

Butterflies

of Southern 8ths
Preserve



CHESTERFIELD, SOUTH CAROLINA



Made possible by The Carolina Butterfly Society
and The Carolina Wildlands Foundation

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND CREDITS

*Carolina
Butterfly Society*



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Thread Communications



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Butterflies of Southern 8ths, Chesterfield, SC.

Austin, T.; Kastner, D.; Kastner, M.; Demko, J.; Smith, A.; Wietecha, S.; Tedeschi, L.

BUTTERFLIES: DID YOU KNOW?

Butterflies are beautiful, there's no denying that! They have captivated the hearts and minds of humankind for millennia. Their bright, dazzling colors and chaotic flight patterns just scream, "**Look at me!**" Butterflies are everywhere, from meadows to marshes to mountains to parking lots and lawns. To enjoy them, just open your eyes. No fancy equipment needed. Read on and you'll never ignore a butterfly again!

Butterfly vs. Moth

- Butterflies and moths belong to the same insect order, *Lepidoptera*. It is second only to beetles as the largest order of animals on Earth.
- Worldwide, there are about 17,500 species of butterflies. There are over 800 species of butterflies in the United States, around 180 in the Carolinas, and 56 butterflies have been seen at the Southern 8ths Preserve to date.
- Butterflies and moths are related and share many similarities. The big difference is that butterflies fly during the day, and most moths fly at night.
- Since butterflies fly in daylight, many have bright colors and bold patterns.
- Most butterflies are attracted to colorful flowers to drink their nectar.
- All butterflies have good eyesight, which helps them find other butterflies and flowers. They can even see ultraviolet light and perceive patterns on flowers that are invisible to humans!

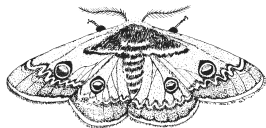


BUTTERFLY

Often boldly patterned & bright colored

Antennae slender with a club tip

When resting, holds wings
forward or folded



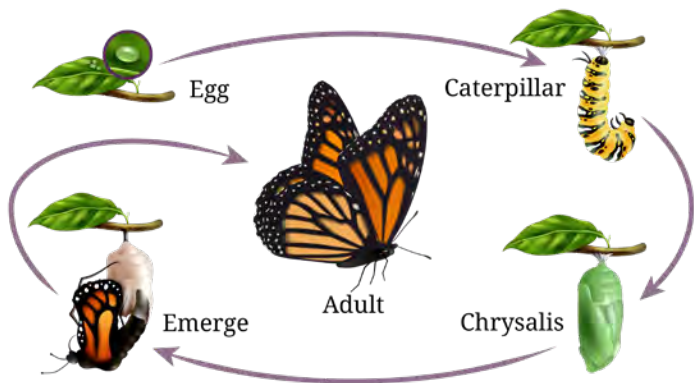
MOTH

Often camouflaged with earth tones

Antennae are thread-like or feathery

When resting, holds wings
downward and open

FROM EATING MACHINE TO FLYING MARVEL



Butterflies have a four-stage lifecycle: egg, caterpillar, chrysalis, and adult.

It usually takes 1-2 months for a butterfly to complete its lifecycle

1. Butterflies lay their **eggs** on plants. Butterfly eggs are tiny, ranging from as large as a mustard seed to as small as a grain of sand!
2. From a butterfly egg hatches a worm-like **caterpillar**. Caterpillars are literal eating machines. From the day they hatch, all they do is eat plants and grow. The caterpillar stage generally lasts 1-3 weeks. In that time some caterpillars can grow 10x their original length and 20x their weight. That's like a dog growing to the size of a cow, in just two weeks!
3. Once a caterpillar grows big enough, it glues itself to a branch and turns into a **chrysalis**. There it will sit, motionless, generally for 1-2 weeks, but sometimes months. During this time it undergoes metamorphosis. Its body basically dissolves into soup, preserving most of its brain, some nerves, and a few organs.
4. Right after an **adult butterfly** emerges from the chrysalis its wings are folded and need to be pumped up with hemolymph (insect blood) and dried before it can fly. Yet within a few hours it is flying, pollinating, and looking for a mate.

Most adult butterflies live for just a few weeks to a month, if they emerge during the spring and summer. But when fall rolls around, the adults of some species respond by living longer. Over-wintering butterflies often live for over 6 months.

WORLDLY WANDERERS

Most butterfly species don't roam far from home and stay in their "hometown." They travel no more than a few miles in their lifetime.

Other butterfly species will travel hundreds of miles in search of available habitat. Many of these species that arrive in the Carolinas are one-way migrants from the tropics. They don't make a return journey but may sometimes survive a mild winter.



Image Credit: Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc

A select few butterflies, like the Monarch, make a return journey. Every spring, adult butterflies fly north from the tropics, lay eggs in a new land, then perish. Their children do the same and each generation moves hundreds of miles north. When temperatures begin to cool before fall, the next generation of butterflies takes notice and hurries south. In half-a-year these insects, which weigh as much as a single pinto bean, can fly over 2,000 miles south straight from Canada to Mexico!

Some butterflies not only migrate two-ways but also occasionally sail upon the high seas. The Painted Lady and Red Admiral are two examples. Both can be found in Europe as well as North America. Their populations experience "eruption" years with more butterflies than normal. "Vagrant" butterflies during eruptions will fly to far-flung places and can even get swept out to sea on the trade winds to remote islands.



WHY BUTTERFLIES MATTER

Because butterflies are widely appreciated, they provide a powerful connection between people and nature. Protecting butterflies also helps conserve the habitats that support countless other species.

Part of a Bigger Conservation Picture

As universally loved animals, butterflies can serve in 3 important "marketing" roles in conservation as "indicator," "umbrella", and "gateway" species.

Indicator species – like a warning light – provide clues about the condition of an environment. Since butterfly caterpillars depend on only specific host plants, the presence of a butterfly often shows that its host plant and habitat are nearby. Healthy local butterfly populations suggest a healthy local ecosystem.

