

## Volunteers Needed to Monitor Karner Blue Butterflies



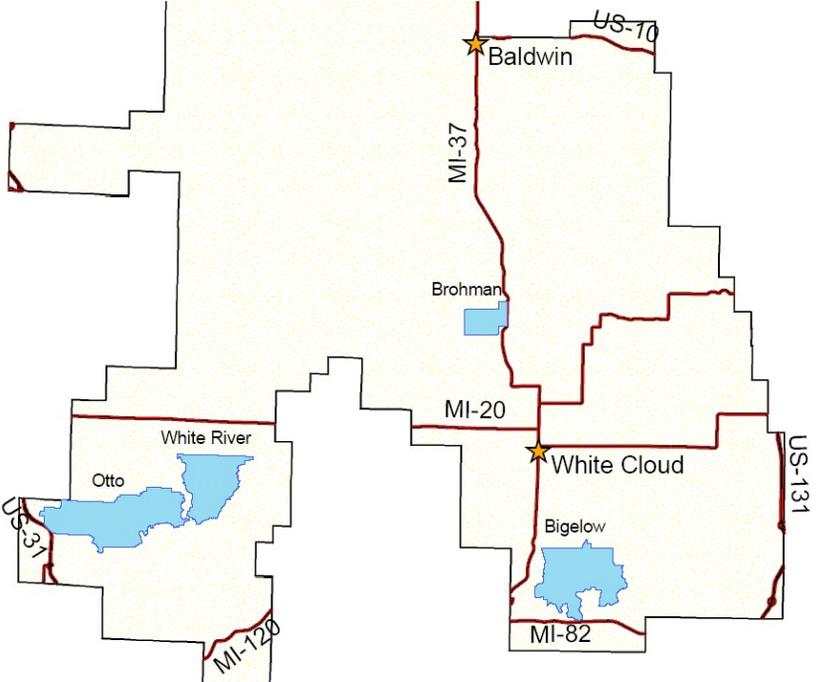
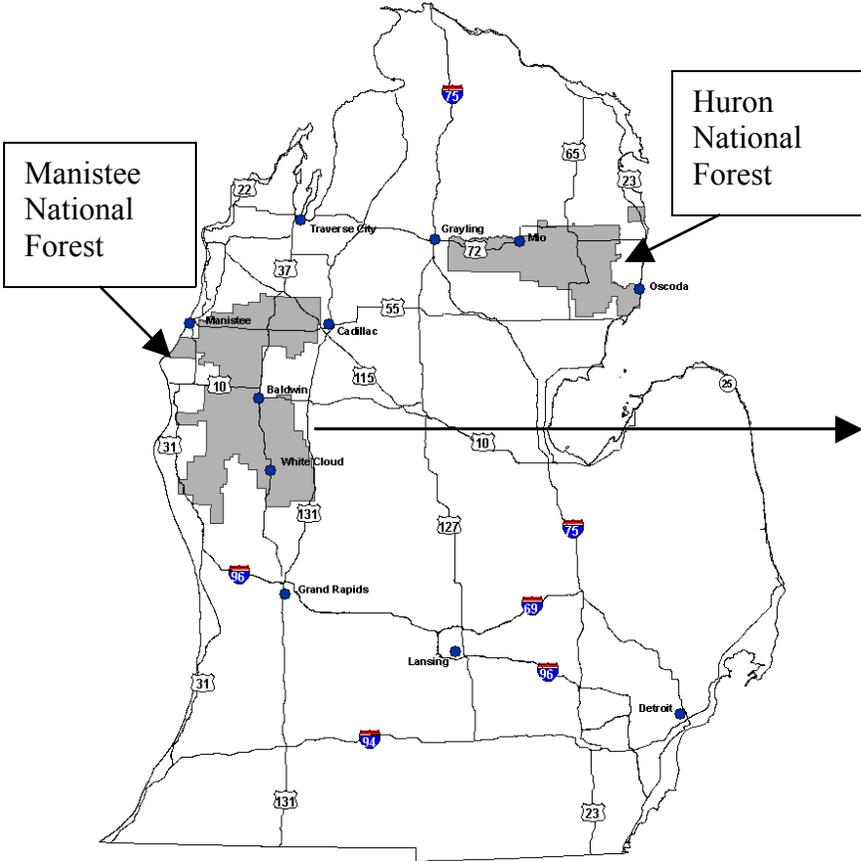
Karner Blue Butterfly (*Lycaeides melissa samuelis*)

Photos by Brett Shelagowski

The U.S. Forest Service Baldwin Ranger Station is looking for volunteers to assist in monitoring the Karner blue butterfly, a federally endangered species, within the Manistee National Forest in 2007 and beyond. In September 2003, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service issued The Final Recovery Plan for the Karner Blue Butterfly (*Lycaeides melissa samuelis*) (Lepidoptera: Lycaenidae). The Recovery Plan identified four Karner blue butterfly metapopulation areas (Otto, White River, Brohman, and Bigelow) within the Manistee portion of the Huron-Manistee National Forests in western Lower Michigan. Recovery goals were established for each of the four metapopulation areas.

The Baldwin Ranger Station is monitoring the status of these areas in regards to the Recovery Plan goals. Monitoring efforts will be focused on addressing four questions:

- 1) How many occupied Karner blue butterfly subpopulations exist within each metapopulation area;
- 2) What is the abundance of Karner blue butterflies within each subpopulation and within each metapopulation area;
- 3) How many remnant savanna/barrens sites and openings exist within each metapopulation area; and
- 4) What are the habitat characteristics of remnant savanna/barrens and openings that are occupied and unoccupied by Karner blue butterflies?



In late May to early June 2007, during the first flight of adult Karner blue butterflies, the Baldwin Ranger Station will conduct inventory surveys for savanna/barrens, openings, and sites occupied by the Karner blue butterfly. In July 2007, during the second flight of adult Karner blue butterflies, the Baldwin Ranger Station will conduct surveys to estimate Karner blue butterfly abundance within all occupied sites. Habitat surveys will also be conducted during July within (1) all sites occupied by Karner blue butterflies, (2) randomly selected sites that have been occupied previously by Karner blue butterflies but are no longer occupied, and (3) randomly selected sites for which there is no known documented occurrence of Karner blue butterflies. The presence of other indicator wildlife and plant species for savanna/barrens and openings will also be noted during all surveys.

Data collection efforts are being conducted cooperatively with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and The Nature Conservancy. Together, with these partners, standardized monitoring protocols and shared databases are being developed so Karner blue butterfly metapopulation structure and status can be analyzed over larger areas. These partners are also cooperating to conduct coordinated management activities to maximize increases in total Karner blue butterfly habitat creation and connectivity within and between different land ownerships.

Our survey effort is doubling this year and we need volunteers to achieve our monitoring goals for 2007. There are opportunities for individuals of all skill levels to participate. Interested parties can volunteer during weekdays and/or weekends, for a few days or for a week or more. Reimbursement for mileage and housing (on a first-come/first-serve basis) may be available. If you are interested in participating in the 2007 field season, please contact Dr. Heather Keough at the Baldwin Ranger Station at (231) 745-4631 x 3114 or [hkeough@fs.fed.us](mailto:hkeough@fs.fed.us).

Heather Keough, Ph.D.  
USDA Forest Service  
Huron-Manistee National Forests  
Baldwin Ranger Station  
P.O. Box Drawer D  
650 N. Michigan Ave.  
Baldwin, MI 49304  
(231) 745-4631 x 3114  
[hkeough@fs.fed.us](mailto:hkeough@fs.fed.us)