

Insect Surveys 2007

Formalized Odonate and Lepidoptera surveys were conducted this year to compliment park inventory data. The order Odonate includes dragonflies and damselflies. Both groups were included in the surveys. Lepidoptera includes butterflies, moths and skippers. Only butterflies and skippers were included in our surveys.

These surveys were established because of a need to include more insect information into our growing species database. The department felt that including these data may provide a more well-rounded and robust inventory of park properties. Recording rare species would help identify preserves.

Volunteers participated with natural resource staff in conducting these surveys once a week from May through mid-October. Approximately four hours per week were spent in one of two parks, Liberty Park (including Pond Brook South) and Cascade Valley. Each park was surveyed approximately twice per month.

Locations were selected throughout the season that may harbor rare or unique species according to their habitat preferences and flight periods. Complete coverage of habitat types was the goal for each park. Various habitat types were surveyed including streams, wetlands, woods, meadows, and right-of-ways. These habitats were scanned for flying adults. Larval forms were not addressed. Liberty Park and Cascade Valley were chosen because they have unique wetland and wet-meadow habitats that may produce rare species.

Fifty species were recorded for Cascade Valley and 65 for Liberty Park. While many of these species have resided in the park for years, they have not previously been included in the park's species database. Table 1 and 2 represents a complete list of all species recorded for Cascade Valley and Liberty Park respectively.

Liberty Park yielded some significant finds. A southern pygmy clubtail dragonfly was recorded for the first time in the park. Larry Rosche believes it is the furthest west the species has been recorded for our state. It does not have a status, but is considered rare in N.E. Ohio according to Rosche, 2002. The species was found in a small spring-fed stream in the west central portion of the park.

A harlequin darter was captured in the same area as the southern pygmy clubtail on the same day. This species was first recorded for the park by Rosche in 2003. It was recently listed as an Ohio state threatened species.

A great blue skimmer was photographed in Liberty Park along the Buttonbush Trail this season. It represents the first Summit County record for this species. While it has no official status, Rosche regards this species as rare for N.E. Ohio.

Although we did not document any butterflies or skippers that have a status, there were many interesting species recorded. Cascade Valley yielded broad winged skippers,

striped and coral hairstreaks, Baltimore checkerspots, and a harvester. Liberty Park's wetlands are home to fiery skippers and bronze coppers.

These surveys were quite successful and will be continued in 2008 at sites to be determined.

Literature cited

Rosche, Larry. Dragonflies and Damselflies of Northeast Ohio. Cleveland Museum of Natural History, 2002.

Representative Photos



Harlequin darner, Liberty Park 6-12-07



Southern pygmy clubtail, Liberty Park 6-12-07



Great Blue Skimmer, Liberty Park 7-9-07



Baltimore Checkerspot, Cascade Valley 6-6-07



Bronze Copper, Liberty Park 6-29-07