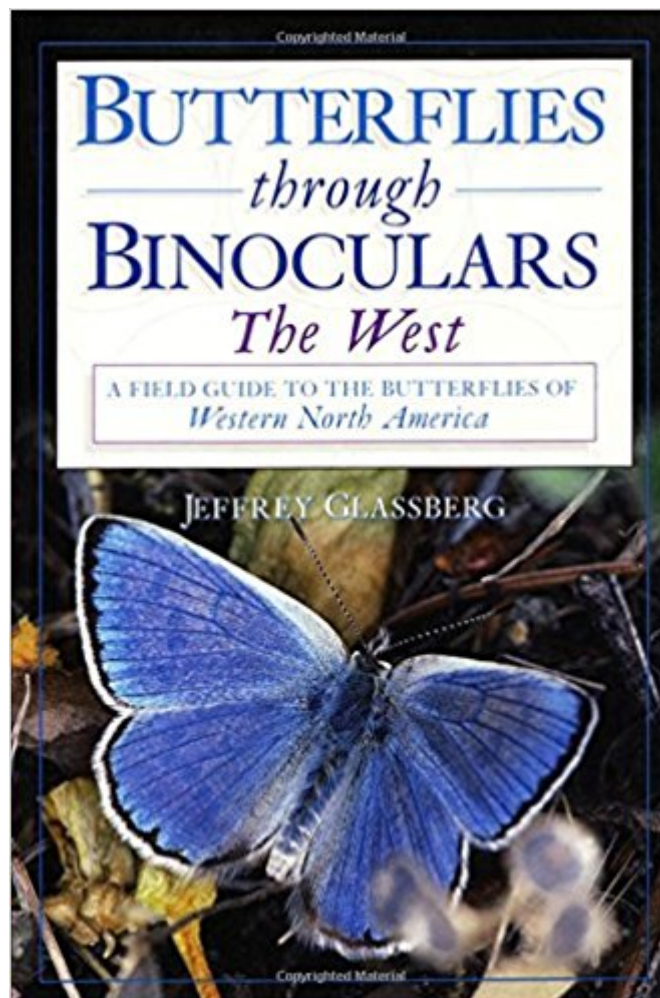




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Butterflies Through Binoculars: The West A Field Guide To The Butterflies Of Western North America



Synopsis

This field guide offers a comprehensive display of all the magnificent butterflies of the western region, stretching from the plains of middle America to the Pacific coast, and from southwestern Canada all the way to the Hawaiian islands. Jeffrey Glassberg's acclaimed *Butterflies Through Binoculars* series has essentially revolutionized the way we view butterflies. Featuring an extensive array of photographs, this new volume offers expert guidance in locating, identifying, and enjoying all the butterflies of the West. In fact, together with its companion volume *Butterflies Through Binoculars: The East*, every type of butterfly from the continental United States is described and, in most cases, photographed. As a complement to its outstanding instruction in spotting both rare and common butterfly species, the volume also includes range maps, advice on food plants, wing areas, flight times, and a host of other butterfly facts. Moreover, each stunning photograph contains identification marks, shown clearly for ease in positive identification. From butterfly biology to butterfly conservation, this useful and practical field guide provides all the necessary information to make your butterfly experience a success. Whether you are a butterfly enthusiast, a birder, a conservationist, or a nature lover in general, this guide is the ideal accompaniment to your search for western butterflies.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Books like these could open the world of butterflies to much more of the general public...Overall, I like this guide's arrangement...Binoculars supplies descriptions and, most important, scientific

names and range maps on pages that face the photographs, which saves a lot of page turning...Lastly, Butterflies Through Binoculars has a wonderful section on conservation." -- Paul R. Ehrlich, Science

"Bird watching has been popular for many years, but now it's time for butterfly watching to take the spotlight! With the help of this 'Butterflies Through Binoculars' this latest trend in nature study is made understandable through text and photographs."--Y.E.S. Quarterly

"Prayer answered! Six hundred twenty-five color photographs of butterflies in the wild! Color range maps that show where each species occurs, and when! Descriptions, punctuated with the diagnostic field marks in boldface! Timelines of peak flight abundance! And a quirky author's voice throughout that communicates Glassberg's infectious love of his subject, something that makes this more than a field guide: it's a field companion."--Bird Watcher's Digest

"The best way to find out if a nature guide is any good is to test it in the field....Our test of Butterflies through Binoculars: The West out in the laboratory of Big Bend National Park proved that it's an exceptionally useful field guide. Those who seek to know the kind of butterflies flitting over hill and dale will want to own a copy."--Gary Clark, Houston Chronicle

Dr. Jeffrey Glassberg is President of the North American Butterfly Association and editor of American Butterflies magazine.

