

## Rare Butterflies of Wolfe Lake

*Lepidoptera* – Order of insects including 155,000 species of butterflies, moths and skippers.

From 2009 to 2015, Ralph Thorpe has been making observations as well as recording and submitting data on butterflies in an area from the North Shore of Wolfe Lake, north and east to the Parish Road and its junction with Highway 10. Ralph, a fellow cottager on Wolfe, is currently the leading contributor of *Lepidoptera* observations to The Ontario Butterfly Atlas database for the Leeds and Grenville United Counties, and his records represent an impressive 70 species (the total species of butterflies for the county is 91). To see The Ontario Butterfly Atlas online, just search for it by name. It is maintained by the Toronto Entomologists' Association. When accessed online, the database's available records can be viewed within individual maps of 10 km squares. All of Ralph's records as they relate to this article are from the areas represented in the 10 km squares labeled I8UQ84 and I8UQ85 [see corresponding map].

In addition to many commonly occurring butterflies, such as the American Lady, Eastern Comma, Canadian Tiger Swallowtail and Eyed Brown, Ralph has logged 18 species that he denotes as rare in the Wolfe Lake area. Species considered to be rare are those seen only once or twice during the aforementioned 7-year period of observation. Ralph adds more species to his observation list each year and is encouraged by the potential to see additional rare butterflies he has yet to encounter. To better predict the possibility and relative probability of encountering such additional species, he conducted his own test case using the 10 km square, I8UQ84. An upgraded calculation feature of The Ontario Butterfly Atlas online, which uses the range maps for species shown in the ROM Field Guide to Butterflies of Ontario, yielded predicted species for the square. Ralph added others rare in the area (one or two seen in 7 years) to this list. By searching the Atlas for the number of squares with records for each of these species within a range of 50 km, he obtained numbers he took to be the relative probability that these species could be found. Thus, he concluded that 18 additional rare butterflies could likely occur within the 10 km area I8UQ84. They are: the **West Virginia White**, Pink-edged Sulphur, **Acadian Hairstreak**, **Coral Hairstreak**, **Edwards' Hairstreak**, **Hickory Hairstreak**, Brown Elfin, **Hoary Elfin**, Early Hairstreak, Cherry Call Azure, **Atlantis Fritillary**, Tawny Crescent, **Compton Tortoiseshell**, **Milbert's Tortoiseshell**, Red-spotted Purple, Mulberry Wing, **Silvery Checkerspot** and Green Comma. Of these species, 10 are predicted to occur with a greater probability and have been **offset in bold print**. To find some of these, it might be best to look in other habitats farther south in the I8UQ84 square. Ralph muses that this additional list of rare butterflies "*might take me another 7 years of searching [but] with a little luck I could finish the job by the time I'm 85.*"

Ralph's complete listing of rare butterflies observed around Wolfe Lake is shown in the columned table following this article, as well as two lovely images of butterflies he photographed in the area (a Mustard White and a Bronze Copper). More of Ralph's colourful photographs for many of the butterfly sightings in the Westport/Wolfe Lake area can be viewed online at: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/Thorpe-nature-site/sets/>. To see the species' name for each butterfly image, hang on the picture and the name will appear in the lower left-hand corner of the photograph.

It's certainly impressive to consider the time and energy Ralph devotes to successfully locating and identifying so many species of butterflies in the area (you can often find him walking the cottage roads and surrounding pastures in search of his winged quarry). But perhaps even more impressive is

how he has used a combined arsenal of knowledge, detailed organisation and a scientific approach to help predict which rare species of Lepidoptera are likely to occur around Wolfe Lake.

Margie Manthey – condensed from a report by Ralph Thorpe  
With Photographs and Diagram by Ralph Thorpe

<b>Butterfly</b>	<b>Observed</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Square</b>
American Copper	July 26, 2009	at a powerline across Cottonwood Drive	18UQ84
American Copper	July 27, 2012	Scotch Thistle patch N. of Pollard Road	18UQ84
Arctic Skipper	June 5, 2010	west of 281 Cottonwood Drive	18UQ84
Meadow Fritillary	June 20, 2010	near the start of Cottonwood Drive	18UQ84
Least Skipper	July 26, 2010	large marsh north of Pollard Road	18UQ84
Least Skipper	July 31, 2010	Evergreen Golf Course	18UQ84
Dion Skipper	July 15, 2011	at a beaverdam on Pollard Road	18UQ84
Two-spotted Skipper	July 28, 2011	viewpoint over Wolfe Lake, near Pinecrest Lane junction of Pinecrest Lane and Cottonwood Drive	18UQ84
Striped Hairstreak	July 1, 2012		18UQ84
Peck's Skipper	July 13, 2012	Pollard Road at former beaver pond	18UQ84
Broad-winged Skipper	July 20, 2012	at a beaverdam on Pollard Road field S. of Porter Rd about 0.6 km. W. of Hwy. 36	18UQ84
Common Buckeye	Aug. 11, 2012		18UQ84
Juniper Hairstreak	June 15, 2013	site near Porter Road and Pollard Road junction	18UQ84
Juniper Hairstreak	June 13, 2015	site near Porter Road and Pollard Road junction	18UQ84
Baltimore Checkerspot	June 28, 2014	small field on Pollard Road	18UQ84
Gray Hairstreak	Aug. 7, 2014	at a small pond east of Porter Road culvert by Porter/Pollard junction; male & female	18UQ84
Bronze Copper	Sept. 5, 2014		18UQ84
Bronze Copper	June 13, 2015	culvert near Porter Road/Pollard Road junction	18UQ84
Lintner's Mourning Cloak	Sept. 20, 2014	near junction of Porter Road and Pollard Road	18UQ84
Mustard White	May 9, 2015	bit W. of jct. Cottonwood Dr./Pinecrest Ln.	18UQ84
Mustard White	Sept. 5, 2015	lawn of cottage at 89 Pinecrest Lane	18UQ84
Henry's Elfin	May 15, 2015	bit W. of jct. Cottonwood Dr./Pinecrest Ln.	18UQ84
Harvester	June 7, 2015	near both Parish Road and Highway 10	18UQ85



Bronze Copper



Mustard White

