## INSECTS

## BUTTERFLIES OF THE PEACE RIVER REGION OF ALBERTA AND BRITISH COLUMBIA

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**Introduction** Although the Peace River valley and surrounding area were explored early in Alberta's history and have been settled since the early 1900s, little has been published regarding its insect fauna.<sup>13,20</sup> Works describing various aspects of the natural history of the Peace River valley include Spalding with a general synthesis, Moss on plants, and Soper on mammals and birds.<sup>25,26,36,37,38</sup>

With respect to butterflies, Llewellyn-Jones lists 12 species from the Peace River district of British Columbia, and Bowman mentions six species from the Peace River district of Alberta.<sup>1,21</sup> Case and Bird discuss the Peace River valley as part of a larger study area and list 32 species collected along the Peace River valley of Alberta.<sup>3</sup> Ferris reports distribution records for various Colias species in the study area.8,9,10,11 Other miscellaneous butterfly records have been reported in the News of the Lepidopterists' Society.<sup>31,32,33,34,35,41,42,43,44</sup>

Pike conducted extensive surveys while resident in Fairview from 1979 to 1986 and was the first to find many of the interesting butterfly taxa resident in this area. Sperling explored the region while conducting research on the genus *Papilio* from 1980 to 1986. Kondla conducted extensive surveys over eight years from 1979 to 1992. We also include records provided by K. Avery, C. Schmidt, C. Guppy, G.J. Hilchie, J. Pelham, A.W. Rupp and J. Shepard. The primary purpose of this paper is to report on the results of this increased activity since 1979.

The study area we deal with herein consists of the Peace River valley from Bullhead Mountain/ Dunlevy area west of Hudson Hope, British Columbia, to Fort Vermilion, Alberta; low elevation streams tributary to the Peace River; nearby areas which historically contained aspen parkland grasslands;25,26 most lands and within 30 km of the Peace River; and a few other areas of low elevation poplar forest. Not included are Butler Ridge, British Columbia; and Mount Watt and Caribou Mountains in Alberta even though they are very close to the Peace River valley. They



Fifth instar (Papilio Zelicaon) from Dixonville, Alberta.

Felix Sperling

are excluded because they support distinctly different habitats and fauna in comparison with the remainder of the study area.

Specific study sites are listed in Table 1 and geographically displayed in Figure 1. Over 96 sites were visited and more than 6400 specimens were collected and identified in the course of researching this region since 1979. Specimens of rare or doubtful taxa collected before 1979 have been examined and identifications checked. Specimens are in the personal collections of the authors, with some voucher specimens deposited in the Strickland Museum, Department of Entomology, at the University of Alberta, Edmonton.

Butterfly nomenclature has been both fluid and controversial in recent years. Consequently there is no single source that represents the consensus of butterfly students. Zoological names at the genus level follow Scott and we have taken species and subspecies names from a variety of published and unpublished contemporary sources.<sup>29</sup> Our use of common names is reasonably consistent with Miller.<sup>23</sup>

### **Annotated List**

### Hesperiidae

Northern Cloudy Wing Thorybes pylades Scudder LOCALITIES: 1c, 1e, 1f, 2a, 3h, 4b, 4j, 5d, 5i, 5j, 6g, 7b, 7i, 8d, 8e, 8i, 8j Flight dates: 18 May to 12 July

Dreamy Dusky Wing Erynnis icelus (Scudder and Burgess) LOCALITIES: 1c, 1e, 1i, 2a, 2h, 2j, 3e, 3g, 5d, 5e, 5i, 5u, 8d, 8e, 8i FLIGHT DATES: 4 May to 21 June



Beatton River valley northeast of Fort St. John, B.C.

N. Kondla

Persius Dusky Wing Erynnis persius (Scudder) LOCALITIES: 1e,1h, 1l, 2h, 3e, 4d, 8d, 8g, 8i FLIGHT DATES: 16 May to 21 June

**Grizzled Skipper** *Pyrgus centaureae freija* (Warren) LOCALITIES: 2j FLIGHT DATES: 3 June NOTES: This denizen of open black spruce bogs has only been found once in the study area, a few miles west of Goodlow, BC.

#### **Checkered Skipper** *Pyrgus communis* (Grote)

LOCALITIES: 3g, 5f, 5h, 5i, 5j, 6g FLIGHT DATES: 17 May to 25 August 25

NOTES: Adults of this species fly over the dry grasslands along the river valley, often visiting flowers of alfalfa which are used as nectar sources and as perching sites for males. The flight period is very long but it is unclear if this represents multiple broods or a staggered emergence. Previously, this taxon was known to occur as far north as Fort MacMurray and as far west as Edmonton.

Arctic Skipper Carterocephalus palaemon mandan (W.H. Edwards) LOCALITIES: 1k, 2h, 2j, 3a, 3g, 4k, 5d, 5h, 5i, 5j, 5q, 5u, 5w, 8e, 8i FLIGHT DATES: 16 May to 26 June NOTES: Case and Bird indicate that, in their larger study, there is a great deal of variation within this species.<sup>3</sup> Kondla listed the main differences between mandan and the unnamed mountain subspecies in Alberta.<sup>16</sup> We have found in the Peace River region that there is little phenotypic variation. All specimens collected are small and light in colour. Garita Skipperling Oarisma garita (Reakirt)

LOCALITIES: 1c, 1e, 1f, 1k, 1l, 2a, 3h, 4e, 4k, 5d, 5f, 5h, 5i, 5j, 5u, 6f, 6g FLIGHT DATES: 31 May to 3 July NOTES: Populations of this species appear to be largely confined to native grasslands, primarily along the Peace River valley and tributary stream valleys. They have not been collected in old fields or along highways or road sides any distance from native grassland. Adults differ from those collected in other areas of Alberta in that the dark areas of the ventral hind wing are greatly extended and much darker in specimens from the Peace River valley. Based on material collected, this taxon may warrant description as a distinct subspecies.

