

Delmarva Tip Butterfly Count 2025

By Adrienna Frank



Volunteers from the Delmarva Tip Count with representation from the Eastern Shore, Middle Peninsula and Williamsburg area.

The Delmarva Tip Butterfly Count was held on July 27, 2025. In its 26th year, there were 17 participants, and the majority of those participants drove to the National Wildlife Refuge from the Virginia Peninsula or the Middle Peninsula. The count started at 10 a.m. and the last group ended the day at 4:30 pm.

The group divided into four sectors: the National Wildlife Refuge, Kiptopeke State Park, Seaside Road and Oyster. It was hot and very dry. For at least one sector, Kiptopeke State Park, the count was low due to the parched earth. The number of individual

butterflies in the park was one-quarter of the count for the previous year.

A total of 31 butterfly species were identified, with 693 individuals counted. The species was fairly consistent with recent years, but the number of individuals was lower. This was the lowest count since 2001. Over the years, the butterfly counts have dropped nationwide. A five-year average calculated in 2020 for the Delmarva was 43 species and over 2,000 individuals.

Individual species vary from year to year. In 2025, the most frequently sighted butterfly was the Silver-spotted Skipper. The highest number of any individual species recorded from any year was Broadwing Skippers, with 25 recorded. There were species that have been typically found in other years, but not this year. Those included Cloudless Sulphur, Gray Hairstreak, Red-banded Hairstreak, Question Mark and Little Glassywing.



Broadwing Skipper, the highest number of individuals recorded from the 2026 count.