Easy, Medium, and Difficult Butterfly IDs

Colorado Butterfly Monitoring Network



Easy

Cabbage White





- Black dot on forewing (one on males, two on females)
 - Black marking on apex of forewings

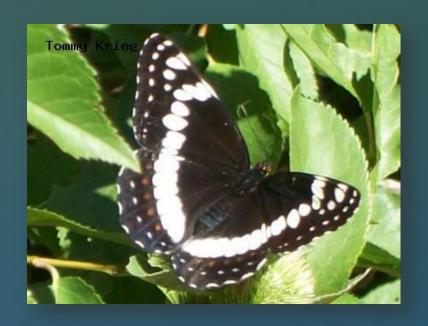
Mourning Cloak





- Beige border above on outer margins of wings with blue spots on the inner border brown in color
- Below, blackish brown with pale border around margins

Weidemeyer's Admiral





- Black with white band on both wings above
- White spots near forewing tips

Monarch





- Prominent black veins
- Two rows of white dots along wing margins
- Wingspan: 3 3/8 to 4 3/8in

Viceroy





- Black line across hind wing
- Single row of white dots along margins
- Wingspan: 2.5 to 3 3/8 in

Medium

Painted Lady





American Lady





Red Admiral





Pearl Crescent





Silvery Checkerspot





Clouded Sulphur







• When wings are closed, clouded and orange sulphurs look very similar

Orange Sulphur





Source: BAMONA

• When wings are closed, clouded and orange sulphurs look very similar

Difficult

Western White vs Checkered White



Western White (Source: Robert Weeden, BAMONA)



Checkered White female

- Western Whites and female Checkered Whites look almost identical
- Western Whites have heavy yellow-green veins below wings and checkered whites have yellow-brown veins
- Western Whites will typically also have darker, black patterns above on forewings, compared to lighter, gray-black pattern on checkered whites

Blues

• From above, all blues can look nearly identical – IDs can mostly only be confirmed by observing underneath the wing



Arrowhead Blue



Reakirt's Blue



Boisduval's Blue



Spring (Echo) Azure



Silvery Blue



Melissa Blue



Rocky Mountain Dotted Blue



Lupine Blue

Fritillaries

 Like Blues, Fritillaries are also nearly identical above the wing. Looking at markings below the wings can make identification easier.



Variegated Fritillary – will have no silvered spots on hindwing below



Edward's Fritillary – gray – green wings below with metallic silver spots



Aphrodite Fritillary – spots below will always be silvered



Northwestern Fritillary – spots can be silvered or unsilvered

Spread-wing Skippers



Grizzled Skipper



Two-Banded Checkered Skipper



Common – Checkered Skipper

Spread-wing Skippers Cont'd



Persius Duskywing



Dreamy Duskywing



Afranius Duskywing

Grass Skippers







Woodland Skipper

Taxiles Skipper



Western Branded Skipper

Resources for Identification

- 1. "Butterflies of the Colorado Front Range: A Photographic Guide to 100 Species (2nd Edition)" by Janet R. Chu & Stephen R. Jones
- 2. Colorado Front Range Butterflies http://coloradofrontrangebutterflies.com/
- 3. Butterflies and Moths of North America (BAMONA) http://butterfliesandmoths.org
- 4. iNaturalist https://www.inaturalist.org/