#### **Assiniboia Skipper** *Hesperia assiniboia* (Lyman)

LOCALITIES: 1e, 1f, 2a, 2d, 3h, 4e, 5d, 5h, 5i, 5j, 5k, 5u, 5w, 6c, 6g FLIGHT DATES: 4 August to 26 August

NOTES: Adults of this taxon are locally abundant on the grassy slopes of the Peace River valley, where they frequent flowers of alfalfa and Aster sp. The distinctive Peace River populations are assigned to this species due to their very light coloration, but they show consistent phenotypic differences from specimens of this species collected in southern Alberta. These differences include a strong tendency towards loss of silvering on the ventral surface, and a reduction of the orange colouring on the dorsal surface. The collection of H. assiniboia in the Peace River area is a range extension of about 550 km, from Redwater, Alberta.<sup>15</sup>

### Long Dash Polites mystic dacotah (W.H. Edwards)

LOCALITIES: 1b, 2c, 3a, 4h, 5d, 5h, 5j, 7i, 8i

FLIGHT DATES: 19 June to 14 August

NOTES: Case and Bird report this taxon under the name *P. sonora da-cotah.*<sup>3</sup> On 14 June 1981, two fresh specimens were collected at Dunvegan. Both individuals were puddling at alkali seepages at the base of a steep grassy slope locally known as Dunvegan Hill. In 1983 specimens appeared to be more abundant, and were seen or collected along margins of aspen forests.

**Roadside Skipper** *Amblyscirtes vialis* (W.H. Edwards)

LOCALITIES: 4j, 5d, 5i, 5j, 6g, 7b, 7i, 8d, 8i

FLIGHT DATES: 20 May to 23 June NOTES: This species has not yet been found in the portion of the study area in British Columbia.

### Papilionidae

### Old World Swallowtail Papilio machaon pikei Sperling

LOCALITIES: 1a\*, 1c\*, 1e\*, 1f\*, 2a\*, 5f\*, 5g\*, 5h\*, 5j\*, 6f\*, 6g\*, 7b\*, 7i (asterisks indicate larval records)

FLIGHT DATES: 30 May to 14 July NOTES: This race Papilio of *machaon* is endemic to the eroding valley sides and badlands of the Peace River area. It was originally reported by Llewellyn-Jones as P. machaon oregonius; and by Case and Bird, and Case and Case as P. machaon hudsonianus.<sup>3,4,21</sup> Sperling described it as a patronym of Edward M. Pike.<sup>37</sup> P. m. pikei is intermediate among P. m. hudsonianus, P. m. aliaska and P. m. oregonius in wing shape and colour markings, and is best separated by habitat and locality.

Populations can be found wherever

dense patches of its larval host plant, linear-leaved wormwood (Artemisia dracunculus), can be found. Small larvae have been found as early as July 8, and all instars have been found in August.<sup>40</sup> Larvae collected in early September had a high rate of parasitism by large black ichneumon wasps (Trogus sp.). Adults nectar at alfalfa (Medicago sativa). Males are easily found while they patrol for females along the upper edge of prominent, south-facing valley slopes or sometimes also at host plant of grassy patches at the base slopes.

### Zelicaon Swallowtail Papilio zelicaon Lucas

LOCALITIES: 1a\*, 1d\*, 1e, 1g\*, 1l, 2h, 3a\*, 3b\*, 3e, 3f\*, 3g, 4a\*, 4c\*, 4g\*, 4h\*, 4i\*, 5f, 6a\*, 6g, 7k, 7m\* (asterisks indicate larval records)

FLIGHT DATES: 17 May to 9 July NOTES: Larvae of all instars can be found throughout July. Adults have been reared from larvae collected on cow parsnip (Heracleum lanatum), heart-leaved Alexanders (Zizia apand water parsnip (Sium tera) suave). P. zelicaon generally flies in mixed forest and parkland. P. zelicaon and P. machaon adults have been collected together at several localities along the high, grassy slopes of the Peace River valley and a small number of hybrids have been collected.<sup>39</sup>

**Canadian Swallowtail** *Papilio canadensis* Rothschild and Jordan

LOCALITIES: 1c, 1e, 1f, 1h, 1i, 1l, 1k, 1j, 2a, 2e, 2h, 3a, 3b, 3d, 3e, 3g, 4b, 4e, 4k, 5d, 5f, 5g, 5h, 5i, 5j, 5k, 5u, 5w, 6e, 6f, 6g, 7 a, 7c, 7d, 7i, 7k, 7n, 8c, 8d, 8e, 8g, 8h, 8i

FLIGHT DATES: 15 May to 14 July NOTES: This species seems to be generally distributed throughout the study area. Adults are found in all habitats. An adult was reared from an egg that was observed being oviposited on a small aspen poplar leaf about one metre above the ground at La Crete ferry. Traditionally reported in the literature as a subspecies of *Papilio glaucus* but recently the taxon *canadensis* has been shown to be a distinct species.<sup>12</sup>

### Pieridae

Western Checkered White Pieris occidentalis Reakirt

LOCALITIES: 1c, 1e, 1f, 1k, 2a, 3e, 3g, 3h, 4e, 4k, 5f, 5g, 5i, 5j, 5r, 5u, 5z, 6g, 7a, 7b, 7c, 7i, 7k, 8i, 8g

FLIGHT DATES: 4 April to 8 September

NOTES: This species was listed under the name *P. protodice occidentalis.*<sup>3</sup> It is here treated as a separate species in accordance with accepted classification.<sup>14,24</sup> There are at least two broods. Early spring brood individuals are smaller and more heavily marked with dark scales on the ventral hind wing than butterflies of the summer brood which are larger and lighter.

Mustard White Pieris napi oleracea Harris

LOCALITIES: 3g, 5d, 5e, 5i, 5q, 5u, 7i, 8a, 8g, 8h, 8i COLLECTION DATES: 3 May to 26 July

**Cabbage Butterfly** *Pieris rapae* (Linnaeus)

LOCALITIES: 1e, 1f, 1k, 1n, 2a, 2f, 2j, 3e, 3g, 3h, 4d, 4e, 4k, 5d, 5f, 5h, 5i, 5j, 5k, 5u, 5w, 6b, 6g, 7a, 7b, 7c, 7e, 7f, 7i, 8c, 8e

FLIGHT DATES: 27 April to 29 September

NOTES: This introduced species is generally distributed throughout the Peace River valley. Adults can be very abundant, frequently visiting flowers of alfalfa in August, and larvae are considered pests of market garden crops. There are at least two broods, and perhaps as many as four.

**Large Marble** *Euchloe ausonides* Lucas

LOCALITIES: 1c, 1i, 2a, 2c, 2e, 2h, 3e, 3g, 4e, 5d, 5f, 5h, 5i, 5y, 6f, 7a, 7b, 7c, 7g, 7i, 8c, 8g, 8h

FLIGHT DATES: 16 May to 9 August NOTES: In June, if a large number of white butterflies is seen flying over an unploughed field in the Fairview area, it is certain that they are adults of this species, and not *P. rapae*. In some fields the adults are very abundant. Adults are also found in jackpine sandhills, aspen forests, and grasslands along the Peace River. Eggs are laid on budding inflorescences of *Arabis drummondii* Gray, one egg to a plant.

