

Mariposa Road: The First Big Butterfly Year by Robert Michael Pyle.
Yale University Press 2013.

Obsessive birders are called 'twitchers' and obsessive butterfly collectors are called...lepidopterists! Mariposa Road is the lepidopterist's equivalent of a road movie, as Robert Michael Pyle, teacher, writer and life-long naturalist sets out to see and identify as many species of North American butterflies as he can, inspired by a birder friend, the superbly named Benton Basham, who identified 700 avian species in one year.

As Pyle crosses the States he unfolds a great natural story to his reader; the butterflies may be the *raison d'être* of the book but this is also a panoramic view of the richness of America's flora and fauna.

The book is divided into fourteen sections (rays), each then subdivided for a butterfly, ranging between two and nineteen per sections. These sub-sections are superb vignettes and build into a memorable whole.

At the end of the book Pyle reflects on his journey and the 478 certified Lepidoptera that he saw and recorded, he also muses on what he might have done differently and what he might do in the future.

Mariposa Road is a book for those who love the natural world as well as those who enjoy a good yarn, exceedingly well told, which also happens to be true!

Rabbi Dr Charles H Middleburgh