

GRAB BAG

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Wild SIDE

Papilio zelicaon

Anise swallowtail

By LYNETTE RAE MCADAMS

Common throughout the western regions of North America, the anise swallowtail butterfly enjoys lots of open space and is usually spotted near fields, sparse hillsides, wide country roads, or sizable backyard gardens. Mostly yellow, and spanning about three inches wide, this

colorful flier has broad bands of black edging on both sets of wings, with magnificent blue spotting on the hind set and two red “eyes” near the insect’s characteristic “tails.”

Like all butterflies (there are 20,000 species), this swallowtail (one of 550 in the swallowtail family), has a life cycle that has captivated humankind since the earliest times. In the first stage, eggs are laid singly on the undersides of plants, secured with a glue-like substance secreted by the female.

Host plants are chosen for their suitability to provide

FINDING THE FLOWERS OF THEIR CHOICE IS EASY: THEIR EYES ARE MADE UP OF MORE THAN 6,000 LENSES.



PHOTO BY LYNETTE RAE MCADAMS

An anise swallowtail butterfly, *Papilio zelicaon*, rests on a plant on Washington’s Long Beach Peninsula.

food when eggs hatch; here on the coast, swallowtails are partial to wild fennel (hence the “anise” name) and cow parsnip.

The tiny caterpillar that emerges from an egg begins to eat and grow immediately. Over the course of five to 10 days, it will increase in size so rapidly that it must shed its skin repeatedly, revealing a different look at every turn. After the fourth shedding, it seeks out a safe place — usually a leaf or twig — and attaches itself with home-spun silk, shedding its outer layer a final time to uncover a tough, case-like skin called a chrysalis.

Inside the living chrysalis, all the tissues of the caterpillar are fully liquified, then biologically recycled into the final phase of life: a fully grown, winged adult butterfly.

Anise swallowtail butterflies eat only liquids, consuming flower nectar and, occasionally, water from mud puddles rich in minerals. To eat, they unfurl a long tubelike structure, called a proboscis, that works like a straw to draw liquids upward. Finding the flowers of their choice is easy: Their eyes are made up of more than 6,000 lenses, and they can even detect color in the ultraviolet spectrum, a realm invisible to humans.

Famous for its color, *P. zelicaon*’s wings are actually clear or translucent; the striking patterns and brilliant hues we see are made by the reflection of millions of tiny scales that cover the wings and rub off like dust. Using its wings as solar panels, this butterfly heats its body to the necessary 85 degrees required for flight and is known to reach speeds up to 10 mph.

Though you don’t see it often, a group of butterflies is called a “flutter.”

Antlers taken by Hunter S. Thompson return to Ernest Hemingway home

By KEITH RIDLER
ASSOCIATED PRESS

BOISE, Idaho (AP) — Gonzo journalist Hunter S. Thompson went to Idaho to write about literary icon Ernest Hemingway and decided to take a piece of his hero home with him — a set of trophy elk antlers.

More than half a century later, the antlers have been returned.

“One of the stories that has often been told over the years is the story of Hunter S. Thompson taking the antlers,” said Jenny Emery Davidson of Ketchum Community Library. “These are two great literary figures who came together over the item of the antlers.”

Davidson was there on Aug. 5 when Thompson’s widow, Anita Thompson, gave back the antlers she says her husband regretted taking. Hemingway’s house in Ketchum is owned by The Nature Conservancy, which has an agreement with the library to help catalog and preserve items in the residence where the author took his life.

In 1964, Hunter Thompson, then 27, came to Ketchum when he was still a conventional journalist. He had not yet developed his signature style, dubbed gonzo journalism, that involved inserting himself, often outrageously, into his reporting and that propelled him into a larger-than-life figure.

Thompson was writing a story for the National Observer about why the globe-trotting Hemingway shot and killed himself at his mountain-town home three years earlier at age 61. Thompson attributed the suicide in part to rapid changes in the world that led to upheavals in places Heming-



CHRISTINA JENSEN/THE COMMUNITY LIBRARY VIA AP

Anita Thompson, Assistant Regional History Librarian for The Community Library, left, is joined by Library Executive Director Jenny Emery Davidson, middle, and Program Manager Scott Burton as they pose with trophy antlers while returning them to the former home of writer Ernest Hemingway.

way loved most — Africa and Cuba.

Even Ketchum, which in the 1930s and 1940s attracted luminaries such as Gary Cooper, had fallen off the map of cafe society by the late 1950s, Thompson wrote.

In the story, later collected in his book “The Great Shark Hunt,” he noted the problem of tourists taking chunks of earth from around Hemingway’s grave as souvenirs. Thompson aimed higher.

Early in the piece, he writes about the large elk antlers over Hemingway’s front door but never mentions taking them.

For decades, the antlers hung in a garage at Thompson’s home near Aspen, Colorado.

Davidson said they made their way back to Idaho after historian Douglas Brinkley, who spoke at the library in May and was familiar with the antler story after interviewing the writer, contacted Anita

Thompson. She called the library on Aug. 1.

“She gave a little background about the antlers and said she’d love to return them,” Davidson said.

They have since been shipped to a Hemingway grandson in New York who wanted them, she said. It’s not clear if the antlers came from an elk killed by the author, who was a noted big game hunter, or if they were a gift.

Anita Thompson and Sean Hemingway didn’t respond to emails or phone messages seeking comment from The Associated Press.

Not long after the visit to Hemingway’s house, Thompson developed the journalism style that took him into the dangerous world of the Hells Angels motorcycle gang and would make him famous.

Like Hemingway, Thompson ended his own life by shooting himself, dying in 2005 at age 67 at his Colorado home.