Creusa Marble Euchloe creusa (Doubleday)

LOCALITIES: 1h

**COLLECTION DATES: 26 June** 

NOTES: So far only found in the Dunlevy area where the Peace River enters the Rocky Mountains.

### **Clouded Sulphur** Colias philodice Godart

LOCALITIES: 1c, 1e, 1f, 1j, 1k, 1l, 1n, 2a, 2e, 2h, 3a, 3b, 3e, 3g, 4e, 4k, 5d, 5f, 5h, 5i, 5j, 5k, 5u, 5y, 6g, 7d, 7i, 7m, 8e, 8g, 8i

FLIGHT DATES: 4 May to 29 September

NOTES: This species appears to have a small spring brood, at least two summer broods and sometimes a fall brood in the Peace country. Specimens of this species were reported as *C. eurytheme.*<sup>3</sup>

**Christina Sulphur** *Colias christina* Edwards

LOCALITIES: 1e, 1h, 1m, 2a, 2e, 2f, 2h, 2j, 3a, 4b, 4c, 5d, 5h, 5y, 7a, 7e, 7k, 7m, 8i

FLIGHT DATES: 21 June to 12 August

NOTES: Specimens of this species were misidentified as C. eurytheme.<sup>3</sup> The taxon alberta, described from the study area by Bowman as a subspecies of *eurytheme*, has been the subject of some debate in the literature.' Besides having been viewed as a synonym of C. christina, it has been attached to both C. eurytheme and C. philodice vitabunda.24 As well it has been referenced as a hybrid situation.<sup>6</sup> Kondla has reviewed this situation and determined that alberta is in fact allied with C. christina.<sup>17</sup> This species, while widespread, is only locally common.

Canadian Sulphur Colias canadensis Ferris

LOCALITIES: 1j, 7m<sup>8</sup>

FLIGHT DATES: 30 May to 4 July NOTES: This recently described species has in the past been reported as *Colias hecla*.

## **Giant Sulphur** *Colias gigantea* Strecker

LOCALITIES: 1j, 2j, 3a, 5d, 5g, 5j, 5y FLIGHT DATES: 14 June to 8 July NOTES: Adults appear to have a very short flight period, and are almost universally restricted to wet willow fens and catchment marshes with willows.

Pink-edged Sulphur Colias interior Scudder

LOCALITIES: 1b, 2j, 3g, 4e, 5d, 7a, 7b, 7e, 7m

FLIGHT DATES: 21 June to 5 August

Palaeno Sulphur Colias palaeno chippewa W.H. Edwards FLIGHT DATES: June 18

NOTES: So far only found along

Highway 2, 56 km SE of Dawson Creek in Alberta.<sup>10</sup>

Bronze Copper Lycaena hyllus (Cramer)

LOCALITIES: 6c

FLIGHT DATES: 17 August NOTES: A single battered male was collected in 1981. It could represent

a local colony or a migrant. The specimen was collected while visiting alfalfa flowers near a marsh, and represents a range extension of about 320 km. Kondla reports that the species does use fens in central Alberta and since this species is easy to overlook, it may well be established in fens and marshes in the study area.<sup>18</sup>

**Purplish Copper** *Lycaena helloides* (Boisduval)

LOCALITIES: 2a, 4k, 5i, 5j, 5w, 6c FLIGHT DATES: 29 June, 14 August to 22 August

NOTES: The taxonomy of this species and *L. dorcas* has been the subject of conflicting interpretations.<sup>7,28</sup> Based on work in Alberta we treat these two as distinct species. Specimens appear to be differentiated from populations in southern Alberta, but series are too short to be certain of constancy of differences.

**Dorcas Copper** *Lycaena dorcas dorcas* (W. Kirby)

LOCALITIES: 2f, 2j

FLIGHT DATES: 6 July

NOTES: So far only found in a black spruce bog a few miles west of Goodlow, BC, and along Highway 64 just east of the AB/BC border.

Mariposa Copper Lycaena mariposa (Reakirt) LOCALITIES: 1h, 4e, 7e, 7f, 7m, 8e COLLECTION DATES: 25 June to 1 August

Coral Hairstreak Harkenclenus titus

(Fabricius)

LOCALITIES: 1c, 1e, 1f, 1k, 1l, 1n, 2a, 5d, 5 j, 6g, 8c

FLIGHT DATES: 28 June to 11 August

NOTES: Adults are consistently darker than adults of other populations in western North America. They appear to be otherwise similar. Due to the difference, description as a distinct subspecies may be warranted.

Adults are associated with the edge of native grassland, where they tend to perch on saskatoon bushes. Populations in the Fort St. John area were found to frequently display hilltopping behaviour which was not observed in those from the Peace River valley in Alberta.

**Striped Hairstreak** Satyrium liparops (Le Conte)

LOCALITIES: 1e, 1f, 1k, 1l, 2a, 5d, 5j, 6g, 7a, 7i

FLIGHT DATES: 26 June to 26 July NOTES: Individuals of this species, both male and female, are different from all other specimens examined from North America in that they are darker and have a more uniform wing pattern. They may be worthy of description as a distinct subspecies.

Adults perch on spreading dogbane and saskatoon and chokecherry bushes. They do not hilltop as regularly as *H. titus* but do engage in this behaviour. They also appear to be territorial, and chase individuals of any insect species out of their territory.

**Brown Elfin** *Callophrys augustinus* (Westwood)

LOCALITIES: 3e, 5c, 5d, 5e, 5o, 7j, 8e, 8g

FLIGHT DATES: 3 May to 12 June NOTES: Adults of this species are found in wet and boggy areas near spruce and poplar forests, and in jackpine forests.

Hoary Elfin Callophrys polios obscurus (Ferris and Fisher) LOCALITIES: 2 a, 3e, 5d, 5e, 5j, 5o, 5y, 7a, 7c FLIGHT DATES: 26 April to 8 June

**Eastern Pine Elfin** *Callophrys niphon clarki* Freeman LOCALITIES: 5d, 5o, 7I FLIGHT DATES: 13 May to 23 May NOTES: On comparison with adults of this subspecies from Clyde, Alberta, 11 specimens clearly represent this taxon. Their collection extends the range of this species westward from Wood Buffalo National Park and Clyde, AB.

Western Pine Elfin Callophrys eryphon (Boisduval)

LOCALITIES: 2a, 4j, 5d, 5o

FLIGHT DATES: 9 May to 19 June NOTES: The occurrence of this species sympatrically with the preceding species raises the possibility of hybridization as suggested by Reist.<sup>27</sup> A single specimen taken north of Manning may also be referable to this species. Further study is required to clarify the relationship between these two species in northern Alberta.

