

Often, my yard is aflutter with butterflies, multicolored, iridescent floaters.

As I headed to the front door from the car, a Pipevine Swallowtail let go of a purple flower and floated out in front of me, weightless.

As if in a choreographed dance, another Pipevine floated out in front of me. The two noticed each other and sped to meet in the middle, which was right in front of me, not more than two feet from my face.

The two black butterflies, overlaid with deep iridescent electric blue, challenged each other and fell into an amazing swirl right before my eyes.

Perhaps it was a male and female, I don't know, but the dance was beautiful.

They swirled directly in front of me as I walked to the front door, a butterfly whirlwind. Round and round and round the flapping jewels spun. I chuckled at the marvel before my eyes. How can I be so fortunate to see such marvels so often?

Notes: The pipevine plant is an aristolochia and the flowers of that genus look like Dutchman's pipes or Dutchman's pipes look like those flowers. The caterpillars of the pipevine swallowtail feed on the vine, which makes them toxic, like other butterflies that eat toxic milkweed.

The caterpillars are bright orange as a warning to predators. My yard is festooned with pipevines, which are native here. They are beautiful plants. I have tried to take photos of those butterflies before and have much difficulty as they flit about constantly. I will try again.

The pipevine butterfly swallowtail would not sit still for a photo. Eventually, a common buckeye butterfly, tiring of watching the photographer wear herself out with no good result, volunteered to stand in for the



pipevine swallowtail photograph. "I'm prettier, anyway," the buckeye (disdaining the "common" part of its name) said, and the photographer got a good picture and went back inside for a well-earned rest.