Umbrella species – shield others from harm – when they are protected, and also benefit many other plants and animals that share the same habitat. By conserving habitat for a well-known and loved butterfly, conservationists can help protect entire ecosystems. The Monarch is one of the best-known examples. Efforts to preserve Monarch habitat have greatly benefited many other pollinators, native plants, and wildlife species.

Gateway species – win hearts and minds – spark public interest in nature and conservation. Butterflies are especially effective in this role because they have an almost magical aura and beauty, plus are widespread and easy to observe. Watching butterflies develop from caterpillar to chrysalis to adult inspires curiosity and appreciation for other insects and wildlife



DELICATE LIVES IN A DELICATE BALANCE

Butterflies have a tough life and experience perils around every corner. Weather, predators, and the actions of humans can hit them hard. They may be individually delicate but, as a whole, are incredibly tough creatures!

- Extreme rain can wash eggs and caterpillars off of plants. If caught out of cover, raindrops can batter a butterfly out of the sky. Imagine getting pelted with water balloons for hours on end!
- Butterflies need plants to eat as caterpillars and flowers to drink from as adults. Drought, floods, and wildfires can hurt local plant populations and leave butterflies hungry and temporarily without a home.

*When people are careless with their land management,
butterflies can get caught in the crossfire.*

- Butterflies are easily killed by most insecticides and they can vanish from properties where pesticides are used recklessly.
- Over use of herbicides can eradicate the native plants and wildflowers they rely on for food.
- Land clearing and habitat destruction alters the landscape and leaves butterflies with no place to go.
- Butterflies and moths form the foundation of the food web in many ecosystems. So many animals eat them! Not only do spiders, frogs, and birds prey on adult butterflies but caterpillars are a staple food source for native wasps, lizards, and birds. Nearly every species of songbird in the Carolinas chows down on caterpillars. They're a critical food source for baby birds!

*So, forget the chemicals, leave the weeds,
and make room for butterflies!*



A SIGHT TO BEHOLD

Are you ready to butterfly watch?

Butterflies are not only beautiful sights, they are one of the easiest animals to get out there and see!

Butterflies can be found in every habitat in the Carolinas, from the salt marshes of the Atlantic coast, to the mountaintop meadows of the Appalachians, to your local park or backyard, and even the concrete jungle of our cities.



To start butterfly watching, all you really need is a set of eyes! However a pair of binoculars, a smart phone, and a field guide, like this book, can be helpful to figure out what you're looking at. That's all you need to enjoy the beauty of butterflies.

The best time to look for butterflies

In the Carolinas, the best butterfly activity usually occurs during spring through fall on calm, warm, sunny days, especially between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Many species are common in April and May and again in August and September.



The best places to look for butterflies are areas with abundant native plants, and plenty of wildflowers. Different butterflies prefer different environments, and many species rely on specific host plants for their caterpillars. Learning these connections can greatly improve your chances of finding certain butterflies. If you find the host plant, with patience, you may find the species you are searching for.

HOW TO SEE BUTTERFLIES

Take a walk!



Butterfly walks hosted by organizations such as the North American Butterfly Association and regional butterfly clubs, nature centers, and conservation groups are an excellent way to learn more. You will also discover new natural areas, and meet other people who are interested in wildlife and conservation.

Make your walk a citizen science project! Counting butterflies along the same route over time can provide valuable information about local populations and seasonal changes. Share your observations through apps such as **eButterfly**, where they help researchers track butterfly populations across North America.



NIX THE NET!

Unless you're working for a museum or university, you don't need a net to collect and appreciate butterflies. Netting and jarring butterflies can damage their wings and hurt them.

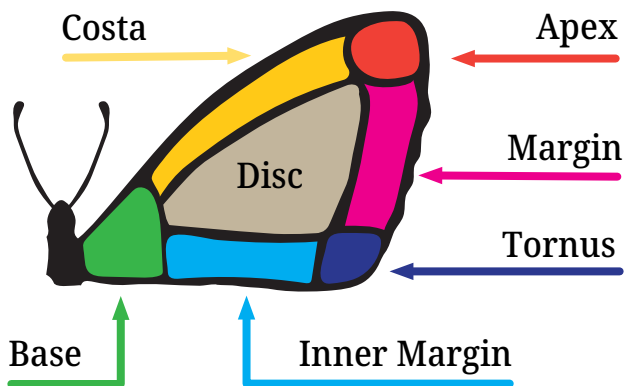
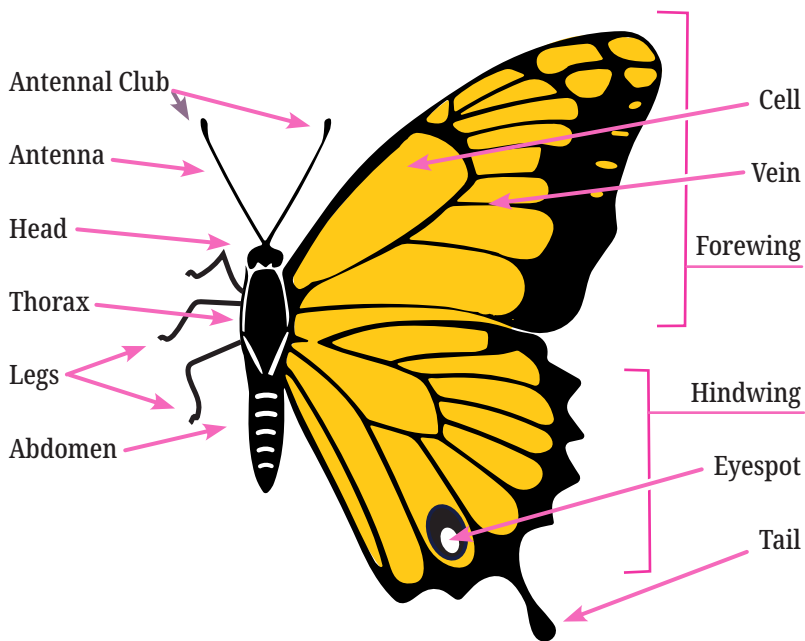
Butterflies are fleeting creatures whose beauty is best appreciated in their natural environment. Watching a butterfly drift free from flower to flower offers a brief but memorable connection to the natural world.