#### Western Tailed Blue Everes amyntula albrighti Clench

LOCALITIES: 1c, 1d, 1e, 1f, 1h, 1i, 1k, 1l, 2a, 2e, 2h, 2j, 3a, 3b, 3d, 3e, 3g, 4d, 4e, 5d, 5e, 5g, 5h, 5i, 5j, 5u, 5x, 5y, 6f, 6g, 7a, 7i, 7m, 8c, 8d, 8e, 8g, 8h, 8i

FLIGHT DATES: 11 May to 1 August

**Spring Azure** *Celastrina argiolus lucia* (Kirby)

LOCALITIES: 1e, 2a, 2j, 3g, 4e, 5d, 5e, 5i, 5j, 5k, 5o, 5u, 5y, 7l, 8g FLIGHT DATES: 7 April to 11 June NOTES: Recent literature treats *lucia*  as a subspecies of *C. argiolus*. However recent research (H. Pavulaan, pers. comm.; Kondla, unpublished) shows that *argiolus* actually consists of a species complex and that *lucia* may be a distinct species.<sup>30</sup>

Silvery Blue Glaucopsyche lygdamus couperi Grote

LOCALITIES: 1c, 1e, 1f, 1h, 1i, 1k, 1l, 2a, 2c, 2e, 2h, 2j, 3a, 3b, 3e, 3g, 4e, 4k, 5d, 5e, 5f, 5h, 5i, 5j, 5o, 5p, 5u, 5w, 5y, 6f, 6g, 7a, 7c, 7h, 7i, 7j, 8a, 8c, 8e, 8g, 8h, 8i

FLIGHT DATES: 26 April to 14 July NOTES: Widely distributed in most habitats. Recent work suggests that the taxon *couperi* may be a distinct species from *G. lygdamus*.<sup>5</sup>

Northern Blue Plebejus idas scudderi (Edwards)

LOCALITIES: 1e, 1h, 2j, 2h, 4e, 5d, 6g, 7e, 7f, 7m, 8c, 8e, 8f

FLIGHT DATES: 21 June to 11 August

NOTES: Case and Bird report specimens of this species as *P. melissa.*<sup>3</sup> Their specimens have been re-examined and they are all females of *P. idas.* 

**Greenish Blue** *Plebejus saepiolus amica* (W.H. Edwards)

LOCALITIES: 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d, 1e, 1f, 1h, 1i, 1j, 2a, 2c, 2e, 2h, 2j, 3a, 3b, 3c, 3d, 3h, 4d, 4e, 4f, 5d, 5f, 5h, 5i, 5u, 5x, 5y, 6f, 6g, 7b, 7e, 7i, 7k, 7m, 8b, 8c, 8e, 8g, 8i, 8k

FLIGHT DATES: 30 May to 26 July NOTES: One of the ubiquitous species in the region.

## **Rustic Blue** *Plebejus rusticus* (W.H. Edwards)

LOCALITIES: 1c, 1e, 1f, 2a, 3a, 3e, 4b, 4e, 5d, 5e, 5f, 5h, 5i, 5j, 6f, 7i, 8i FLIGHT DATES: 11 May to 12 July NOTES: A variety of genus and species names that have been applied to this taxon in recent years.<sup>19</sup> Populations in the study area appear most closely allied with subspecies *rusticus* but work is needed to clarify the most appropriate subspecies nomenclature.

Adults fly on the native grasslands along the Peace River valley, and can also be found in jackpine sandhills. Colonies are small and do not appear to be numerous.

### Nymphalidae

**Great Spangled Fritillary** *Speyeria cybele pseudocarpenteri* (F. and R. Chermock)

LOCALITIES: 1e, 1f, 1k, 2a, 2d, 2j, 3g, 4e, 5d, 5h, 5i

FLIGHT DATES: 28 June to 27 August

NOTES: This very aggressive flier can be found in shrub thickets on valley slopes, poplar draws on valley sides and upland poplar forest. Unlike individuals from more southern populations, adults in this study area very seldom nectar at flowers.

Aphrodite Fritillary Speyeria aphrodite manitoba (F. and R. Chermock) LOCALITIES: 1e, 1f, 1h, 1k, 1l, 1m, 2a, 2j, 5d, 5e, 5g, 5h, 5i, 5j, 5u, 8i FLIGHT DATES: 6 July to 7 September

NOTES: In the Peace River country adults of this species fly primarily in late July and early August, after the majority of adults of *S. electa* disappear. Its discovery in the Peace River region is a major range extension, and due to the habitat information provided by Kondla we expect that future field work in intervening areas will confirm that the Peace River populations are in fact disjunct from others.<sup>18</sup>

Boreal Fritillary Speyeria hollandi

(F. and R. Chermock) LOCALITIES: 1e, 2j, 5d, 5e, 7a, 7b, 7e, 7i, 7m, 8a, 8b, 8c, 8d, 8e, 8f, 8i FLIGHT DATES: 22 June to 21 August NOTES: This species is usually

found in boggy or heavily wooded areas. The taxonomic and nomenclatural argument provided by Kondla is followed for this and the following species.<sup>18</sup>

**Northwestern Fritillary** *Speyeria electa* (W.H. Edwards)

LOCALITIES: 1b, 1c, 1e, 1f, 1h, 1k, 1l, 1m, 2a, 2j, 3a, 3b, 3e, 3g, 3h, 4c, 4e, 5g, 5h, 5i, 5j, 5u, 5y, 6b, 6f, 6g, 7b, 7i

FLIGHT DATES: 6 June to 1 August NOTES: Adults of this species appear in June with the flight period extending into July.

Mormon Fritillary Speyeria mormonia eurynome (W.H. Edwards) LOCALITIES: 5u, 5w, 6g FLIGHT DATES: 26 August

**Bog Fritillary** *Boloria eunomia dawsoni* (Barnes and McDunnough) LOCALITIES: 2e, 2h, 5d, 5e, 5g, 5y, 8e, 8g FLIGHT DATES: 8 June to 23 June

Silver-bordered Fritillary Boloria selene (Denis and Schiffermueller) LOCALITIES: 1d, 2h, 3a, 3g, 4a, 5b, 5d, 5i, 5k, 5u, 5y, 6b, 7a, 7d, 7e, 7m, 8e

FLIGHT DATES: 6 June to 25 July

Meadow Fritillary Boloria bellona jenistae Stallings and Turner LOCALITIES: 1c, 1f, 1l, 2a, 2h, 3e, 3g, 4e, 5d, 5e, 5h, 5i, 5j, 5u, 5v, 6f, 6g, 7a, 7b, 7i, 8c, 8e, 8g, 8h, 8i FLIGHT DATES: 9 May to 28 June; 13 August to 25 August NOTES: In the Peace River country this species is double brooded.