A quick summary for anyone who doesn't want to read my ramblings. This is a great identification reference. It is intended only as an identification guide. And as that, it is excellent. But with so many butterflies described, the casual butterfly observers may want a smaller book / chart with only local species for easier lookup (perhaps in addition). First, it is important to know what this is. It is a field guide to aid in identification of butterflies and skippers, with very good photos for that end. The photos may not be artistically pleasing to everyone, but they are taken in such a way to best present the butterfly for identification. Unique identification characteristics of individual species are pointed out when they will aid in the identification. Size and geographical distribution is also given. On each photo the author also tells you how large the photo is compared to a real specimen. This is not a butterfly reference book. You will not find detailed information about the butterflies in this book. Instead, you will be able to identify what you find, and then use the name to look up more details on that butterfly in another book / the Internet. This is also not a coffee table book with large glossy photos of butterflies. Due to the sheer number of species described in the book, each photo is rather small, and as mentioned earlier, may not be artistically pleasing to everyone. Little attention is paid to the background, since that is not very important to identification. When the plant the butterfly

frequents is important to the identification, it will be mentioned in the text. The sheer number of butterflies in this guide can be overwhelming to the casual observer. I don't know if I'll ever see more than 1% to 2% of the butterflies listed here. Since the butterflies are not sorted by region, getting a less comprehensive book with local species only may be easier for the casual observer. This book stays at home, while I carry a small laminated "quick guide" to common local butterflies. I don't observe them through binoculars (the book does have a short section on that as well), I photograph them. There's a short section on butterfly photography that, while mainly focused on film photography, does contain some good tips. The only thing I have not been able to identify definitively so far with this book are skippers.

I love this book! It has real photographs! (How they captured those was truly a marvel!) The only thing: I wish it wasn't just for WESTERN butterflies. I am sure that they could do the whole country instead of just the West, as I am sure that most would overlap. I am learning to identify the ones near me... If only the maps would show where they would be nationwide, instead of stopping exactly at the Mississippi River!. Now I have to buy the Eastern book, but I live WEST. (We were east all summer, and I had that with me from AZ to FL to WV, to MD, to NJ, and back.) However, as the Whole Earth Catalog said on the back cover, "This is the best butterfly book available". Just wish they combined the Eastern book and the Western book, and clarify the butterflies on the US maps located on each picture. That would have been much better and practical when traveling. I would have gladly paid more to get the combination book!

A while back I wrote a review of the Peterson Series "Field Guide to Western Butterflies", which I had used in the field during the 4th of July Butterfly Count in the Organ Mountains of New Mexico. I gave it five stars as I thought it the best field guide to actually use in the field. The rival Audubon guide to butterflies left me cold because it simply does not show enough detail for identifying hard species. I thus dismissed photo guides because of this bad experience, thinking that artists did better work in illustrating these beautiful insects. I was wrong! There is a way to produce a photo guide to butterflies that actually works and Jeffrey Glassberg has done it! This is the best field guide that I have ever seen for butterflies. The photos, mostly taken by the author, are simply superb! The best thing that Glassberg has done is to standardize the photos so you can compare the same characters. This is a major innovation and must certainly have taken a lot of time. The placing of maps and descriptions opposite the photographic plates is also a major change from the other popular guides. It sure saves a lot of page flipping! I am often laughed at because I still use a 35 mm

SLR for photographing insects, but Glassberg's photos (all with a 35 mm SLR) show why it still may pay. Digitals are, I know, the coming thing and will soon overtake SLRs, but most digitals still cannot match an old Nikon FM2n with a 55 mm macro or an Olympus with a 90 mm macro, both of which I use. Glassberg's remarks about how much space digital shots take up (5 MB roughly for a decent high resolution) are probably dated because of gigabyte technology which allows as much as 200 shots at a time, even at high resolution. However, I still like the feel of a SLR and many digitals (but not the more expensive ones) are boxy and difficult to hold. I get irritated with the automatic focus that often keeps me from getting the shot of an easily disturbed subject. Those aside; if you are at all interested in butterflies and can afford only one book, get this guide! It is the new standard for photo guides and it will be hard to ever beat it.

Having just purchased "Butterfly Photographer's Handbook" and finding it a bad choice, I ended up posting a two-star review and recommending this book instead. I can only agree 100 percent with the other positive remarks I see here: I haven't found a better source for identification help. I also work with native plant IDs, and photos are not good for that because there's too much confusing detail; I expected illustrated butterfly books to also be the better way. Totally wrong! Kaufman is a good general work, and Peterson's is less wonderful. Glassberg is the one you want.

Spectacular, use it all the time to identify and learn about species (I am a butterfly photographer)

No question this is a great guide. When I picked up my used copy on , it said list price \$55. When I got the book it had a retail price on the cover of \$19.95. I guess prices have changed but it would be nice to know if the new copies have been revised, etc.

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