*So, what are you waiting for?
Get outside and look at some butterflies!*

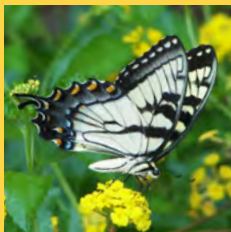
WORDS TO KNOW

Androconia:	Specialized scales, often found in patches on the wing, that produce pheromones. Only present on males.
Aposematic:	A bold pattern of bright colors, usually black and orange, used to warn that an animal is poisonous.
Brood:	A distinct adult "generation" for a butterfly species, usually with locally synchronized adult emergence.
Closed-winged:	A butterfly that typically keeps its wings closed together.
Dorsal:	The back, or top surface of the wing.
Fresh:	A recently emerged butterfly without visible damage.
Host Plant:	The species of plant(s) a butterfly caterpillar is able to eat to survive and grow.
Jet-Fighter:	A spread-winged arrangement for many skippers where the forewings remain next to the body at a 45° angle.
Metamorphosis:	The process through which an animal dramatically changes its body shape between distinct stages in its life, most often to better take advantage of different environments or food sources.
Nectaring:	The act of a butterfly drinking nectar from a flower.
Pollination:	The transfer of pollen to receptive female structures on a flower. Cross-pollination being between different plants.
Proboscis:	The long coiled tube-like mouth of a butterfly.
Puddling:	The act of a butterfly, or a group of butterflies, visiting a puddle, damp patch of earth, animal droppings, carrion, or something similar to consume nutrient rich moisture.
Scales:	The tiny, shingle-like plates of chitin that cover the wings of butterflies and moths. Each is a singular color.
Spread-winged:	A butterfly that typically keeps its wings spread apart.
Tent:	A refuge of silk and foliage created by a caterpillar to protect it from the elements and predators.
Ventral:	The belly, or bottom surface of the wing.
Worn:	An older butterfly, damaged or missing wing scales.

BUTTERFLY ANATOMY



BUTTERFLY FAMILIES

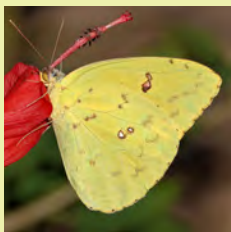


Papilionidae

SWALLOWTAILS

8 Species in the Carolinas

All large in size, black and yellow in color with some blue, perch spread-winged, and have hindwing tails.

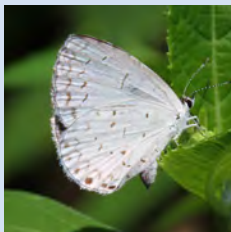


Pieridae

WHITES, SULPHURS, YELLOWS

16 Species in the Carolinas

All perch closed-winged, are somewhat circular in profile, and overall either white, yellow, or orange. Most medium-sized.

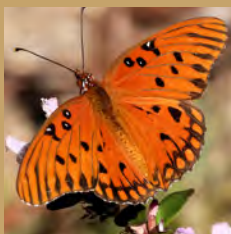


Lycaenidae

GOSSAMER-WINGED

32 Species in the Carolinas

All rather small in size, somewhat circular in profile, and perch closed-winged. Most gray or brown in color, with blue above.



Nymphalidae

BRUSHFOOTS

49 Species in the Carolinas

Extremely variable between sub-groups. All perch using only four of their legs. Many medium in size and brown or orange in color.

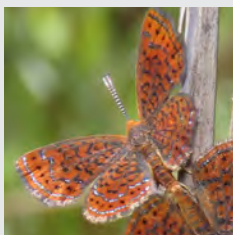


Hesperiidae

SKIPPERS

73 Species in the Carolinas

Highly variable but most a triangular, wedge-shape in profile. Many small in size, orange brown in color, and perch close-winged.



Riodinidae

METALMARKS

1 Species in the Carolinas

The Little Metalmark (*Calephelis virginensis*) is tiny, perches spread-winged, and is brick-red colored with metallic-silver markings.

Species not found at
Southern 8ths Preserve

TIMES THEY ARE A CHANGIN'

Notes on Taxonomy

Recent advances in genetics and renewed research of archived collections have revealed cryptic species – “new” butterflies hiding in plain sight – now split off as distinct species. Others have been recently combined or renamed. More changes to scientific names are sure to come.

These updates reflect scientific progress. Yet, they can create confusion in printed guides like this one. Some names printed here may change in the future. However, the butterflies themselves remain the same.

The information in this guide will still help you recognize, understand and appreciate them, even if the scientific names evolve.

EASTERN TIGER SWALLOWTAIL

Pterourus glaucus

SIZE

Spread-winged
3 to 5.5 in

RESIDENT

FLIGHT TIME

JAN

FEB

MAR

APR

MAY

JUN

JUL

AUG

SEP

OCT

NOV

DEC



Photos: D Kastner

HOST PLANTS

Black Cherry, Tulip-Poplar, Sweetbay Magnolia, and many other hardwoods

HABITATS

Hardwood Forests, Powerline Clearings, Gardens, Forested Streams

RANGE

Eastern and Central US.
Across the Carolinas.

ID FEATURES

Both above and below, yellow with black wing borders and "tiger" stripes on forewing. Hindwings with tails. Females have large blue patch on hindwing. Males have little or no blue on hindwing. Some females are "dark morph" with little to no yellow.

BEHAVIOR

Often flies very high up in the forest canopy.

