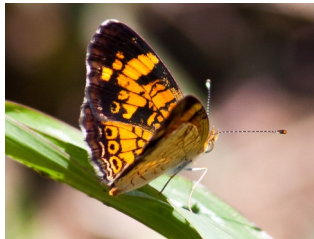


# Beyond the Butterfly Garden

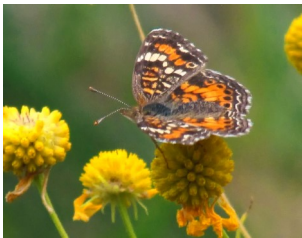
September Issue

**Butterflies can be found at Hagerman National Wildlife Refuge during any month or season, and throughout the year, visitors are encouraged to look beyond the Butterfly Garden to find them. With the shorter days and cooler temperatures, the roadways are lined with Sunflowers and Eryngo. Prairie Aster, Saw Leaf Daisy, and Frostweed are popular nectar plants now.**

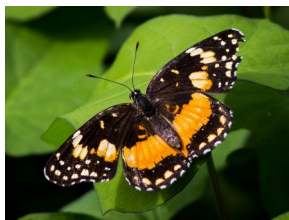
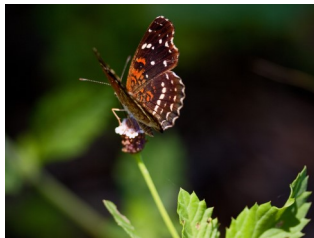
**Pearl Crescent** is one of the most common small butterflies at Hagerman NWR. It feeds on a wide variety of flowers and it can be seen in many habitats. Its larval hosts are members of the Aster family, so fall is a great time to find Pearl Crescents in all parts of the refuge.



The **Phaon Crescent** is similar in size and coloring, but can easily be distinguished by the contrasting cream or white band on the forewing. Phaon Crescent and Pearl Crescent often feed on the same nectar plants, but Phaon Crescent will lay eggs only on Frogfruit. Look for both of these on the lakeside ends of pad roads where you find spreading patches of Frogfruit.



The **Texan Crescent** is similar in size to other crescents and is in the same family, although it is much darker than its orange cousins and has a distinctive white band on its hindwing. A resident of south Texas, it regularly but infrequently strays north to the refuge. Look for it in open areas along roadsides and beside the lake, such as in the Goode Unit and Haller Haven Trail.



**Bordered Patch** is slightly larger than the crescents but is similarly shaped and belongs to the same family. The broad orange band on its hindwing and predominantly dark upper side make it easy to identify, although its coloring can be quite variable. This butterfly lays its eggs on Sunflower

and Ragweed plants, which are plentiful on the refuge in the fall. It is found feeding along with crescents regularly but infrequently, as Hagerman NWR is at the edge of its normal range.



On woodside edges or open fields, look for the **Common Wood-nymph**, a larger, brown butterfly, with prominent eye spots on its forewing. These are frequently found in the Sandy Unit between Oil Field Rd and Sandy Point Rd, or near the Goode Picnic Area. They lay their eggs on grasses in the fall. Larvae hatch but do not feed until spring. Instead, they overwinter as dormant caterpillars. Common Wood-nymphs hatch only one brood per year, but the adults are on the wing summer to fall.

In early fall, the **Pipevine Swallowtail** becomes very common on the auto tour roads, especially on Plover, where its larval host plants grow wild. Caterpillars of this species feed on noxious Pipevine plants which makes the adults unpalatable to typical butterfly predators so they are avoided. Several other butterfly species use this to their advantage, which is why most black swallowtail butterflies appear similar. Look for an iridescent blue wash on the upper hindwing of the Pipevine Swallowtail, and a single row of large orange spots edging the hindwing below.



The **White M Hairstreak** is rarely identified at Hagerman NWR but it is so similarly marked to the Gray Hairstreak that it may simply be overlooked. A single white dash on the leading edge of the forewing distinguishes it from other hairstreaks.



**Clouded Skippers** have few distinctive characteristics, being very small and overall brown with just a few small white dots on the forewing. They may be found in open areas or woodside edges feeding on flowers but are also found on grasses, basking with open wings. They are common in fall and at times may congregate to feed.