Adults fly in old fields,

forest

openings, and edges of grassland areas. Pike found that eggs are laid on violets.

Frigga's Fritillary Boloria frigga saga (Staudinger) LOCALITIES: 2i, 2j, 3g, 5d, 5e, 5h, 5y, 8g, 8j FLIGHT DATES: 19 May to 23 June

Freija Fritillary Boloria freija (Thunberg)

LOCALITIES: 2a, 2i, 2j, 3g, 4e, 5c, 5d, 5e, 5o, 5y, 7a, 7c, 7l, 7n, 8g, 8h FLIGHT DATES: 26 April to 11 June

**Purple Fritillary** *Boloria titania grandis* (Barnes and McDunnough) LOCALITIES: 2f, 2j, 5d, 5e, 7e, 7f,

7m, 8i FLIGHT DATES: 17 June to 23

August

Gorgone Checkerspot Chlosyne gorgone (Huebner)

LOCALITIES: 5i, 5h

FLIGHT DATES: 17 May to 26 June NOTES: An uncommon and local species in Alberta, adults are rarely collected in series. In 1980, a small colony was discovered at Green Island. Extensive investigations yielded another small colony at Dunvegan in 1983. These are the only known colonies in the Peace River region to date.

The colonies cover an area of about 1/4 ha, and within that area, adults are fairly abundant. Outside of that area, adults are rarely encountered. In over 100 hours of collecting, only one specimen has ever been seen over 100 m from a colony.

Northern Checkerspot Chlosyne palla (Boisduval) LOCALITIES: 1c,1k, 2a, 5f, 5h, 5j,

6g, 7a, 7i, 8c, 8i FLIGHT DATES: 23 May to 14 July

NOTES: Although Case and Bird fail

to report this species, the first known specimen was collected by J. Belicek at Peace River town site in 1973, and a series of over 100 specimens now exists in collections. Adults primarily inhabit valley-side poplar forests where the presumed food plant, *Aster conspicuous*, grows in the understorey. However, adults are best observed at the poplar forest/grassland interface where they visit flowers of alfalfa and spreading dogbane and *Senecio* sp.

There is some question as to the correct placement of this taxon. It is clearly distinct from both *C. palla* in southern Alberta and British Columbia, but it is also distinct from *C. acastus* from southern Alberta prairies. It is placed with *C. palla* largely because Alberta *C. acastus* has a monotone orange ground color on the dorsal surface, and *C. palla* has a two-toned ground color. The Peace River material has a two-toned ground color.

**Northern Crescent** *Phyciodes morpheus* (Drury)

LOCALITIES: 1a, 1b, 1d, 1e, 1f, 1h, 1k, 2b, 2e, 2h, 2j, 3a, 3b, 3e, 3g, 4c, 4e, 5d, 5f, 5g, 5h, 5i, 5j, 5k, 5u, 5x, 6b, 6f, 6g, 6h, 7a, 7c, 7e, 7i, 7k, 8b, 8c, 8e, 8f, 8g, 8i

FLIGHT DATES: 28 May to 23 August

NOTES: Adults are found in or near forested areas, and at the edges of poplar forests along river bottoms.

#### Tawny Crescent Phyciodes batesii (Reakirt)

LOCALITIES: 1c, 1e, 1f, 1k, 1l, 2a, 2 j, 3e, 4b, 4e, 5j, 5h, 5i, 6g, 7a, 7i

FLIGHT DATES: 23 May to 14 July NOTES: Larvae are web spinners, which is a reliable character in separating this species from the preceding one. This species is found around the shrubs of the grasslands, and is not often found flying with *P*. *morpheus*.

Field Crescent Phyciodes pratensis (Behr) LOCALITIES: 1h FLIGHT DATES: 26 June NOTES: So far only found in the Dunlevy area.

Satyr Anglewing Polygonia satyrus (W.H. Edwards) LOCALITIES: 1h, 3g, 4b, 5d, 5e, 5l,

5j, 6g, 7a, 7c

FLIGHT DATES: 17 April to 30 June (hibernating generation), and 15 July to 18 August (new generation).

NOTES: Adults are found in any forested area where shaded stinging nettles are found. Pike confirmed stinging nettle as a larval food plant in this area.

**Green Comma** *Polygonia faunus* (W.H. Edwards) LOCALITIES: 1f, 1h, 2a, 5d, 7b, 8a FLIGHT DATES: 11 April to 17 August

**Hoary Comma** *Polygonia gracilis* Grote and Robinson

LOCALITIES: 3g, 5e, 8j

FLIGHT DATES: 21 April to 11 June NOTES: Specimens are provisionally listed under this taxon for lack of a better available name. Individuals from most parts of the boreal forest in northern Alberta and British Columbia are black and gray on the ventral surface while nominate *gracilis* is two-toned brown on the ventral surface. More work is needed on the taxa *gracilis* and *zephyrus* in this part of the continent.<sup>18</sup>

Gray Comma Polygonia progne (Cramer) LOCALITIES: 1f, 2a, 3g, 5d, 5i, 5j, 6g, 8i FLIGHT DATES: 17 April to 26 August NOTES: Adults are found in and near poplar forests where willow is growing.

**Compton Tortoise** *Shell Nymphalis vau-album* (Denis and Schiffermueller)

LOCALITIES: 1e, 1h, 3g, 4 e, 5d FLIGHT DATES: 24 May to 17 August

Mourning Cloak Nymphalis antiopa (Linnaeus)

LOCALITIES: 1e, 1f, 2a, 3g, 4b, 4e, 5d, 5h, 5i, 5j, 5k, 5w, 5z, 6g, 8c FLIGHT DATES: 16 April to 23 August

Milbert's Tortoise Shell Nymphalis milberti (Say) LOCALITIES: 1e, 1f, 1h, 1j, 2f, 2h,

3g, 4e, 4k, 5d, 5h, 5i, 6g, 7k, 7m FLIGHT DATES: 25 May to 14 August

Painted Lady Vanessa cardui (Linnaeus)

LOCALITIES: 1c, 1f, 1n, 2a, 5i, 5u, 5w

FLIGHT DATES: 28 May to 8 September

NOTES: A large migration into the Peace River area occurred in 1979. Many fresh adults were seen throughout the area in August and September. Smaller migrations occurred in 1991 and 1992.