Similar Species

Appalachian Tiger Swallowtail

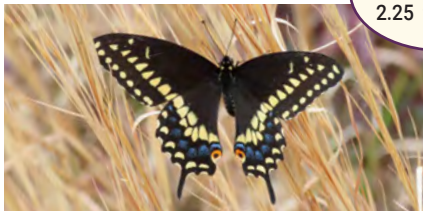
DID YOU KNOW?

Official state butterfly of both SC and NC, as well as 3 other states.

BLACK SWALLOWTAIL

Papilio polyxenes

SIZE
Spread-winged
2.25 to 3.75 in



Photos: T.Austin; D.Kastner

HOST PLANTS

Parsley, Dill, Carrot, Golden Alexander, and other Umbels

HABITATS

Meadows, Fields, Gardens

RANGE

Eastern and Central US.
Across the Carolinas.

Similar Species

Pipevine Swallowtail [pg.15]

Spicebush Swallowtail [pg.14]

Eastern Tiger Swallowtail

(dark morph) [pg.12]

Palamedes Swallowtail

ID FEATURES

Overall black. Above, two rows of yellow spots on the outer edge of the forewing. On the hindwing, blue patches towards the margin and a single orange spot with a black dot in the center at the bottom corner of the hindwing. Males have larger yellow spots. Females have larger blue patches. Below, both have two arching bands of orange spots across the hindwing.

BEHAVIOR

Erratic, wandering flight close to the ground.

DID YOU KNOW?

A species often found in vegetable gardens, as it hosts on many common garden herbs.

RESIDENT

FLIGHT TIME

JAN

FEB

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MAY

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DEC

SPICEBUSH SWALLOWTAIL

Pterourus troilus

SIZE

Spread-winged
3.5 to 4.5 in

RESIDENT

FLIGHT
TIME

JAN

FEB

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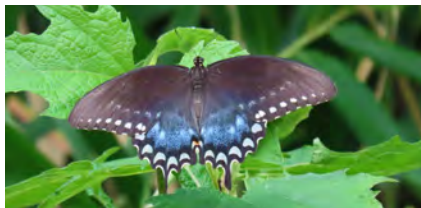
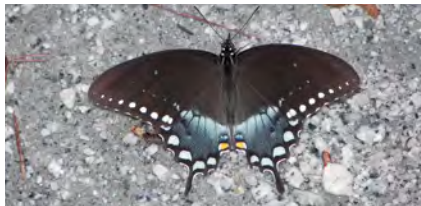
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Photos: T.Austin, D.Kastner

HOST PLANTS

Sassafras, Spicebush,
Magnolias, Swamp Bay

HABITATS

Hardwood Forests,
Powerline Clearings,
Gardens, Forest Edges

RANGE

Eastern and Central US.
Across the Carolinas.

Similar Species

Pipevine Swallowtail [pg.15]
Black Swallowtail [pg.13]
Eastern Tiger Swallowtail
(dark morph) [pg.12]

ID FEATURES

Above, mainly black with a single full line of pale yellow spots along the outer edge of the forewing. On the hindwing, a small solid orange spot at the bottom corner and a large blue patch. Males have a larger patch of pale blue green and females a smaller sky blue patch. Below, both have a blue patch on the hindwing bordered by two bands of orange spots. However, the inner band is broken by a "rocket" of blue between the 4th and 5th orange spot.

BEHAVIOR

Flutters its wings while drinking nectar. Males often patrol close to the ground.

DID YOU KNOW?

Their caterpillars change color
from green to bright yellow
before pupating.

PIPEVINE SWALLOWTAIL

Battus philenor

SIZE
Spread-winged
2.75 to 5 in



Photos: T.Austin; D.Kastner

HOST PLANTS

Virginia Snakeroot,
Pipevines

HABITATS

Upland Forests, Savannas,
Forested Roadsides,
Powerline Clearings

RANGE

Southern US.
Across the Carolinas.

ID FEATURES

Above, black hooked forewings and blue hindwings with a single band of pale yellow spots. Male hindwings are a vibrant iridescent blue and the female dull blue with pale spots extending onto the forewing. Below, both have one arching row of orange spots amidst a blue patch.

BEHAVIOR

Constantly flutters its wings while drinking nectar. Females have a low, chaotic, wandering flight and rarely land.

Similar Species

Spicebush Swallowtail [pg.14]

Black Swallowtail [pg.13]

Red-spotted Purple female [pg.34]

Diana Fritillary

RESIDENT**FLIGHT TIME**

JAN

FEB

MAR

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DID YOU KNOW?

Their caterpillars absorb toxic chemicals from their host plant that make them distasteful to birds and protect them as adults.

CABBAGE WHITE

Pieris rapae

SIZE

Closed-winged
1 to 1.25 in

RESIDENT

FLIGHT
TIME

JAN

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Photos: D.Kastner

HOST PLANTS

Mustard, Radish, Canola,
Collards, Broccoli, and
other "Cole Crops"

HABITATS

Gardens, Roadsides,
Agricultural Fields

RANGE

Continental US.
Across the Carolinas.

Similar Species

Checkered White,
Falcate Orangetip female
[pg.17]
Great Southern White

ID FEATURES

Above, white with black forewing tips and black spots. Females have one black spot and males two. Below, white with yellowish color to hindwing.

BEHAVIOR

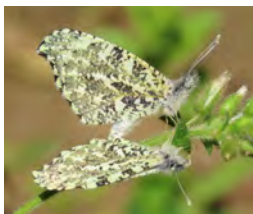
Males patrol a territory.

DID YOU KNOW?

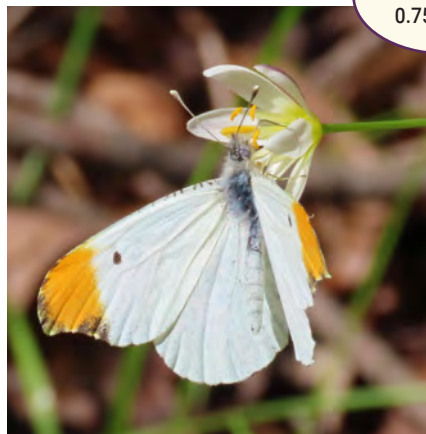
Cabbage Whites were introduced
from Europe in the 1860's
and have rapidly spread across
North America.

