

**SAN JUAN COUNTY** supports over forty species of butterflies, compared to about one-hundred fifty species in Washington State. While this may appear to be a modest number, it is actually greater than might be expected for an area this small, especially in western Washington. The relative paucity of the butterfly fauna west of the Cascades is due to the rainy climate and extensive forest cover. The San Juan Islands lie in the rainshadow of the Olympics and provide open, sunny habitats with abundant flowering plants that are attractive to butterflies. There are likely more species to be found here, although summer droughts may limit the possibilities.

**Habitat is the key** to finding sought-after species. The islands provide a mosaic of biologically diverse niches from rocky and sandy shores, wetlands, and prairies to mixed woodlands reaching to the summit of Mount Constitution. Brown Elfins perch on madrones; Pine Whites float down from the Douglas-firs; Mylitta Crescents and Ochre Ringlets bask in the grass; Painted Ladies forage in thistle patches, and Satyr Anglewings nectar on sap at the forest's edge.

**The butterflies** of the San Juan Islands have not been surveyed well. This checklist is a compilation of sighting information from, most notably, John Hinchliff's *An Atlas of Washington Butterflies*. Robert M. Pyle's surveys of San Juan Island and his related research, James Miskelly's spring survey (2005), and sightings and surveys by islanders, mainland biologists, and butterfly seekers have been invaluable.

**The goal of this checklist** is to provide a reference point for studying the butterflies here. Public participation is encouraged to help expand the data base, and to provide insight into the life histories of these fascinating insects that play an important role in the web of life of the San Juan Archipelago.

## MONARCHS

**Within recent years**, two Monarch butterflies have been photographed on San Juan Island - unprecedented events. Its host plant is milkweed which does not occur here naturally. The sightings are important as they may mean these long distance migrants occasionally stop over in the islands on their peregrinations.

**As butterfly habitat diminishes** and shifts are seen in climatic conditions, every piece of information on the movement of these icons of the butterfly world is important to insure its long-term survival. Biologists strongly urge the public not to release Monarchs at social events or schools. This practice undermines study of the species' natural range.



Monarch

## REFERENCES:

- \* Hinchliff, John, *An Atlas of Washington Butterflies*, Oregon State University, 1996.
- \* Pyle, Robert Michael, *The Butterflies of Cascadia*, Seattle Audubon, 2002.

## FIELD NOTES



Mourning Cloak

Acknowledgments: Robert M. Pyle made a significant contribution to the review of this checklist. Thanks also to John Fleckenstein, James Miskelly, Ann Potter, and Idie Ulsh for review, data, or other information. Photograph of Monarch butterfly copyright by Ron Keeshan.

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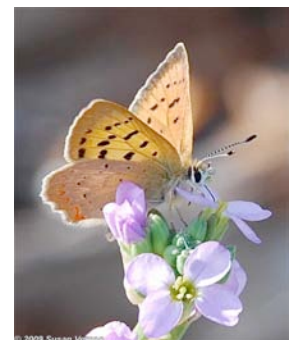
P.O. Box 3081  
Friday Harbor, WA 98250  
arcpress@rockisland.

# BUTTERFLIES OF THE SAN JUAN ISLANDS

## CHECKLIST



Red Admirable



Purplish Copper

## BUTTERFLIES OF THE SAN JUAN ISLANDS

**This checklist** contains species occurring throughout the archipelago including the outer islands of Yellow, Crane, Cypress, and Waldron. Not all butterflies are found on every island. The Island Marble, for instance, appears localized to San Juan and Lopez, Edith's Checkerspot is known only in a remote location, and the Great Arctic was historically seen on Orcas, but decades ago.

L= localized; H= historical; S= stray; R= rare.

### PARNASSIANS & SWALLOWTAILS (Papilionidae)

- CLODIUS PARNASSIAN *Parnassius clodius*
- ANISE SWALLOWTAIL *Papilio zelicaon*
- WEST. TIGER STAIL *Papilio rutulus*
- PALE SWALLOWTAIL *Papilio eurymedon*

### WHITES, MARBLES, ORANGETIPS, SULPHURS (Pieridae)

- PINE WHITE *Neophasia menapia*
- WESTERN WHITE *Pontia occidentalis*
- CABBAGE WHITE *Pieris rapae*
- ISLAND MARBLE *Euchloe audonides insulanus - L*
- SARA'S ORANGETIP *Anthrocharis sara*
- ORANGE SULPHUR *Colias eurytheme -S*

