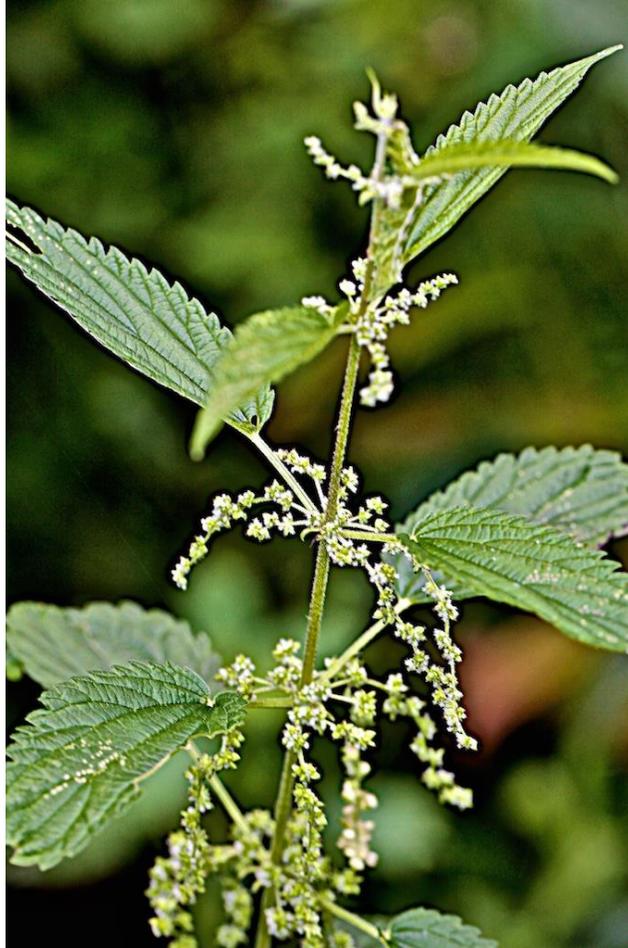


STINGING NETTLE



Stinging Nettle, *Urtica dioica* Photo © Dick Harlow

Stinging Nettle is so named because it has trichomes on the leaves and stems, which are hollow stinging hairs. These hairs inject histamine and other chemicals that create a stinging sensation when the histamine and chemicals react with mammal cells. The hairs act like tiny hypodermic needles when they come in contact with the skin of humans and other mammals.

You would think that with this kind of reputation we would try and get rid of this plant. That is not the case. Stinging Nettle has a long history of medicinal uses.



Close-up of Stinging Nettle Leaf showing trichomes
© Urban Butterfly Garden 2010-2015

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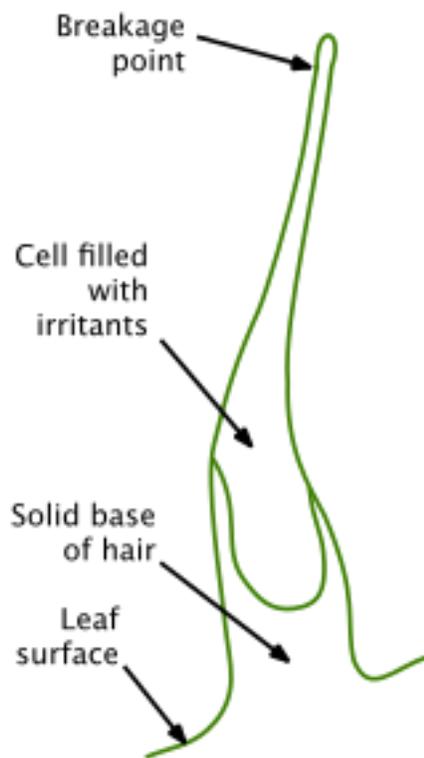


Diagram of a Trichome
© Urban Butterfly Garden 2010-2015

If you Google Common or Stinging Nettle you will get a whole list of topics about Stinging Nettle and the medicinal uses of this plant. Austria has used this herb as treatment for kidney, urinary tract, gastrointestinal and skin disorders along with cardiovascular problems and influenza. There is much folklore about the benefits of nettles to human food and health.