**Red Admiral** Vanessa atalanta rubria (Fruhstorfer)

LOCALITIES: 5w, 6g, 8c, 8e, 8h FLIGHT DATES: 10 June to 17 June

White Admiral Limenitis arthemis rubrofasciata (Barnes and McDunnough) LOCALITIES: 1c, 1e, 1f, 1h, 1k, 1l, 2a, 2e, 2h, 2j, 3a, 3e, 3g, 4b, 4c, 4e, 5d, 5e, 5f, 5g, 5h, 5i, 5j, 5y, 6b, 6g, 7a, 7b, 7c, 7h, 7i, 7k, 8e, 8i FLIGHT DATES: 7 June to 11 August Inornate Ringlet Ceononympha inornata McDunnough

LOCALITIES: 1c, 1d, 1e, 1f, 1i, 1j, 1k, 1l, 2a, 2c, 3b, 3e, 3g, 4b, 4c, 4d, 4e, 4f, 4k, 5d, 5f, 5g, 5h, 5i, 5j, 5u, 5w, 5y, 6d, 6f, 6g, 8c, 8g, 8i

FLIGHT DATES: 11 May to 16 July NOTES: Adults of this taxon appear to be somewhat differentiated from adults of this taxon from elsewhere in Alberta. There is a tendency to be darker, and a reduction or absence of eyespots on the forewing. This, at least, is true of populations from the native grasslands. Roadside populations do not show these tendencies. Thus there may be native and introduced populations with limited interaction between them.

**Common Wood Nymph** *Cercyonis pegala ino* (Hall)

LOCALITIES: 1e, 1f, 1k, 1l, 2a, 2j, 3g, 3h, 4i, 5d, 5h, 5i, 5j, 5k, 5u, 5w, 6d, 7a, 7b, 7f, 7i

FLIGHT DATES: 28 June to 23 August

NOTES: Specimens collected from native grasslands appear darker than specimens from southern Alberta, but specimens from road sides in the Alberta part of the region are much like the rest of the Alberta populations. Here, as in the preceding species, there may be native and introduced populations interacting.

## Dark Wood Nymph Cercyonis oetus (Boisduval)

LOCALITIES: 1c, 1e, 1f, 1i, 1l, 1n, 2a FLIGHT DATES: 4 July to 11 August NOTES: This species seems to be restricted to the BC side of the Peace River valley, and many adults are substantially darker than adults from other areas of British Columbia and Alberta.

**Disa Alpine** Erebia disa mancina Doubleday LOCALITIES : 2j

#### FLIGHT DATES: 3 June

NOTES: So far only found in a spruce bog west of Goodlow, BC. Relatively little work was done in spruce bogs and this species is certainly more widely distributed in the region than this one record would indicate.

**Red Disked Alpine** *Erebia discoidalis macdunnoughi* Dos Passos LOCALITIES: 1g, 1j, 2j, 3g, 5c, 5d,

5e, 5i, 5u, 5y, 7i, 7l

FLIGHT DATES: 26 April to 24 May NOTES: This species was reared by Pike (unpublished), and the life cycle photographed and described. The most noteworthy point of the life cycle is that mature larvae spin flimsy cocoons before pupating.

**Common Alpine** Erebia epipsodea freemani Erhlich

LOCALITIES: 1c, 1e, 1f, 1h, 1i, 1j, 1k, 1l, 2a, 3g, 3h, 4b, 4d, 4e, 4k, 5d, 5f, 5h, 5i, 5j, 5u, 5w, 5y, 7i, 7l FLIGHT DATES: 13 May to 28 June

Macoun's Arctic Oeneis macounii (W.H. Edwards)

LOCALITIES: 4j, 5e, 8e, 8i

FLIGHT DATES: 11 June to 20 June NOTES: Adults fly in the vicinity of jackpine sandhills and will hilltop.

# **Uhler's Arctic** *Oeneis uhleri* (Reakirt)

LOCALITIES: 1c, 1e, 1f, 1k, 1l, 2a, 4b, 4e, 5f, 5h, 5i, 5j, 6g, 7i

FLIGHT DATES: 7 May to 3 July

NOTES: Adults from the Peace River valley are distinct from adults collected in other parts of Alberta in that they are mostly larger, darker and have more eyespots.

Females oviposit on many species of grasses, and eggs take about three weeks to hatch. Mature larvae pupate in early May.

Alberta Arctic Oeneis alberta Elwes LOCALITIES: 2a, 4e, 5d, 5e, 5i, 5j, 5z, 6f, 6g

FLIGHT DATES: April 26 to June 18 NOTES: First reported by Kondla from Kleskun Hill. Adults of this taxon are locally common along the Peace River in the native grasslands from Clayhurst to Peace River. They are also found occasionally in jackpine sandhills. This is one of the first butterflies to fly in the spring. Females oviposit on many species of grasses, and eggs hatch in about 30 days. Mature larvae overwinter and pupation occurs in early April, often before the snow has completely melted.

Peace River populations may represent a distinct subspecies which is being investigated by Pike.

Jutta Arctic Oeneis jutta ridingiana F. and R. Chermock LOCALITIES: 2j, 5d, 5e, 8e FLIGHT DATES: 3 June to 13 June

**Discussion** A total of 76 species have now been documented for this study area. We have not included a number of taxa collected by K. Bowman in 1925 at an undetermined location near Fort Vermilion. Although specimens are in the collection of the University of Alberta, the exact locality where these were collected is unknown and may not be within the study area as defined herein. Efforts by the writers and G.J. Hilchie to find the source of Bowman's records, both in the field and through file information, have been unsuccessful.

Only a few species are candidates for future addition to the fauna of the study area:

Manitoba Skipper Hesperia comma

*manitoba* (Scudder) — MacNeil reports one female collected 24 August 1961 at Hotchkiss River.<sup>22</sup> We treat this as a hypothetical species at this time because we have not been able to verify the identification and this taxon is known from only one other location in the boreal forest of Alberta. The flight date strongly suggests that this specimen could be *H. assiniboia.* The taxonomy of *Hesperia* in North America needs more work, especially to determine relationships (if any) to European *Hesperia comma.* 

**Peck's Skipper** *Polites peckius* (W. Kirby) — This species has been found north, south, east and west of the study area, so it is just a matter of time before it is discovered here. It should be looked for in fens, marshes and moist meadows.

**California White** *Pieris sisymbrii* (Boisduval) — Specimens were collected by K. Bowman in the vicinity of Fort Vermilion and further work may yet confirm the presence of this species in the study area.