FALCATE ORANGETIP*Anthocharis midea*

SIZE
 Closed-winged
 0.75 to 1 in



Photos: T.Austin; D.Kastner

**HOST PLANTS**

Bittercress

HABITATS

Wet Roadsides, Streams,
 Floodplains,

RANGE

Southeast US.
 Across the Carolinas.

Similar Species:

Cabbage White [pg.16]

Checkered White

ID FEATURES

Above, white with hooked forewing tips and a single black spot. Males have neon-orange forewing tips. Below, the hindwing is white with heavy gray green mottling and the forewing mainly white.

BEHAVIOR

Flight is usually close to the ground, lands infrequently.

RESIDENT**FLIGHT TIME**

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DEC

DID YOU KNOW?

*One of the earliest to fly in spring
 and has only one spring brood*

ORANGE SULPHUR

Colias eurytheme

SIZE

Closed-winged
1 to 1.25 in

RESIDENT

FLIGHT
TIME

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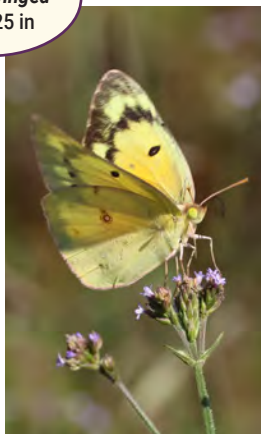
AUG

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DEC



Photos: T. Austin, D. Kastner

HOST PLANTS

Clover, Sweetclover,
Alfalfa, Medick, and other
low-growing Legumes

HABITATS

Fields, Pastures, Prairies,
Old Fields, Roadsides,
Gardens

RANGE

Continental US.
Across the Carolinas.

Similar Species:

Clouded Sulphur [pg.19]

Sleepy Orange [pg.21]

ID FEATURES

Below, yellow with a gold or orange wash to the forewing and a small dark ringed white spot on the midline of each wing. Orange may only be on the above and hard to see when perched, but readily noticed in flight. Above, outer edges of wings have a heavy black border. Looks extremely similar to the Clouded Sulphur, but has orange coloration..

BEHAVIOR

Flies quickly just above vegetation in open areas.

DID YOU KNOW?

Originally limited to the Midwest but began spreading east about 100 years ago and is now quite abundant in the East.

CLOUDED SULPHUR*Colias philodice***SIZE****Closed-winged**
1 to 1.25 in

Photos: D. Kastner

**HOST PLANTS**

Clover, Sweetclover,
Alfalfa, Medick, and other
low-growing Legumes

HABITATS

Large Fields, Prairies,
Extensive Pastures

RANGE

Southern US.
NC Piedmont, scarce in
NC Coastal Plain and rare
in SC.

ID FEATURES

Below, green yellow, sometimes with a smoky
gray haze, and a small dark ringed white spot
on the midline of each wing. Above, outer
edges of wings have a heavy black border.
Looks extremely similar to the Orange Sulphur,
but lacks any orange.

BEHAVIOR

Flies quickly just above vegetation in
open areas.

Similar Species:

Orange Sulphur [pg.18]

DID YOU KNOW?

*Is highly dependent on vast open
meadows and prairies.*

RESIDENT**FLIGHT
TIME**

JAN

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DEC

CLOUDLESS SULPHUR

Phoebis sennae

SIZE

Closed-winged
1.5 to 2 in

RESIDENT /
MIGRANT

FLIGHT
TIME

JAN

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Photos: T.Austin

HOST PLANTS

Partridge Pea, Sicklepod,
and other Legumes

HABITATS

Gardens, Forest Edges,
Roadsides, Savannas, nearly
any Open Area

RANGE

Southern US.
Across the Carolinas.

Similar Species:

Clouded Sulphur [pg.19]

ID FEATURES

Overall, a bright green yellow with no dark borders. Females have two small white spots surrounded with copper brown on each wing and other tiny brownish spots. Males are nearly unmarked.

BEHAVIOR

A strong flier that perches infrequently. Never perches with wings open. Often seen migrating northward in summer along roads.

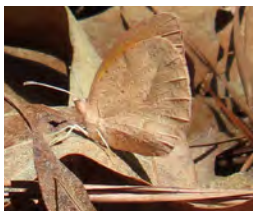
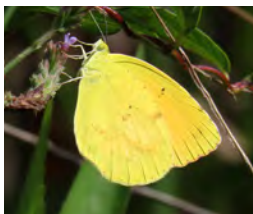
DID YOU KNOW?

*This species will drink nectar
from almost any flower, but prefers
large red flowers.*

SLEEPY ORANGE

Eurema nicippe

SIZE
Closed-winged
 1 to 1.25 in



Photos: T. Austin

**HOST PLANTS**

Sicklepod, Partridge Pea,
 and other Legumes

HABITATS

Disturbed Areas, Savannas,
 Farm Fields, Meadows,
 Roadsides, Parks

RANGE

Southern US.
 Across the Carolinas.

ID FEATURES

Below, orange yellow. Hindwing has a brown, smudge-like diagonal line in the middle as well as other small brown markings. Fall form can have a warm brown hindwing. Above, orange with heavy black borders.

BEHAVIOR

Never perches with wings open. Flight is quick and low to the ground.

Similar Species:

Orange Sulphur [pg.18]

RESIDENT**FLIGHT TIME**

JAN

FEB

MAR

APR

MAY

JUN

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AUG

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DID YOU KNOW?

This species gets the name
 "Sleepy" as it often hangs
 upside-down when perching.

