

## Beyond the Butterfly Garden – November, 2017

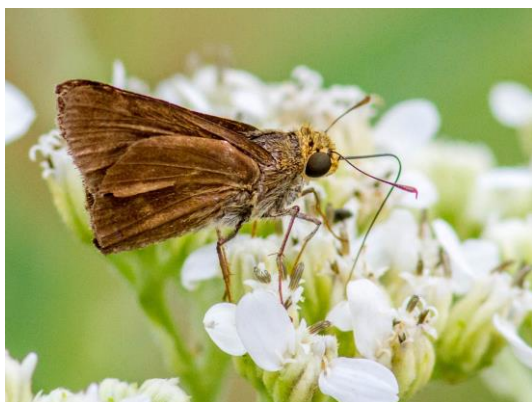
By Laurie Sheppard, Texas Master Naturalist

*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. Now that fall has arrived, butterfly migrants are moving on and each species' wintering form is preparing for the approaching cold. Some lingering adults will still be around until the first hard freeze but the season is virtually over. This month we'll look back at the new species identified on the refuge in 2017.*



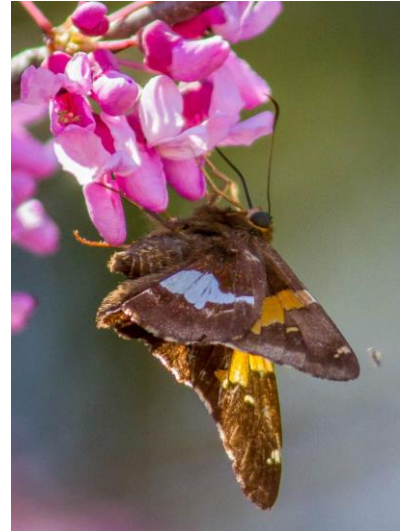
As 2017 draws to a close, 89 species of butterflies have been documented by citizen scientists in Grayson County and of those, 84 have been found and verified on the refuge. In the spring, three butterflies previously documented in the county were photographed on the refuge. Those were **Hayhurst's Scallopwing** (pictured at left), **Southern Broken-dash**, and **Dun Skipper**. The Hayhurst Scallopwing is tiny, dark, and found in or very close to wooded areas, such as near the end of Oil Field Road. They fly spring through fall, but are most easily found in spring.

The Southern Broken-dash, shown at right, and Dun Skipper are also very small and like most grass skippers, they are usually found with wings closed. The Southern Broken-dash is red-orange with a gray fringe on the forewing. The hindwing has a pale spotband which sometimes resembles the number 3. They are not common in north Texas, but may be found nectaring on late spring flowers such as Prairie Verbena.



The Dun Skipper, (left) is one of the most widespread brown skippers but typically they are found well north of the Red River. Their wings most often are kept closed and the undersides are unmarked. They usually can be distinguished from other brown skippers by their contrasting gold head.

Each spring, Redbud blooming in the woods off of Oil Field Road attracts many pollinators, including several species of butterflies. This year, the butterflies included a pair of **Silver-spotted Skippers**. This butterfly (shown at right) is common in the east, but unusual in north Texas. Although they usually perch with their wings closed, they may open them to bask in the sun. Among their larval hosts is the Honey Locust, so perhaps a new colony will establish itself at Hagerman NWR.



Another tree with attractive blooms in early spring is Eve's Necklace. Found at the edges of the woods along Oil Field Road, these trees attracted a **Bell's Roadside-skipper** (at left) on several occasions. This tiny dark skipper inhabits moist woods and streambeds in north Texas, Oklahoma, and eastern central states. They fly from spring to fall, with three broods, but are infrequently seen.

Surprisingly, before this spring the **Cabbage White** butterfly had never been documented in



Grayson County, let alone on the refuge. It is an introduced species, considered to be an agricultural pest of Cabbage, Nasturtium, and cultivated Mustards and is now common throughout the U.S. The Cabbage White is less likely to be found in natural areas but with the proliferation of Bastard Cabbage on the refuge, we may see it more often.

Several other new butterflies were found in 2017 and will be highlighted in next month's blog.