Melissa Blue Plebejus melissa W.H. Edwards — Two males and one female collected by K. Bowman at Wembly in 1925 appear to be of this species. Genitalia have not been examined and more work is needed to clarify whether or not this species does occur in the study area.

**Yukon Blue** *Plebejus optilete yukona* (Holland) — This species has been found northwest, east and southeast of the study area. Field work in spruce bogs during early July will likely turn up populations in the study area.

**Chryxus Arctic** *Oeneis chryxus caryi* Dyar — Specimens were collected by K. Bowman in the general area of Fort Vermilion. This species was reported by Case and Bird but we have been unable to verify their record.<sup>3</sup> Additional exploration of pine forests in June is needed to determine if this taxon occurs in the study area.

Analysis of the adult flight phenology data (Table 2) shows that two-thirds of the species are on the wing in late June. Relatively high species diversity can be observed from mid-May through early July. Substantially fewer species are on the wing in late April to early May and mid-July to late August.

The northern limit of the study area is almost as far north as Churchill, Manitoba, which is well known for its arctic and subarctic butterflies. The Peace River region is unique as a northern area due to its high species diversity and due to disjunct and range-edge populations of species that are distinctly southern in their primary distribution. Thus the study area is at the limits of the range of 23 taxa.

Taxa which are at the northern and northwestern limits of their range here are: O. garita, H. assiniboia, P. mystic dacotah, A. vialis, H. titus, S. liparops, S. cybele pseudocarpenteri, C. pegala, O. uhleri ssp., and O. alberta. S. aphrodite manitoba, P. batesii and C. inornata nr. benjamini are at their western and northwestern range limits here. The following taxa are at their northwestern range limits here: P. communis, L. hyllus, L. helloides, P. rusticus nr. rusticus, C. gorgone. Three taxa are at their northern range limits here: P. zelicaon, C. palla, and C. oetus. C. niphon and E. epipsodea freemani are at their western range limits. It is interesting to note that none of the taxa in the study area are at their

southern or southeastern range limits here.

Ten of these taxa are also clearly disjunct for distances of 200 to 500 km from the nearest related populations to the south and southeast: P. communis, O. garita, H. assiniboia, P. machaon pikei, H. titus, S. liparops, C. gorgone, C. palla, O. uhleri and O. alberta. These same taxa also have highly circumscribed distributions within the study area, being wholly or largely confined to the Peace River valley and, in some cases, nearby tributary stream valleys. Cercyonis oetus is also disjunct but is limited to the western part of the study area and flies outside of the Peace River lowlands as well. Five taxa may be disjunct but additional work in areas to the east and southeast is needed to clarify this: L. hyllus, L. helloides, P. rusticus nr. rusticus, S. aphrodite manitoba, and C. inornata nr. benjamini.

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## Table 1. LIST OF SPECIFIC COLLECTING SITESWITH REFERENCE NUMBERS SHOWN ON FIGURE 1

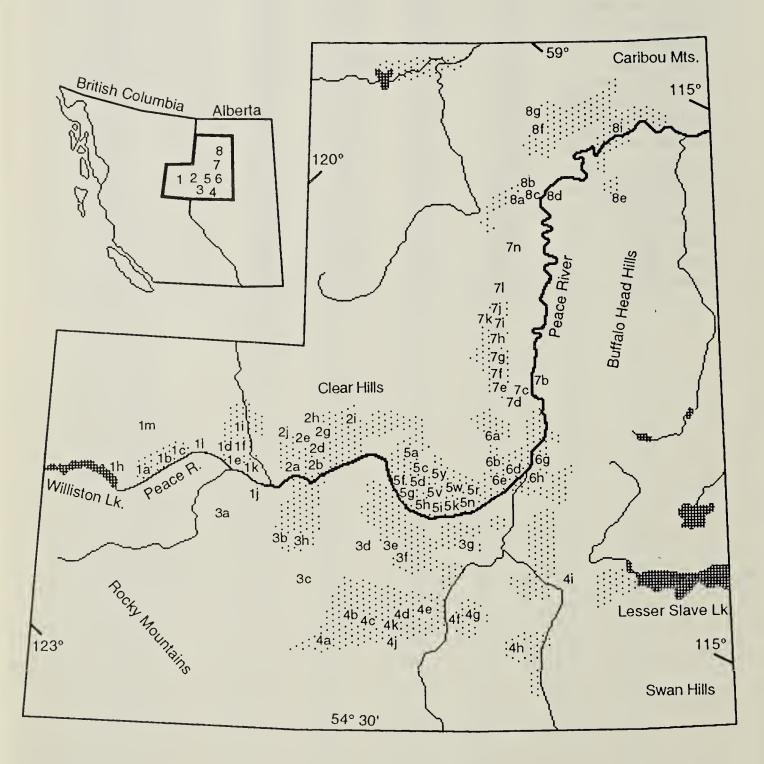
1a b c d e f g h i j k I m	5-7 km NE of Hudson Hope 15 km SW of Attachie 3 km NW of Attachie 15 km W of Fort St. John District of Taylor Beatton River ENE of Fort St. John Cecil Lake Bullhead Mountain and Dunlevy areas adjacent to Williston Lake (low elevations) Beatton River 8 km NE of Rose Prairie Alaska Highway, Milepost 29 10 km E of Taylor Bear Flat Halfway Indian Reserve and vicinity	c d e f g h i j k I n o p q r s u w x y z	3 km N of Hines Creek George Lake Sandhill Lake Gage Highland Park 30 km W of Fairview Dunvegan Green Island 16 km SE of Fairview 13 km S of Bluesky 8 km S of Bluesky Camp Island, 20 km S of Whitelaw 7 km S of Whitelaw 4 km SE of Whitelaw Whitelaw 5 km SW of Brownvale Figure 8 Lake, 13 km N of Brownvale 10 km SW of Fairview Fairview 3 km N of Fairview 11 km N of Fairview Fairview Ski Hill 18 km S of Dixonville
b c d e f	6.5 km S of Bear Canyon Bear Canyon Highway 64 at Clear River Boundary Lake Highway 64, 3 km E of AB/BC boundary	b c d e	Lac Cardinal 2 km S of Lac Cardinal Grimshaw 16 km SE of Grimshaw Shaftsebury Ferry
g h i j	22 km N of Bear Canyon 30 km N of Bear Canyon 11 km W of Worsley N of Clayhurst and Goodlow area	g	Peace River (town) 10 km S of Peace River
3a b c d f g h	Sunset Prairie Bear Mountain Demmitt White Mountain fire lookout tower, 25 km SW of Spirit River Spirit Ridge, 14 km S of Spirit River 2 km E of Woking Codessa fire lookout tower, 14 km S of Codessa Pouce Coupe	b c d	16 km E of Northstar 20 km E of Northstar 14 km E of Deadwood Deadwood fire tower, 10 km S of Deadwood 25 km S of Manning
4a b c d e f g h i j k	21 km W of Elmworth Beaverlodge Wembly 2 km S of Clairmont Lake Kleskun Hill Highway 34 at Smokey River Debolt 3 km W of Calais 25 km W of High Prairie 10 km S of Grande Prairie Grande Prairie		

#### Table 2. ADULT BUTTERFLY FLIGHT PHENOLOGY

'X' = species has been found in a phenology unit, 'o' = it has not. Each month is divided into 3 phenology units; the first days 1-10, the second days 11-20 and the third days 21-end.