LITTLE YELLOW

Eurema lisa

SIZE

Closed-winged
0.75 in

RESIDENT

FLIGHT
TIME

JAN

FEB

MAR

APR

MAY

JUN

JUL

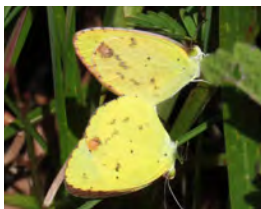
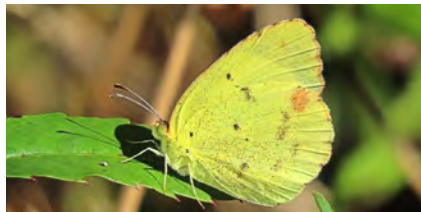
AUG

SEP

OCT

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DEC



Photos: T.Austin; D.Kastner

HOST PLANTS

Sensitive Partridge Pea,
Littleleaf Mimosa, and
other low-growing Legumes

HABITATS

Savannas, Field Borders,
Gardens, Forest Edges,
Roadsides

RANGE

Eastern US.
Across the Carolinas.**Similar Species:***Barred Yellow**Dainty Sulphur*

ID FEATURES

Below, yellow with a rusty spot at the top of
the hindwing and scattered small dark marks.
Males tend to be a richer yellow. Females can
be very pale. Above, yellow with black borders.

BEHAVIOR

Low flyer. Nectars infrequently on small
flowers that are close to the ground.

DID YOU KNOW?

*It can often be found "puddling" in
large groups on damp dirt roads.*

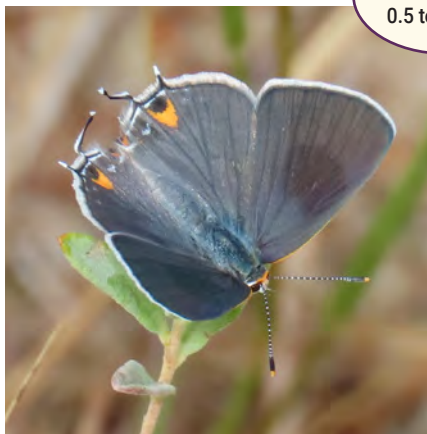
GRAY HAIRSTREAK

Strymon melinus

SIZE

Closed-winged
0.5 to 0.75 in

Photos: T.Austin

**HOST PLANTS**

A generalist, preferring
Legumes and Mallows

HABITATS

Roadsides, Savannas, Parks,
Forest Edges, Gardens,
Open Weedy Areas

RANGE

Continental US.
Across the Carolinas.

Similar Species:

White-M Hairstreak

Oak Hairstreak

Red-banded Hairstreak [pg.24]

ID FEATURES

Below, a neutral gray in color with two black dashed lines, the inner line with a white highlight. The bottom corner of the hindwing has two orange spots, a dull blue patch, and a set of thin tails. The leading edge of the forewing is often orange near the head. Above, a dark gray with a single orange spot around a black dot on the bottom edge of the hindwing.

BEHAVIOR

Makes short flights. Perches readily on foliage or flowers. Easy to approach. May bask in the sun with its wings open.

RESIDENT**FLIGHT TIME**

JAN

FEB

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JUL

AUG

SEP

OCT

NOV

DEC

DID YOU KNOW?

One of the only Hairstreaks with no
blue iridescence above on the wings.

RED-BANDED HAIRSTREAK

Calycopis cecrops

SIZE

Closed-winged

0.5 in

RESIDENT

FLIGHT
TIME

JAN

FEB

MAR

APR

MAY

JUN

JUL

AUG

SEP

OCT

NOV

DEC



Photo: T. Austin

HOST PLANTS

Sumac, Wax-myrtle, Oaks,
and other woody shrubs

HABITATS

Forest Edges, Savannas,
Open Woods, Roadsides,
Pond Banks, Most Shrubby
Areas

RANGE:

Eastern US.
Across the Carolinas.

Similar Species:

Oak Hairstreak

Gray Hairstreak [pg.23]

ID FEATURES

Below, a warm gray with a distinct red orange band highlighted by white that extends across both wings. The bottom corner of the hindwing has two dull orange and black eyespots, a dull blue spot beneath, and a set of thin tails. Above, dark gray with iridescent blue on the hindwing. This blue is more vibrant in males.

BEHAVIOR

Often lands on the ground or on low foliage.

DID YOU KNOW?

*Its caterpillars eat dead leaves that
have fallen to the ground.*

EASTERN TAILED-BLUE

Cupido comyntas

SIZE
Closed-winged
0.5 in

Photos: T.Austin



HOST PLANTS

Lespedeza species,
Clover, and other Legumes

HABITATS

Savannas, Roadsides,
Field Margins, Lawns,
Meadows

RANGE

Continental US and
West Coast.
Across the Carolinas.

ID FEATURES

Below, light gray with scattered black spots. At the bottom corner of the hindwing, two orange crescents and a single thin tail per wing. Above, males are a bright iridescent blue with a thin black border. Females are dark gray, sometimes with a bit of blue towards the body.

BEHAVIOR

Skittish. Flies low to the ground and prefers to visit small flowers.

Similar Species

Azures [pg.26-27]

RESIDENT

FLIGHT TIME

JAN

FEB

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MAY

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DEC

DID YOU KNOW?

The combination of eyespots and tails on this species, and on other Hairstreaks, mimics an insect head, in order to fool predators.

SPRING AZURE

Celastrina ladon

SIZE

Closed-winged
0.5 to .75 in

RESIDENT**FLIGHT
TIME**

JAN

FEB

MAR

APR

MAY

JUN

JUL

AUG

SEP

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NOV

DEC



Photos: S. Wietecha

HOST PLANTS

Dogwood

HABITATS

Forests and Forest Edges
with Dogwood

RANGE:

Eastern US.
Mainly Mountains and
Piedmont of the Carolinas.

ID FEATURES

Below, very pale gray with small dark gray spots. Above, iridescent blue violet with no obvious veins. Extremely similar to Summer Azure and other Azure species.

