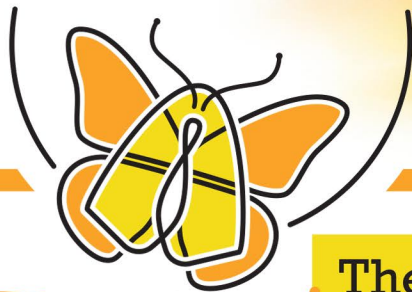


# MISSOULA BUTTERFLY HOUSE & INSECTARIUM



## NEWS



### The Buzz Strength and Creativity

By Jen Marangelo, Executive Director

#### Winter 2020 INSIDE...

- What's Buzzin' Review
- Accessible Education Project
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#### Our Mission

The Missoula Butterfly House and Insectarium inspires an appreciation and understanding of insects and their relatives.

#### Missing our Bugs?

We've got you covered. Check out our website for our *Online Bug Encounters* and other entertaining and educational resources including *Notes from the Lab*, our *Bug Bytes* podcast, and more at [missoulabutterflyhouse.org](http://missoulabutterflyhouse.org).



Running Crab Spider (Philodromidae)

I would never have guessed what the year ahead would end up being like when I wrote this piece for our Winter 2019 newsletter last year. As you might remember, the title was *Year of Change, Year of Opportunity*. While I certainly got the “change” prediction right ...in a number of ways I also got the “opportunity” part right too.

There's no doubt we'll all be glad to flip the calendar to January 2021 in a few weeks. However, dealing with the challenges we've all faced, just like overcoming any challenge in life, provides valuable learning opportunities. It ultimately makes us stronger. That being the case, I think we're all a bit stronger right now, even if you don't feel like it.

For the Missoula Butterfly House and Insectarium, we were already facing a year of significant change with 2020 being our first full year of operations without a visitation destination. The need to switch to online and distanced programming just made the gears of change turn a bit faster.

But through it all, we've grown stronger these past months – adding new tools to our education toolbox and working with a growing number of partners to deliver our

unique programs in new ways. We've taken the opportunity to focus on a long-term objective of engaging in citizen science projects with the intent of providing students and volunteers with the opportunity to collect real data contributing to real-world scientific research. With these and other changes taking place, the success we've seen this year has had a lot to do with creativity, adaptability, and flexibility.

At the same time, our efforts to open a new, larger facility featuring a tropical butterfly house are charging ahead. I'm thrilled to report we're making continuous and significant progress toward realizing the dream that started our organization more than a decade ago. With our plans steadily moving forward, we hope to break ground in the spring!

I hope your navigation through the challenges of the past months have gone smoothly and that you are starting to look back upon the past year from a position of increased strength and resilience. 2021 will certainly have its share of hurdles, but after this past year ... we've got this.

Best wishes for a happy, safe, and healthy holiday season. 🦋



# What's Buzzin' Review



Arctic Blue Butterfly (*Plebejus glandon*)

Some ideas and projects begin in strange ways. For us, the idea for our What's Buzzin' report began with the receipt of a package containing a deceased giant water bug with a letter asking, "What is this?" Your average person (or more accurately, almost all people) would be taken aback by opening a package to find a dead bug inside. We, on the other hand, excitedly replied to the sender regarding what they had found. While receiving dead bugs in the mail is not common (even for us), a similar scene began playing out on a weekly basis over email and social media as more and more people submitted photos of various creepy crawlies they had found. The idea for What's Buzzin' was born.

For the past six years our weekly What's Buzzin' report has featured insects and other arthropods you might currently find crawling and

flying around Montana. It's captured the attention of inquisitive observers throughout western Montana and across the state. Each year the audience, and the number of submissions, has steadily grown. From a mere 42 photos (mostly taken by our staff) in 2015 to sharing 320 photos submitted by 87 different individuals showcasing 242 different species in 2020, we've established ourselves as a local insect identification hub.

Not only has this seasonal report proven to be popular, it's been an extraordinary learning opportunity for us too. While we've seen and identified a lot of species over the past six years, by no means do we know everything you might find across our region by sight. Compiling this report requires a good bit of research, giving us the opportunity to learn and share something new each week.

With all of the photos we've accumulated and the identification work largely done, we've got the framework for an incredible guide to the insects of western MT ...but that's an idea, and a project, for another day.

Our thanks to everyone who submitted photos this year and to all of our enthusiastic What's Buzzin' followers. 🐛



Click Beetle (*Danosoma brevicornis*)

## Welcome Lisa Carter



It may not always be the position that gets the spotlight. The work largely deals with what's happening behind the scenes. But strong administration within any organization is the glue that keeps everything together and working smoothly.

