

THE BUTTERFLY PROJECT

Why?

- To determine what butterflies reside at the Cathance River Preserve in the transition of Summer to Fall.

What we thought:

- As the season changes from Summer to Fall, different species of butterflies will no longer be visible, at staggered times, causing changes in what is present.

You should know:

• **A butterfly** is a mainly day-flying insect of the order Lepidoptera, the butterflies and moths. The butterfly's life cycle consists of four parts: egg, larva, pupa and adult. Butterflies comprise the true butterflies (superfamily Papilionoidea), the skippers (superfamily Hesperioidea) and the moth-butterflies (superfamily Hedyloidea).

• **Butterflies** feed primarily on nectar from flowers. Some also derive nourishment from pollen, tree sap, rotting fruit, dung, decaying flesh, and dissolved minerals in wet sand or dirt.

• **The Aphrodite** Fritillary Butterfly lives in Nova Scotia, Northern Midwest, Great Plains, Arizona, and the Appalachians to Georgia.

• **Question Mark Butterfly's** habitat consists of wooded areas with some open space. They are often seen in city parks, along fencerows, and in suburbs.

• **Eastern Tailed-blues** are often found in sunny, open habitats with lots of clover and alfalfa.

• **The Brown Angle Shades Moth** is found from coast to coast in the northern United States and southern Canada.

• **The Gold Striped Leaf-tier Moth** lives in woodlands and wood edges, also commonly found in suburban yards.

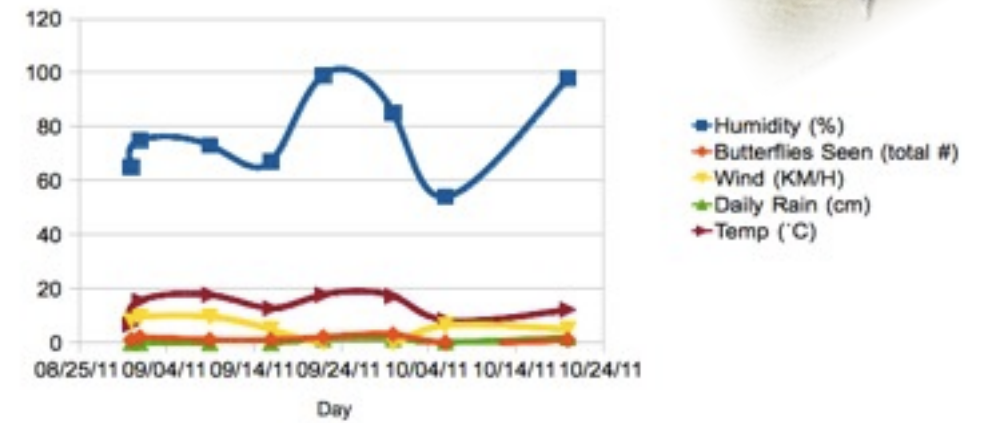
• **Butterflies** are not typically found in the early morning because there is still dew on their wings and it is difficult for them to fly. They are more commonly found in the afternoon in sunny, warm patches.

What we did:

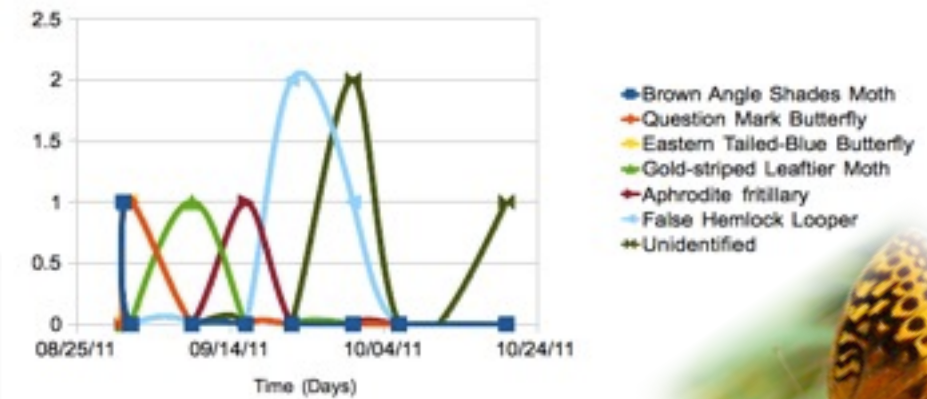
- Gather identification tools: *Butterflies of New England* by Larry Weber, *Eastern Butterflies* by Paul A. Opler and Vichai Malikul, and *Butterflies and Moths* by the Waterford Press; 2 butterfly nets (30 cm); and a camera and go to the Heath Loop (marked green on the map) at CREA.
- Walk the loop. Keep a close eye out for butterflies and moths to record in data table.
- Watch for butterflies until the time comes to return to the CREA hut.
- Upon arrival at the CREA Ecology Center, record: humidity, time, date, temperature, daily rain, wind speed, species sited, and the number of each species that was seen in the data table.
- Include observations made by the Dragonfly Group (Izzy Leon and Belle Fall assisted by David Reed).
- Submit findings to sarah.sparks@maine.edu
Sarah Sparks 4-H Youth Development Professional
and <http://www.flmnh.ufl.edu/wings/> Project Butterfly WINGS

It turns out...

Conditions and Butterflies



Butterflies Seen



Conclusion:

- Butterflies are more prevalent in warmer weather
- The most butterflies were observed when the temperature was highest
- Most observations occurred in the morning when temperatures are cooler. There is a possibility that they are more common in the afternoon after the temperature has increased.
- If it is raining, it is likely that no butterflies will be present
- Humidity (when it was not raining) did not seem to have a very big effect on the butterflies
- The False Hemlock Looper moth was the most common butterfly/moth that the researchers encountered