BEHAVIOR

Often lands several feet off the ground on a shrub. Flies at chest height.

Similar Species

Summer Azure [pg.27]

Holly Azure

Appalachian Azure

Iryna's Azure

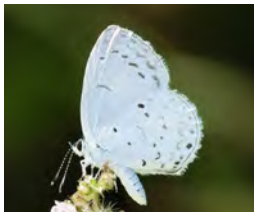
DID YOU KNOW?

Commonly "puddles" in large
groups on dirt roads.

SUMMER AZURE

Celastrina neglecta

SIZE
Closed-winged
0.5 to .75 in



Photos: T. Austin, D. Kastner



HOST PLANTS

Many unrelated species of forbs and deciduous trees/shrubs

HABITATS

Hardwood Forests, Dirt Road Margins, Forest Clearings, Forest Edges

RANGE

Eastern US.
Across the Carolinas.

ID FEATURES

Below, very pale gray with small dark gray spots. Above, iridescent blue violet and with prominent white veins. Extremely similar to Spring Azure and other Azure species.

BEHAVIOR

Often lands several feet off the ground on a shrub. Flies at chest height.

Similar Species

Spring Azure [pg.26]

Holly Azure

Appalachian Azure

Iryna's Azure

DID YOU KNOW?

Our most abundant Azure and the only one that flies after June in the Carolinas.

RESIDENT

FLIGHT TIME

JAN

FEB

MAR

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MAY

JUN

JUL

AUG

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NOV

DEC

HARVESTER

Feniseca tarquinius

SIZE

Closed-winged
0.5 to .75 in

RESIDENT

FLIGHT TIME

JAN

FEB

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MAY

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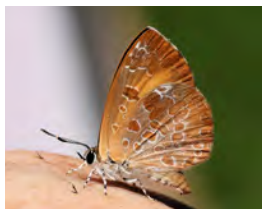
AUG

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Photos: D. Kastner

HOST PLANTS

Alder or Beech trees with
Woolly Aphids

HABITATS

Floodplains, River Banks,
Moist Hardwood Forests,
Beaver Ponds

RANGE:

Eastern US.
Mountains and Piedmont
of the Carolinas, scarce.

ID FEATURES

Below, rusty brown with silver frosting and white
rings across both wings. Forewing orange with
black blocks at center. Above, heavy dark brown
borders and orange wing centers.

BEHAVIOR

Flight is erratic. Often found puddling on muddy
roads. May land on people to drink their sweat
for salts.

Similar Species

Unique in the Carolinas

DID YOU KNOW?

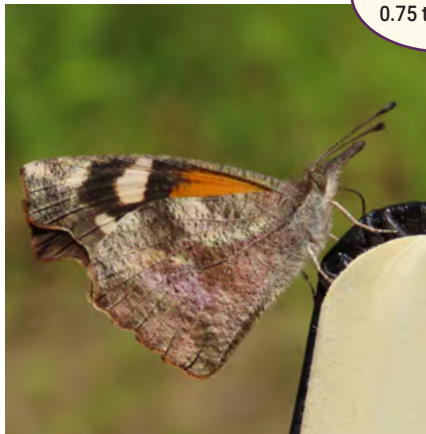
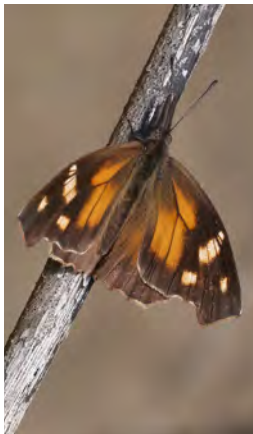
*This butterfly has carnivorous
caterpillars that eat aphids.*

AMERICAN SNOUT

Libytheana carinenta

SIZE
Closed-winged
0.75 to 1.25 in

Photo: D. Kastner



HOST PLANTS

Hackberry

HABITATS

Floodplain Forests,
River Banks

RANGE

Southern and Eastern US.
Across the Carolinas.

Similar Species

Unique in the Carolinas

ID FEATURES

Below, mottled gray brown with some orange and white showing on forewing. Has a distinct wedge-shape when its wings are closed. Above, dark brown with orange patches at the wing centers and four white spots near the tip of the forewing. Has elongated palps on its head, which look like an anteater's snout.

BEHAVIOR

Fast flier. Commonly found on wet roads. Frequently lands on people to drink their sweat for salts.

DID YOU KNOW?

Palps protect a butterfly's proboscis and help them smell and taste.

RESIDENT

FLIGHT TIME

JAN

FEB

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MAY

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VARIEGATED FRITILLARY

Euptoieta claudia

SIZE

Spread-winged
1.75 to 2.25 in

RESIDENT

FLIGHT TIME

JAN

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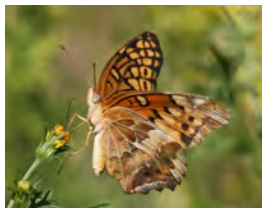
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Photos: T.Austin, D.Kastner

HOST PLANTS

Passionflower

HABITATS

Old Fields, Prairies,
Savannas, Sunny Roadsides,
Powerline Clearings

RANGE:

Eastern US.
Across the Carolinas.

Similar Species

Gulf Fritillary [pg.31]

Meadow Fritillary

ID FEATURES

Above, orange and pale orange with checkered black lines and a line of black spots along both wing margins. Below, a variable mottled orange-brown with gray-tan.

BEHAVIOR

Flight is low and fast. Rather skittish.

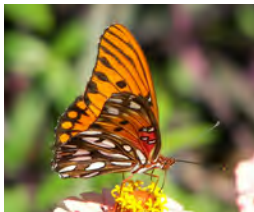
DID YOU KNOW?

The only Fritillary that is a reliable year-round resident of the Carolinas.