SPECIES	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP
Thorybes pylades	000	oXX	XXX	оХо	000	000
Erynnis icelus	000	XXX	XXX =	000	000	000
Erynnis persius	000	oXX	XXX	000	000	000
Pyrgus centaureae	000	000	Хоо	000	000	000
Pyrgus communis	000	оХо	XXX	оХо	XXX	000
Carterocephalus palaemon	000	oXX	XXX	Хоо	000	000
Oarisma garita	000	ооХ	XXX	Хоо	000	000
Hesperia assiniboia	000	000	000	000	XXX	000
Polites mystic	000	000	oXX	XXX	оХо	000
Amblyscirtes vialis	000	oXX	XXX	000	000	000
Papilio machaon	000	οοΧ	XXX	XXo	000	000
Papilio zelicaon	000	oXX	ХоХ	Хоо	000	000
Papilio canadensis	000	oXX	XXX	ХХо	000	000
Pieris occidentalis	ХоХ	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	Хоо
Pieris napi	000	XXX	XXo	ooX	000	000
Pieris rapae	ooX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	Хоо
Euchloe ausonides	000	oXX	XXX	000	Хоо	000
Euchloe creusa	000	000	οοХ	000	000	000
Colias philodice	000	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	ХоХ
Colias christina	000	000	ооХ	ХоХ	XXo	000
Colias canadensis	000	οοΧ	000	Хоо	000	000
Colias gigantea	000	000	oXX	Хоо	000	000
Colias interior	000	000	οοΧ	ХоХ	Хоо	000
Colias palaeno	000	000	оХо	000	000	000
Lycaena hyllus	000	000	000	000	оХо	000
Lycaena helloides	000	000	ooX	000	oXX	000
Lycaena dorcas	000	000	000	Хоо	Хоо	000
Lycaena mariposa	000	000	ооХ	ооХ	Хоо	000
Harkenclenus titus	000	000	ооХ	XXX	Хоо	000
Satyrium liparops	000	000	ооХ	XXX	000	000
Callophrys augustinus	000	XXX	оХо	000	000	000
Callophrys polios	ооХ	XXX	Хоо	000	000	000
Callophrys niphon	000	oXX	000	000	000	000
Callophrys eryphon	000	ХХо	оХо	000	000	000
Everes amyntula	000	XXX	XXX	ХХо	Хоо	00Q
Celastrina argiolus	ХоХ	XXX	ХХо	Хоо	000	000
Glaucopsyche lygdamus	ооХ	XXX	XXX	Хоо	000	000
Plebejus idas	000	000	ооХ	ХХо	XXo	000
Plebejus saepiolus	000	00X	XXX	XXX	000	000
Plebejus rusticus	000	XXX	XXX	оХо	000	000
Spejeria cybele	000	000	ooX	ХХо	XXX	000
Speyeria aphrodite	000	000	000	XXX	XXX	Хоо
Speyeria hollandi	000	000	ooX	000	ХХо	000
Speyeria electa	000	000	XXX	XXX	Хоо	000
Speyeria mormonia	000	000	000	000	ooX	000
Boloria eunomia	000	000 a V a	XXX	000	000	000
Boloria selene Boloria bollona	000	oXo	XXX	XXX	000	000
Boloria bellona Boloria frigga	000	XXX oXX	XXX	Хоо	XXX	000
Boloria frigga Boloria freija	000 00X		XXX	000	000	000
Boloria titania	00X	XXX	XXo	000 00X	000 XXX	000
	000	000	000	00X	XXX	000

SPECIES	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP
Chlosyne gorgone	000	oXX	XXX	000	000	000
Chlosyne palla	000	ooX	XXX	XXo	000	000
Phyciodes morpheus	000	ooX	XXX	ХХо	XXo	000
Phyciodes batesii	000	ooX	XXX	ХХо	000	000
Phyciodes pratensis	000	000	οοΧ	000	000	000
Polygonia satyrus	oXX	XXX	ooX	oXX	XXX	000
Polygonia faunus	oXX	oXX	Хоо	000	XXX	000
Polygonia gracilis	ооХ	oXX	XXo	000	000	000
Polygonia progne	oXX	XXX	XXX	000	XXX	000
Nymphalis vau-album	000	ooX	οοХ	000	XXo	000
Nymphalis antiopa	ооХ	XXX	XXX	000	XXX	000
Nymphalis milberti	000	XXX	oXX	оХо	XXo	000
Vanessa cardui	000	οοΧ	ХХо	000	Хоо	Хоо
/anessa atalanta	000	000	ХХо	000	000	000
Limenitis arthemis	000	000	XXX	ХХо	XXo	000
Coenonympha inornata	000	oXX	XXX	ХХо	000	000
Cercyonis pegala	000	000	x ooX	XXX	XXX	000
Cercyonis oetus	000	000	000	XXX	XXo	000
Erebia disa	000	000	Хоо	000	000	000
Erebia discoidalis	ооХ	XXX	000	000	000	000
Erebia epipsodea	000	oXX	XXX	000	000	000
Deneis macounii	000	000	оХо	000	000	000
Oeneis uhleri	000	XXX	XXX	Хоо	000	000
Oeneis alberta	Xao	XXX	ХХо	000	000	000
Oeneis jutta	000	000	XXo	000	000	000



### Figure 1. LOCATION OF COLLECTING SITES LISTED IN TABLE 1.

Stippled portions show areas identified as containing native grasslands.<sup>25</sup> Insert shows study region within Alberta and British Columbia, with numbers showing eight general collecting areas. Some sites are not shown because they would overlap nearby sites in the figure; missing sites can be related to nearby sites by using Table 1.