



**BUTTERFLY  
PAVILION**

## **Colorado Butterfly Monitoring Network Survey Protocol**

Last updated on June 12, 2024

The Colorado Butterfly monitoring Network follows a modified Pollard Walk protocol. Volunteer monitors walking the same route at least three times throughout the Butterfly Monitoring Season (May 15<sup>th</sup> – September 15<sup>th</sup>) and recording every butterfly seen in a six-meter radius (see Figure 1). Butterfly surveys occurring outside of the official season will be noted as “pre-season” or “post-season” by program leaders.

During a survey, only one monitor observes butterflies at a time, however, monitors are encouraged to work in pairs. This will allow one monitor to conduct the survey while the other keeps notes and assists with animal identifications.

At the beginning and end of each monitoring session, monitors will record;

**Time**

**Temperature**

**Cloud coverage conditions** (i.e. clear, mostly clear, partly cloudy, mostly cloudy, overcast)

**Wind conditions** (i.e. calm, relatively still, moderately windy, windy, very windy)

The monitors will then walk the route at a steady pace, recording every butterfly seen inside their six-meter “bubble”. Any pause in observation longer than three minutes will be recorded as a break.

If an unknown butterfly is seen, monitors are encouraged to identify the butterfly as much as they are able to, but not more than they are confidently able to. A butterfly identification of “Unknown Butterfly” or “Unknown Swallowtail” is much more preferable to an incorrect identification.

If monitors manage to take a photo of the butterfly, they are able to email that photo to a program leader for assistance in identification. A photo can also be submitted by monitors to the [Colorado Butterfly Monitoring Network \(CBMN\) · iNaturalist](#) . If no butterflies are observed during the survey, monitors will still report the results into PollardBase as “No Observations to Report During Survey”.

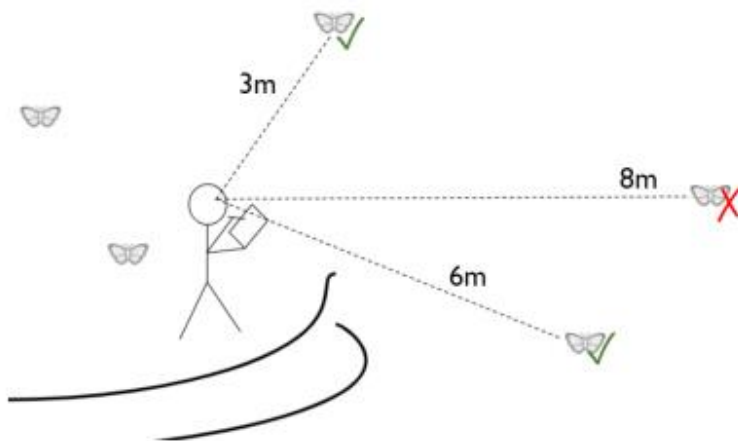


Figure 1: Image from 2021 CBMN Monitor training illustrating the modified Pollard Walk protocol used by CBMN monitors

Monitors are encouraged to use the provided field form to record collected data. The field form is available in two versions, one is a pre-filled form with common species of the Colorado Front Range (where most program routes are concentrated) and the other is a blank field form, allowing monitors to fill in species as they are observed and identified.

[CBMN FIELD FORM](#)

[CBMN BLANK FIELD FORM](#)

Please reach out via email to [cbmn@butterflies.org](mailto:cbmn@butterflies.org) with any questions.