

Butterflies of the Elm Fork Nature Preserve

EASTERN TIGER SWALLOWTAIL

Papilio glaucus

Appearance: This butterfly is primarily yellow with distinctive black stripes. It's a relatively large species, and its unique tail extensions at the back of each wing make it hard to miss.

Diet: They feed on nectar from various trees and have a preference for plants such as Lilac, Milkweeds, and Joe-Pye Weed.

Size: Swallowtails are considered large butterflies, with a wingspread ranging from 3 to 5 inches.



GULF FRITILLARY

Agraulis vanillae

Appearance: This butterfly is predominantly orange with distinct black markings. Its primary wings feature three white spots outlined with black.

Diet: Adults have a diverse palate, favoring nectar from a variety of flowers, including sunflowers, lantana, and salvia.

Size: The butterfly boasts a wingspan ranging from 2.5 to 3.75 inches.



MONARCH BUTTERFLY

Danaus plexippus

Appearance: This butterfly boasts two pairs of vibrant orange-red wings adorned with black veins and white spots along the edges.

Diet: Adult Monarchs have a diverse diet, feeding on nectar from a range of plants including Lantana, Salvia, Milkweed, Mistflower, and Gay feather.

Size: The Monarch butterfly has a wingspan typically ranging from 3 to 4 inches.



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RED ADMIRAL

Vanessa atalanta

Appearance: These butterflies have a black background with vibrant orange to red-colored stripes, and their forewings feature distinct white spots.

Diet: Adults primarily sustain themselves on sources other than flower nectar, including rotting fruit, tree sap, and the droppings of other animals.

Size: They have an open wingspan that typically ranges from 1.75 to 3 inches.



COMMON BUCKEYE

Junonia coenia

Appearance: Adults have predominantly brown upper wings with two distinctive orange bars on the forewing's edge and an off-white forewing band. Additionally, all four wings feature eyespots.

Diet: They can be found on a variety of nectar plants, including Zinnia, Butterfly Bush, and Hydrangea.

Size: The butterfly typically has a wingspan ranging from 1.5 to 2.75 inches.



WHEN AND WHERE CAN I SEE THESE BUTTERFLIES?

At the Elm Fork Nature Preserve we have a diverse population of butterflies that grazes the landscape year-round. Many of them can be found in the pollinator garden out in front of the preserve. In other moments, you may find them flying throughout the preserve searching for their next meal.