RUBY MEADOWHAWK

Those medium to small very red dragonflies that we see in or about our garden at this time of year could be one of three species. The easy one, because of its white face, is the White-faced Meadowhawk. If the dragonfly has black legs, brown face, all red with black triangles on the underside of the abdomen it is probably a male Ruby Meadowhawk.



Ruby Meadowhawk, *Sympetrum rubicundulum*
resting on a leaf. Photo © Dick Harlow

This fellow has a brown face, unlike the Cherry-faced Meadowhawk that has a reddish face and basically has very similar characteristics except for the face coloration. You can see these dragonflies on vegetation, on the ground or resting on rocks; they will even land on your clothing during cool days.

This species will visit a variety of habitats, including our retention ponds, slow moving streams, marshes, even bogs, but they will be often seen in our gardens or the fields out back of Deer Meadow, a fair distance from water.

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RED ADMIRAL

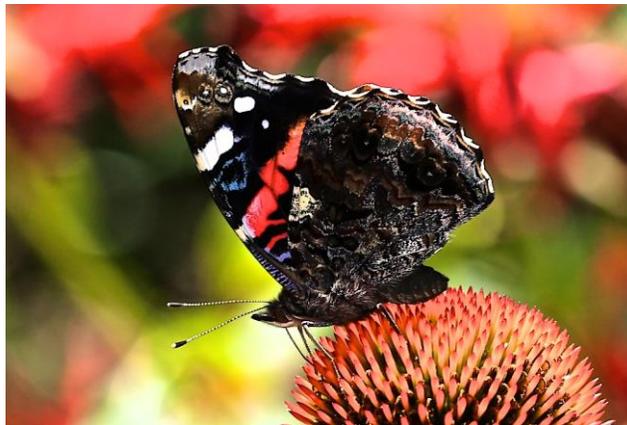
No, I'm not talking about an Admiral in the Russian Navy, but a distinctive red-barred pattern on the wings of a lively, active and fast moving butterfly. The Red Admiral, *Vanessa atalanta*, can be seen throughout the east from Florida and Georgia to all of New England. However, this fellow is also



Red Admiral, *Vanessa atalanta* resting on rock
Photo © Dick Harlow

seen from Canadian subarctic to Central American highlands and in the same type of climate in Eurasia. Those red bars on its forewing and at the end of its hindwing are very noticeable. This species is probably as common as it is because the caterpillar feeds on plants unattractive to humans such as Stinging Nettle, (*Urtica doica*), Wood Nettle, (*Laportea canadensis*), and False Nettle, (*Boehmeria cylindrica*) along moist wood edges and damp wetlands like our wet meadows.

If you recall my notes on the Monarch coloration and why the Viceroy tends to be left alone, you will notice here that red tends to cause aposematic reaction in animals. Aposematic refers to a bright color that is very conspicuous and thus results in a warning and in this case might lead to an avoidance reaction by possible predators. But, tests have shown that this butterfly is palatable, so the learned behavior of red being a warning is probably why this butterfly is so common.



Red Admiral, *Vanessa atalanta* on a Cone Flower
Photo © Dick Harlow

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DEAD CREEK WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA - ADDISON



Canada Geese, *Branta canadensis* Migrating
Photo © Dick Harlow



Corn fields at the Goose Viewing area
Photo © Dick Harlow

Only 15-20 minutes from EastView on Rt. 17 off of Rt. 22A is the **Dead Creek Wildlife Management Area** and **Goose Viewing Shelter**. A short distance beyond the goose viewing area is Dead Creek. Corn is planted in this area so that migrating geese will have food to sustain them for their journey further south. In the past there have been significant numbers of both Snow Geese and Canada Geese feeding just off of the Goose Viewing Shelter, or further in the fields beyond the viewing area.



