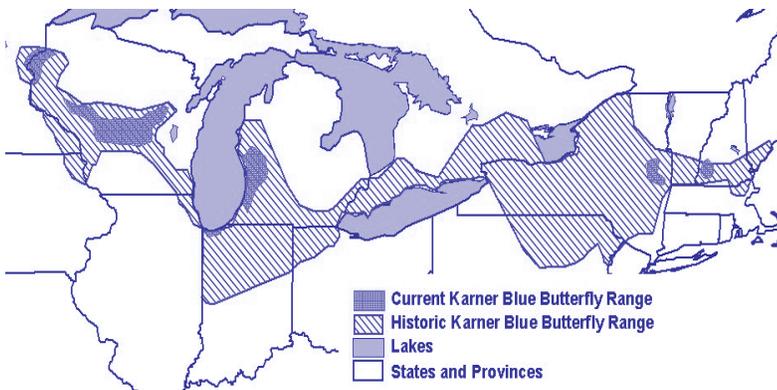




Restoring Habitat For The Karner Blue Butterfly On Private Lands In Wisconsin

Wisconsin has the largest and most widespread populations of the rare Karner blue butterfly in the world. Historically they occurred across a narrow band from eastern Minnesota to Maine.

Because Karner blue butterflies often live on private lands, Wisconsin's private landowners can play a vital role in ensuring their survival and recovery.



Female Karner blue butterfly



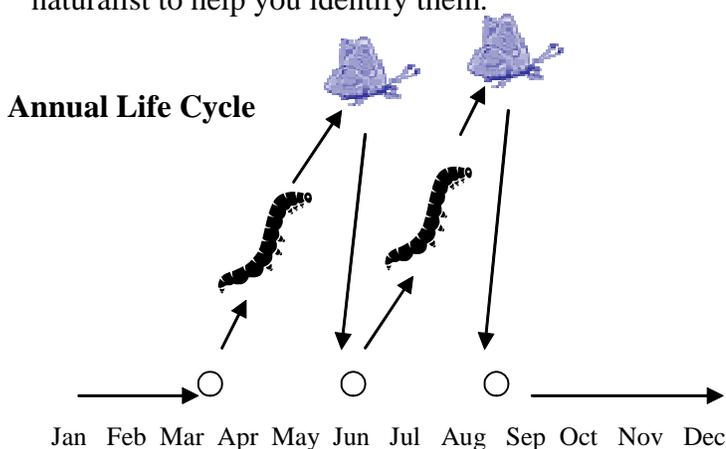
STATUS Across their range, Karner blue populations have declined 99 percent, of which 90 percent has occurred in the last twenty to twenty-five years. They are extinct in Illinois, Iowa, Ontario, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Maine. Small remnant populations remain in Minnesota, New York, and New Hampshire.

Similar to bluebirds, sharp-tailed grouse and other species, the decline in Karner blue populations is closely related to modification, destruction, and fragmentation of grassland habitat. In Wisconsin fire suppression, agriculture, and development have reduced this habitat to less than 0.02% of its pre-settlement area.

Wisconsin Karner Blue Butterfly Range



BIOLOGY The Karner blue butterfly is about the size of a postage stamp. It lives in oak savannas, pine barrens, and prairies, feeding on a variety of flowers. As a larvae, it feeds only on wild lupine, which grows in dry sandy soils in the open and partial shade. The attractiveness of the butterfly, lupine, and other nectar producing flowers encourages many landowners to restore habitat. As shown below, the Karner goes through two generations per year and most live for only about one week as a butterfly. To learn when butterflies are flying in your area call toll free 1-877-4KARNER (452-7637). The remainder of the year individuals are eggs, larvae, or pupae. There are several other small blue butterflies that resemble Karner blues. Consult a field guide or a local naturalist to help you identify them.



Karner blues are weak flyers staying very close to their home lupine patch; flying as far as one mile is rare. Therefore, it is important to maintain and restore even the smallest habitat sites to help the butterflies disperse. Habitat destruction leaves small isolated populations unable to reproduce successfully and vulnerable to local extinction.

MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES BENEFITING KARNER BLUE BUTTERFLIES INCLUDE:

- Planting wild lupine (larval host plant)
- Planting a variety of attractive nectar flowers
- Restoring oak savanna, pine barrens, and prairie habitat
- Creating corridors to connect isolated local populations of butterflies to promote dispersal
- Modifying current land management to benefit the butterfly including timing of mowing, prescribed fire, and timber harvesting
- Controlling invasive species

Helping You Conserve Wisconsin's Wildlife

Getting Started

1. Do you own property within the Karner blue butterfly range?
2. Does your property have dry sandy soils?



**Contact your local
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Office**

What happens next?

A biologist will listen to your description of and goals for your land.

Suggestions for wildlife habitat improvements will be made. If agreeable, a site visit will be scheduled.

During a site visit, plants and animals are identified and a more detailed discussion of the proposed restoration and protection usually occurs around the kitchen table.

After carefully listening to you and visiting the land, the biologist will develop a management plan to accomplish the agreed upon habitat improvements.

The biologist will continue to work with you to implement the plan, hire contractors, purchase materials, and monitor the success of the restoration.

Dollar for dollar cost share is sought on a project by project basis. Up to 100% financial assistance may be available.

Visit our Website [Http://partners.fws.gov](http://partners.fws.gov)



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