



# The Ferrum Nature Society Bulletin

Dedicated to the appreciation and conservation of our natural world

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## Upcoming events:

### Hawk Watch:

Saturday, September 13.  
Rocky Knob, Blue Ridge  
Parkway. Email Todd for  
details.

### Virginia Environ- mental Education Conference:

Sept. 17-18 - Virginia  
Natural History Museum  
in Martinsville.

### Nature's events:

Enjoy the sunset of sum-  
mer, but be prepared for  
rain. The remnants of  
tropical storms or hurri-  
cane may break our  
drought!



### Sky calendar:

Full moon - September  
15

Autumnal Equinox -  
September 22

**Planets** - There are  
many to look for this  
month. Early in the  
month, try to find Venus,  
Mars, and Mercury clus-  
tered low in the western  
sky. Jupiter and Saturn  
hang near the moon.  
Even Uranus is visible  
through binoculars near  
the moon in the middle  
off this month.

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## Small hawk with broad wings

Josh Bernard

The broad-winged hawk (*Buteo platypterus*) is a common breeding bird species seen around the Franklin County area, as well as the eastern United States. This small, stocky raptor breeds in eastern deciduous forests and spends its winters in the tropics. The broad-winged hawk is one of the smallest species in the genus *Buteo* in North America with a body length averaging 13-17 inches, a wingspan of about 3 feet, and a weight ranging from 11-17 ounces.

The species has two color phases - a very light phase and the rare dark phase. The light phase of the broad-winged Hawk has pale wings with a dark trailing edge, a tail that is short and dark with a white band down the middle, a dark face and white throat, a reddish colored chest, and amber colored eyes. The rare dark phase appears sooty with white flight feathers and its wings have a flame-like shape. It has a

black beak, pale yellow talons, and red eyes.

The appearance of the male and female individuals is alike, but juveniles have white underparts with streaks down the center of the breast. The broad-winged hawk preys on its food sources by dropping on them from the height of the canopy; its diet consists mainly of small mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and large insects. When breeding begins, the hawk constructs a bowl-like nest made of old sticks and branches. It will sometimes use old nests.



Note the white tail band of broad-winged hawk in flight [Nationalzoo.si.edu](http://Nationalzoo.si.edu)

**Broad-winged Hawk**  
[Ohiobirds.org](http://Ohiobirds.org)

Broad-winged hawks have a clutch of 2-3 eggs per season and incubate the eggs for about a month before they hatch. Fledglings must be fed by their parents for almost a month before they are ready to leave the nest. Towards the fall, broad-winged hawks begin their migration and completely leave their breeding grounds. The species can be seen together in flocks that are sometimes called 'kettles' that range from a few individuals to thousands. Peak migration in Virginia is the middle of September. Broad-winged hawks migrate to Florida, Mexico, the Caribbean and South America.

# Results of the Franklin County Butterfly Count - Saturday, August 16, 2008

Clyde Kessler

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| Silver-spotted Skipper ( <i>Epargyreus clarus</i> )       | 52         |
| Horace's Duskywing ( <i>Erynnis horatius</i> )            | 1          |
| Wild Indigo Duskywing ( <i>Erynnis baptisiae</i> )        | 3          |
| Common Checkered-Skipper ( <i>Pyrgus communis</i> )       | 1          |
| Common Sootywing ( <i>Pholisora catullus</i> )            | 2          |
| Least Skipper ( <i>Ancyloxypha numitor</i> )              | 1          |
| Fiery Skipper ( <i>Hylephila phyleus</i> )                | 1          |
| Sachem ( <i>Atalopedes campestris</i> )                   | 13         |
| Peck's Skipper ( <i>Polites peckius</i> )                 | 10         |
| Northern Broken-Dash ( <i>Wallengrenia egeremet</i> )     | 1          |
| Little Glassywing ( <i>Pompeius verna</i> )               | 7          |
| Delaware Skipper ( <i>Anatrytone logan</i> )              | 1          |
| Zabulon Skipper ( <i>Poanes zabulon</i> )                 | 15         |
| Common Roadside-Skipper ( <i>Amblyscirtes vialis</i> )    | 8          |
| Unidentified grass skipper                                | 30         |
| Zebra Swallowtail ( <i>Eurytides marcellus</i> )          | 1          |
| Black Swallowtail ( <i>Papilio polyxenes</i> )            | 3          |
| Eastern Tiger Swallowtail ( <i>Papilio glaucus</i> )      | 128        |
| Spicebush Swallowtail ( <i>Papilio troilus</i> )          | 38         |
| Unidentified swallowtails                                 | 19         |
| Cabbage White ( <i>Pieris rapae</i> )                     | 15         |
| Orange Sulphur ( <i>Colias eurytheme</i> )                | 6          |
| Cloudless Sulphur ( <i>Phoebis sennae</i> )               | 3          |
| Little Yellow ( <i>Eurema lisa</i> )                      | 1          |
| Sleepy Orange ( <i>Eurema nicippe</i> )                   | 7          |
| Gray Hairstreak ( <i>Strymon melinus</i> )                | 1          |
| Eastern Tailed-Blue ( <i>Everes comyntas</i> )            | 22         |
| Summer Azure ( <i>Celastrina neglecta</i> )               | 3          |
| Unidentified blues  | 2          |
| Monarch ( <i>Danaus plexippus</i> )                       | 4          |
| Gulf Fritillary ( <i>Agraulis vanillae</i> )              | 1          |
| Variiegated Fritillary ( <i>Euptoieta claudia</i> )       | 31         |
| Diana Fritillary ( <i>Speyeria diana</i> )                | 1          |
| Great Spangled Fritillary ( <i>Speyeria cybele</i> )      | 95         |
| Meadow Fritillary ( <i>Boloria bellona</i> )              | 1          |
| Silvery Checkerspot ( <i>Chlosyne nycteis</i> )           | 3          |
| Pearl Crescent ( <i>Phyciodes tharos</i> )                | 2          |
| Common Buckeye ( <i>Junonia coenia</i> )                  | 9          |
| American Lady ( <i>Vanessa virginiensis</i> )             | 1          |
| Red-spotted Purple ( <i>Limenitis arthemis astyanax</i> ) | 4          |
| Viceroy ( <i>Limenitis archippus</i> )                    | 2          |
| Northern Pearly Eye ( <i>Enodia anhedon</i> )             | 3          |
| Common Wood Nymph ( <i>Cercyonis pegala</i> )             | 2          |
| <b>Total number of identified species</b>                 | <b>40</b>  |
| <b>Number of butterflies counted</b>                      | <b>554</b> |
| <b>Number of observers</b>                                | <b>14</b>  |



Gulf fritillary at Waid Park - Photo by Bill Tucker



Great spangled fritillary on butterfly bush at Ferrum - Photo by Todd Fredericksen

