

Final Report: 2015 Colorado Butterfly Monitoring Network

As of November 30th all field observations have been collected for the third season of Colorado Butterfly Monitoring Network (CBMN). At the beginning of the season we set a September 30th end date for collecting butterfly observations. However, due to warm weather many volunteers were able to continue collecting data for several weeks into October. We have begun examining the data for 2015 and will continue to do so in December 2015 and into January, February and March 2016. We still have some volunteers who have not completed data entry and are encouraging everyone to do so by the end of the year.

As mentioned in the interim report, we trained 60 new volunteers during our April and May workshops. Of these 56 carried through with the project and allowed us to more than double our volunteer base. When the program started in 2013 we had 8 volunteers monitoring 9 sites. In 2014 we increased to 51 monitoring 47 sites. This year we had a total of 107 volunteers monitoring 86 sites.

A large part of our funding from Lois Webster went toward a paid summer CBMN intern. We interviewed multiple candidates and brought on Morgan Kerr. Morgan's education in biology/ecology and experience with pollinators, including butterflies, was extremely advantageous to CBMN. Morgan began her internship by helping with the May 10th training, at which time she met over half of the new volunteers. Morgan was instrumental throughout the field see in volunteer communications. She setup a CBMN email address to which volunteer sent her questions, concerns and comments. Morgan also participated in CBMN by having her own butterfly monitoring site in Eldorado Springs, Colorado. Additionally, Morgan oversaw the database to which volunteers must enter their data. This is a critical step in the process and involved Morgan not only communicating with volunteers, but working with the BAMONA database specialist. Overall the internship took a great deal of time/work and Morgan did a stellar job. Without her we would not have seen the success we did with our returning and new volunteers.

I am extremely excited to finalize the results from 2015 and to begin preparing for 2016. I am currently interviewing for an unpaid spring intern who could help me analyze the data and start contacting new sites for inclusion in 2016 CBMN. I am in communication with Kate Hogan regarding CBMN trainings at the Audubon Society of Greater Denver's Littleton location. I hope this leads to an increased volunteer base in this area of Denver and, specifically, to a monitoring site on the Audubon Trail.

Thank you, again, for your funding and I look forward to presenting more detailed results from 2015 CBMN at the Wednesday May 6th meeting.