Goose Viewing Shelter Dead Creek Wildlife Management Area. Photo © Dick Harlow

Some years ago, 2003 to be exact, there were thousands of Snow Geese in the later part of October, all around the Goose Viewing area, just a sight to behold. A few years later the masses of Snow Geese were fewer, but there was an increase in Canada Geese. There are reasons for fewer Snow Geese, but that is a story for future notes. Just know you will see Snow Geese and Canada Geese, just not 2-5 thousand that we used have at Dead Creek.

Just beyond the Goose Viewing area is a dirt road on the left immediately after crossing the Dead Creek bridge on Rt 17. This is called the **Brilyea Access**. This

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access allows you to drive or pull-over to the side and walk to view water impoundments where many different species of birds can be seen throughout the year. All along this road are opportunities to see land and water birds. Although there is hunting in the wildlife area during hunting season, there is no hunting along this access on either side of the dirt road. Drive to the end, park and walk the trails along other nearby impoundments.



No Hunting Sign Photo © Dick Harlow

If you take Rt. 17 to Jersey St., take a right at the intersection and follow Goodrich Corner Rd. to the first right; this is called **Farrell Access**, another good birding spot.

Almost any month of the year you can find birds off of the Goose Viewing area, at Brilyea, or at the Farrell Access. For example, you could find Snowy Owls here in January and February, spring migrants from March to April, nesting birds from May to July, fall shorebird migrants beginning in August through October and resident birds all year.

Don't be disheartened if you go and don't see any geese. There were 3,000 – 7,000 geese there on Oct 25th, but none when I went in the early morning of Oct. 26th. Just one of those things that is hard to predict – but I WILL go again!

Answer to last week's photo.

Black bar on the hindwing and color looking very similar to a Monarch makes this fellow a:

Viceroy



Viceroy Butterfly

Photo © Dick Harlow

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OCTOBER SIGHTINGS

Butterfly List

- Clouded Sulphur
- Cabbage White
- Monarch
- Viceroy

Dragonfly List

- Canada Darner
- Ruby Meadowhawk

None after the second week

Damselflies

No sightings

Amphibians/Reptiles

- Green Frog
- Common Toad
- Snapping Turtle (2 babies)

Note: 2nd Baby snapping Turtle turned up on the front porch of 206 Deer Meadow Drive on Oct. 22, released at Dragon's Pool on the same date. This is the second baby turtle released into Dragon's Pool in October. This suggests that the eggs were probably laid within the last two weeks of June. This raises the question – Where did the female lay her eggs? How many more made it out of the nest trying to find water? Has anyone else seen baby snapping turtles? Would people even recognize a baby turtle since they are small and dark, blending into their surroundings? A picture of a baby snapper is in the October 1-14, 2015 Nature Notes, found in the binder in EastView's foyer and on EastView's Web Page.

Mammal List

- White-tailed Deer (Doe & 2 yearlings in Deb Venman's backyard)
- Gray Squirrel
- Eastern Cottontail
- Eastern Coyote (h)
- Meadow Vole (under raised beds)
- Mouse, either White-footed or Deer Mouse (diving out of shed)

Interesting to note that summer and fall Coyote barking and howling have been more prevalent in October for the past three years.

Weather Tidbits

October 2015

All Measurements taken at solar noon (1130 EDT).

PRECIPITATION

Precipitation was: 91.0 mm or 3.6 inches.

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First Snow Shower: October 18th

Overcast Days: 13

WIND

Highest wind: 31 MPH, 29 Oct. Direction: WSW

Average Wind speed: Oct. 2015: 3.0 mph,

Dominate Wind Direction: North

Days w/wind gusts 20-29 MPH: 17

Days w/wind gusts 30 MPH or greater: 1

TEMPERATURE

Mean Temp: 10.8 C⁰ 51.4 °F

High Temp: 28.7 C⁰ 83.7 °F

Low Temp: -3.5 C⁰ 25.7 °F