### GOSSAMER-WINGED BUTTERFLIES (Lycaenidae)

- PURPLISH COPPER *Lycaena helloides*
- CEDAR HAIRSTREAK *Mitoura grynea*
- BROWN ELFIN *Incisalia augustinus*
- MOSS'S ELFIN *Incisalia mossii*
- WESTERN PINE ELFIN *Incisalia eryphon*
- GRAY HAIRSTREAK *Strymon melinus*
- WEST. TAILED BLUE *Everes amyntula*
- SPRING AZURE *Celestrina echo*

- SILVERY BLUE *Glaucopsyche lygdamus*

### BRUSH-FOOTED BUTTERFLIES (Nymphalidae)

- ZERENE FRITILLARY *Speyeria zerene bremnerii*
- HYDASPE FRITILLARY *Speyeria hydaspe*
- W. MEADOW FRITILLARY *Boloria epithore*
- FIELD CRESCENT *Phyciodes pulchellus*
- MYLITTA CRESCENT *Phyciodes mylitta*
- EDITH'S CHECKERSPOT *Euphydras editha t.- R*
- SATYR ANGLEWING *Polygonia satyrus*
- GREEN COMMA *Polygonia faunus*
- OREAS ANGLEWING *Polygonia oreas*
- CALIF. TORTOISESHELL *Nymphalis californica*
- MOURNING CLOAK *Nymphalis antiopa*
- MILBERT'S TShell *Nymphalis milberti*
- AMERICAN LADY *Vanessa virginiensis*
- PAINTED LADY *Vanessa cardui*
- WEST COAST LADY *Vanessa annabella*
- RED ADMIRABLE *Vanessa atalanta*
- LORQUIN'S ADMIRAL *Limenitis lorquini*

### RINGLETS & BROWNS (Satyrinae: Nymphalidae)

- OCHRE RINGLET *Coenonympha tullia i.*
- GREAT ARCTIC *Oeneis nevadensis gigas -H*

### MILKWEED BUTTERFLIES (Danainae: Nymphalidae)

- MONARCH *Danius plexippus S*

### SKIPPERS (Hesperiidae)

- DREAMY DUSKYWING *Erynnis icelus*
- PROPERTIUS DWING *Erynnis propertius*
- TWO-B.CHK. SKIPPER *Pyrgus ruralis*
- JUBA SKIPPER *Hesperia juba*
- W. BANDED SKIPPER *Hesperia colorado*
- WOODLAND SKIPPER *Ochlodes sylvanoides*

### NEW SPECIES

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### BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION

- Report butterfly sightings
- Plant a butterfly garden
- Do not use insecticides or Btk which are lethal to butterfly larvae (caterpillars).
- Support habitat preservation
- Learn more:
  - \* Xerces Society <[www.xerces.org](http://www.xerces.org)>
  - \* Washington Butterfly Assoc.

Recycle – Reuse - Rejuvenate

### REPORT BUTTERFLY SIGHTINGS

Include date, place, name of observer, and photographic documentation or careful notes and description.

**SAN JUAN ISLAND BUTTERFLY SURVEY**  
P.O. Box 3081  
Friday Harbor, Wa 98250  
[arcpress@rockisland.com](mailto:arcpress@rockisland.com)

Data will be forwarded to the Washington Dept. of Fish & Wildlife for inclusion in its data base.

### BUTTERFLIES TO WATCH FOR:

Silver-spotted Skipper, Persius Duskywing, Oregon Skipper, Margined White, Clouded Sulphur, Western Sulphur, Puget Blue, Great Spangled Fritillary, and Zephyr Anglewing among others.

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## ISLAND MARBLE BUTTERFLY

In 1998, zoologist John Fleckenstein of the Washington Natural Heritage Program collected a white butterfly on San Juan Island while he was surveying prairie species. It had a mottled pattern on the underside of its hind wings. Some time later, the butterfly was identified as *Euchloe ausonides insulanus* – the Island Marble – thought to have been extinct since 1908.



Marble - perched

**Historically**, little was known about this butterfly. It inhabited a small niche on Vancouver Island from near Nanaimo to Victoria, B.C., and was also found on Gabriola Island in the Gulf Islands of the inland sea. Where has it been for nearly 100 years? Nobody knows, but there is interest now in establishing the extent of its range and learning about its natural history. The sole population known today is restricted to the San Juan Islands, and might not exceed a few hundred individuals. It is a subspecies at risk and of special concern both here and in British Columbia.

**Every precaution** should be taken to protect the Island Marble. It is now a Washington State candidate for listing and, as such, it is illegal under state law to collect, even catch and release, without a state permit.