscaped and some in more natural plant associations. Over 10,000 native plants have been planted here in the last 6 years.
- The second site is at Gilbert Street, Gilberton near the O'Bahn Busway. The Grassy Labyrinth is fun, much more formal in appearance, will have approx 30 species of grasses and small plants, is designed to be burnt off every 2 years (mimicking pre-European growing conditions) and can potentially attract 11 types of butterflies. It was only established in July/August 2006.

JOIN US FOR CHRISTMAS DRINKS AND NIBBLES under the *Capparis mitchelli* tree at the Waite Arboretum, Netley on **Monday 4th December at 6.00pm**. Bring a chair, some nibbles and a drink to share. Entry through small gate off Claremont Avenue and follow the signs/flagging tape.

BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION SA Inc.

Chairman: Roger Grund

Secretary and Newsletter Editor: Jan Forrest OAM C/- South Australian Museum, North Terrace, ADELAIDE, 5000 ph (08) 8207 7503.

email <forrest.jan@saugov.sa.gov.au > or <forrestjan@adam.com.au>

Treasurer : 9 Parkers Road, TORRENS PARK. 5062

OUTREACH PROGRAM

The full exhibition and AO size panels from the Exhibition "Where have all the Butterflies gone?" are available from Jan Forrest at the South Australian Museum for use by Landcare and other Conservation groups at seminars, conferences and workshops or just for display. Included are five introductory panels, and seventeen panels from seven habitat areas: Coastal, Grasses, Mallee, Urban, Migration/Vagrant, Eucalyptus Forrest/Woodland, Arid, Wetland and Lower South East.

DIARY DATES

MEETINGS - Committee meetings are held **bi-monthly** (usually the second Monday of the month) at 6.00pm in the Urrbrae Wetlands Resource Centre, Cross Roads, Urrbrae. All members are welcome to attend. If you would like further information or receive an agenda please contact Secretary Jan Forrest.

Next Meeting: Monday 11th September at 6.00pm

CHRISTMAS DRINKS and NIBBLES at the Waite Arboretum 6.00pm enter through small gate off Claremont Avenue Netley and follow the signs/flagging tape.

EXCURSION—to **Vale Park Primary school** 5th November 2006 see above.

WEB SITES

'Butterfly Conservation SA Inc.' <http://www.chariot.net.au/~bcsa/index.htm>

'South Australian Butterflies' <http://www.chariot.net.au/~rgrund/index.htm>

'Butterfly Watch' - to be advised but somewhere on the SAMuseum website.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS:

**Dawn Burden
Frank Brooks**

SOME MEMBERSHIP FEES for 2006 2007 ARE STILL OUTSTANDING.

This will be the last Newsletter for non financial members so don't miss out.

Your support is special to us and to the butterflies we aim to conserve.

