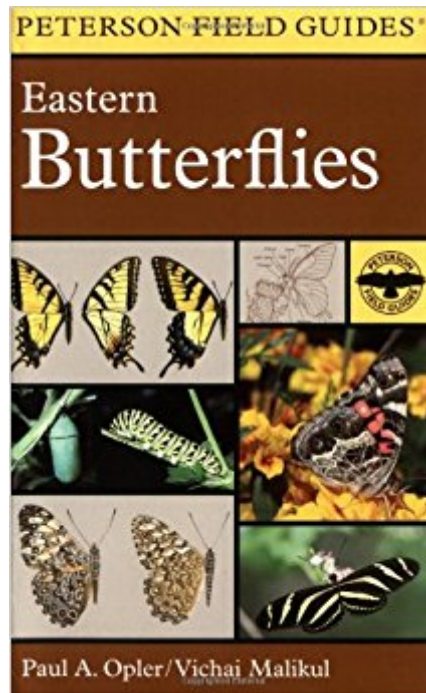




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A Field Guide To Eastern Butterflies (Peterson Field Guides)



Synopsis

This newly designed field guide features descriptions of 524 species of butterflies. One hundred color photographs as well as 348 color range maps accompany the species descriptions. The 541 exquisite color paintings clearly show even the most minute field marks. Introductory chapters include information on butterfly gardening, habitats, and conservation.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The maps in this book are a useful feature, but they are not provided for many of the species. The colour plates are very disappointing, as they often show only one gender of the butterflies and also ignore various subspecies and geographical variations. As the plates are made up drawings, it is often hard to identify species using this field guide, and the reader is left guessing as only the most common variation is shown. The text is quite well done, but more additions and details can be made. This book is hardly good as a main field guide (I greatly recommend "The butterflies of North America: a natural history and field Guide" by James A. Scott -- by far the best single-volume guide to American Butterflies), but it is useful as a pocket book that is light and does not take up much space.

As an amateur watcher just wanting to know which butterflies were in my garden, I was somewhat disappointed. I spent a great deal of time trying to compare the butterfly with the poorly represented plates. The few pictures scattered through the book were better, but I found errors in the

identification given for the picture and the identification given in the plate and one was even not listed on the page they gave (or no where I have yet to find). The range listed were difficult for me to know if this species was in my backyard and not every species had a range map. These errors I found in one whole afternoon while trying to identify only THREE butterflies in my garden. Some of the book I like, like some of the intro information, but I guess other books have this info also. I was frustrated.

For almost half a century, Klots' Guide in the Peterson series was the best general text for identifying butterflies in eastern North America. I suppose this new edition still is, but it is a real disappointment in many respects. It perpetuates the old style of illustration throughout with museum- spread specimens, many of which do not look at all the way butterflies are seen in the field. Skippers (where help is always most needed) suffer particularly from this - surely a modern guide should also show them in side view, with wings determinedly clamped together, with the useful body details and colouring and wing postures noted. Various scales are used willy nilly - it is not helpful to someone who needs a field guide to show the Great Spangled Fritillary the same size as the Meadow Fritillary, for example. Several of the species that strongly grade south to north in shade are shown in only one, southern, version - a Canadian would be hard put to recognize our Wood Nymph from the illustration here. Many species have more forms than are shown - Spring Azure for instance. Some species are much more prone to sun-bleaching than others - beginners would find a portion of an unworn Mourning Cloak wing without a trace of yellow left, for example, an instructive illustration of this.... Given the rapidly increasing popularity of butterfly watching, the market is wide open for a better field guide. This one is a desk guide, for those who still carry a cyanide bottle with them.

Unlike some other reviewers I have always liked the Peterson guides best and this is no exception. The emphasis of the book is not simply on sight identification (which can be difficult at best) but also on a rounded education about the world of butterflies. The first several chapters cover butterfly habitat, life history, behavior and other things helpful for the collector or student. The main chapters are divided by common names with each sub-heading giving both common and scientific names. The butterflies are described according to range, size, and habitat, and there is typically some discussion of the insects' identifying peculiarities. This isn't the best guide for someone wanting to identify bugs in their garden - other guides have much better and many more photos - but for the general student this is the best.

I got this from my son who needed a field guide to take to the park and forests. He loves it and so do I. Before we had borrowed our local libraries' 1950 edition of butterfly field guide. What an improvement! Unlike some people we just love it. The pictures are easy to use in the open where you can just notice a few things before what's being observed takes off flying. Opler is very good at listing the most obvious ID factors for each species. And it fits great in a back pack!

This book is acceptable. It provides helpful clues about each species as well as a measurement that can be useful. However, I have found that an entire species is missing from this book! After only a few weeks of use this tells me that there might be much missing!!! As well they sometimes only provide the upper wing pattern which is not going to help identify some skippers, blues, etc. The Kauffman guide is exponentially better when it comes to depictions, however this provides better descriptions of species like skippers that don't photograph well. The species missing is the Common Checkered Skipper.

I am using the Field Guide almost every day to figure out who is visiting the milkweed that has taken over my brick terrace. I did not use cement to seal the joints and they love to poke up between the bricks. I love butterflies and there are so few Monarchs now. So the milkweed stays and the butterflies rule. I can find another spot to rest my butt! The Field Guide is well done. Lovely colored plates that show the various markings for each butterfly. I just wish the butterflies would hold still a little longer so I can figure out if it is a Canadian Swallowtail or an Eastern Tiger or? And the Fritillaries? An Aphrodite or an Atlantis? It is a wonderful book and is already getting a steady use. I think I will use it for the rest of my life. Well done.

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