That's why we are so thrilled to welcome Lisa Carter as our Administrative Assistant. With a wealth of experience in nonprofit administration, Lisa will add a stronger focus to our operations while freeing the time of other staff to focus on our growing education efforts and our fundraising and planning for our new facility. It's a critical addition to our staff that's long overdue. Welcome Lisa!



# Accessible Education Project



When we started this organization over a decade ago, one of our unspoken goals was to be a “good neighbor” – to be an available and accessible part of our community. Meeting this goal was easy in those early days as nearly all of our programs and events were free of charge. However, when we opened the Missoula Insectarium admissions income and program fees became an important part of our operating budget.

While the fees we've charged for admissions, field trips, and programs are comparable to those of other education organizations, when your budget is tight ...your budget is tight. There's not much wiggle room. That's why we launched our Accessible Education Project shortly after opening the Missoula Insectarium, providing field trip scholarships for low-income / Title 1 schools, free admission days, summer camp scholarships, free programs and memberships to organizations serving disadvantaged children and families, and free admission for families utilizing SNAP benefits as part of the national Museums for All Program.

And while we don't currently have a destination for visitation, this project remains strong with school field trip scholarships and a variety of online education opportunities. As we draw nearer to breaking ground on our new facility, rest assured this project will continue to be an important part of our organization now and in the future.

A big THANK YOU to the Dennis & Phyllis Washington Foundation for their generous support that's literally been the foundation of this program since its inception. And THANK YOU to the Jane S. Heman Foundation for becoming our newest partner in this project by enabling us to expand the reach of this program into Mineral and Ravalli Counties. To say we've had an enthusiastic response so far is an understatement. 🐛

## Staff Favorites



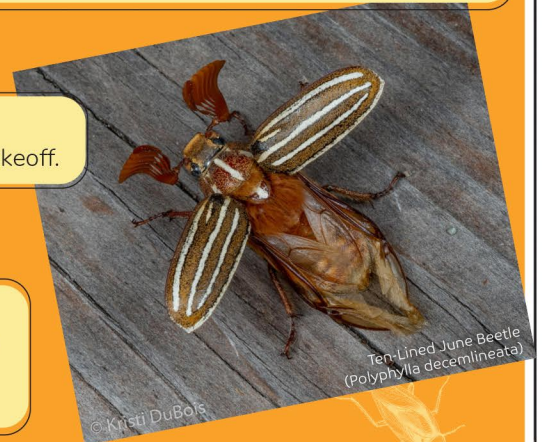
### Carolyn - Favorite question from a field trip:

During a Pre-K program, we were meeting different arthropods and counting their legs to help us identify them. One little boy interrupted to very seriously add that, "Dragons have four legs." Indeed they do.



### Karen - Favorite What's Buzzin' photo of 2020:

I really like Kristi Dubois' photo of a ten-lined june beetle poised for takeoff.



### Glenn - Favorite local insect sighting:

Having my first sighting of a Jagged Ambush Bug (a pair of them) during a socially distanced “Bug Walk” with a group of kids this summer. While the kids thought it was cool, I was by far the most excited.



### Brenna - Favorite animal in our collection:

I'd say my favorite critter (for now, because it changes constantly) has to be the tailless whip scorpions! Their speed can be a little alarming but they're really very gentle.



### Jen - Favorite reaction:

The number of people waving, when I drive our BugMobile, is a strong reminder of the impact we've had on our community and the enthusiasm that exists for our vision.



### Lisa - Favorite insect:

I love bees, especially bumblebees!



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Missoula Butterfly House &  
Insectarium

## MISSOULA BUTTERFLY HOUSE & INSECTARIUM STAFF

Jen Marangelo  
Executive Director

Brenna Shea  
Lead Animal Keeper

Carolyn Taber  
Museum Educator

Lisa Carter  
Administrative Assistant

Glenn Marangelo  
Development Director

Sam McFarland  
Animal Care Intern

Karen Weaver  
Interpretive Content Creator

Summer 2020





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## It's That Giving Time of Year!

Thanks to the dedication and support of friends like you, we head into the New Year with our education efforts in high gear and our fundraising efforts for our new facility charging ahead toward a spring 2021 groundbreaking. Ranging from donations that are important in supporting our programs and operations to opportunities to make a significant impact in our capital campaign, your support is critical to our success in the year ahead. Please consider making a donation today! Online at [www.missoulabutterflyhouse.org](http://www.missoulabutterflyhouse.org).

If you have questions about our programs, making a donation of stock, or considering a gift to our capital campaign, please contact Glenn at 406-317-1211 or [glenn@missoulabutterflyhouse.org](mailto:glenn@missoulabutterflyhouse.org).

Western Eyed Click Beetle (*Alaus melanops*)



### Missoula Butterfly House and Insectarium Board of Directors

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