GULF FRITILLARY

Dione vanillae

SIZE
 Spread-winged
 2.5 to 3 in



Photos: T. Austin; D. Kastner

**MIGRANT****FLIGHT TIME**

JAN

FEB

MAR

APR

MAY

JUN

JUL

AUG

SEP

OCT

NOV

DEC

HOST PLANTS

Passionflower

HABITATS

Meadows, Parks, Savannas,
 Forest Edges, Roadsides,
 nearly any Open Area

RANGE

Southern US.
 Across the Carolinas.

ID FEATURES

Above, rich orange with scattered black spots. Forewing has thin lengthwise black lines and three white spots ringed in black near the "shoulder". Hindwing has a black border surrounding a line of orange spots. Below, copper-orange with many large, elongated white blotches and some brighter orange showing in center of forewing.

BEHAVIOR

Flight is usually low. Drinks nectar frequently.

Similar Species

Variegated Fritillary [pg.30]

Monarch [pg.32]

Viceroy [pg.33]

DID YOU KNOW?

A prolific tropical migrant whose numbers swell over summer and fall in the Carolinas.

MONARCH

Danaus plexippus

SIZE

Spread-winged
3.5 to 4.75 in

MIGRANT

FLIGHT TIME

JAN

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JUL

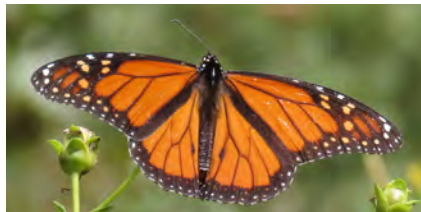
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Photos: T.Austin, D.Kastner

HOST PLANTS

Milkweed

HABITATS

Prairies, Savannas,
Meadows, Bottomlands,
Barrier Islands

RANGE:

Continental US.
Across the Carolinas.

Similar Species

Viceroy [pg.33]

Queen

Gulf Fritillary [pg.33]

ID FEATURES

Above, rich orange with black veins and a heavy black border containing small white dots. Males have a black, oval-shaped androconial patch on the hindwing, in the middle of the vein closest to the body. Below, is much like above but hindwing a paler orange. Body black with many small white dots.

BEHAVIOR

Strong, soaring flier. Glides with wings held in a shallow 'V'.

DID YOU KNOW?

The majority of Monarchs migrate to Mexico or Florida in fall, but some Monarchs overwinter along the SC coast.

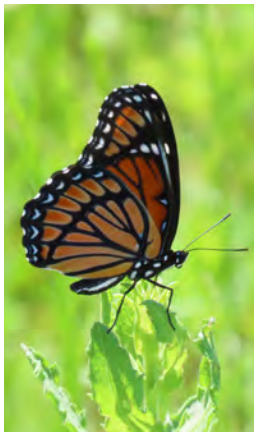
VICEROY

Limenitis archippus

SIZE

Spread-winged
2.5 to 3.25 in

Photos: T.Austin

**HOST PLANTS**

Willow, Cottonwood

HABITATSBrushy Ponds, River Banks,
Wet Meadows, Freshwater
Marshes**RANGE**Eastern and Midwestern US.
Across the Carolinas.**Similar Species***Monarch* [pg.32]*Queen***ID FEATURES**

Above, rich orange with black veins and a heavy black border containing small white dots. Hindwing with a distinct crosswise black band through the middle. Below, is much like above but hindwing a paler orange. Body black with a few white spots and dashes, and a white line down the abdomen.

BEHAVIOR

Flies with wings flat and beats wings in quick pulses before gliding.

RESIDENT**FLIGHT TIME**

JAN

FEB

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DID YOU KNOW?*The Viceroy is one of the most misidentified butterflies, as it mimics the poisonous Monarch for protection.*

RED-SPOTTED PURPLE

Limenitis arthemis astyanax

SIZE

Spread-winged
3 to 4 in

RESIDENT

FLIGHT
TIME

JAN

FEB

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DEC



Photos: D. Kastner

HOST PLANTS

Cherry, Serviceberry

HABITATS

Hardwood Forests,
Forest Edges

RANGE:

Eastern US.
Across the Carolinas.

Similar Species

Pipevine Swallowtail [pg.15]

ID FEATURES

Above, black with iridescent blue mainly on the hindwings and a line of blue dots and dashes along margins. Sometimes with orange spots at the forewing tips. Below, much like above but with a band of orange spots along the wing margins and 7 orange spots near the body. No tails on the hindwings.

BEHAVIOR

Flies with wings flat and beats wings in quick pulses before gliding. Usually lands either on the ground or on foliage above head height.

DID YOU KNOW?

This subspecies mimics the Pipevine Swallowtail here in the Southern US.

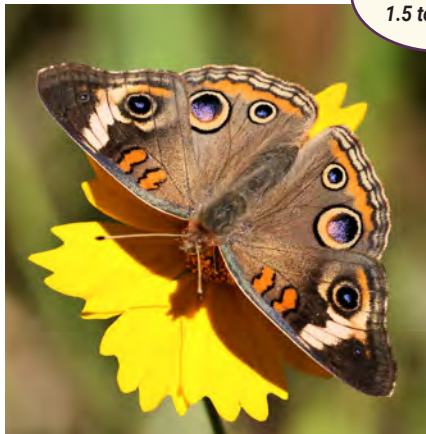
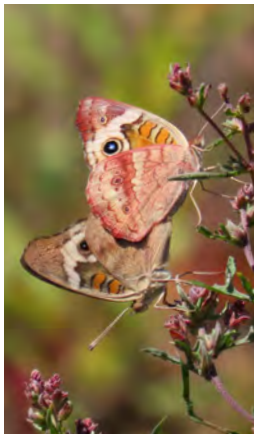
The White Admiral subspecies is found in the Northern US.

COMMON BUCKEYE

Junonia coenia

SIZE
 Spread-winged
 1.5 to 2.75 in

Photos: T. Austin; D. Kastner

**HOST PLANTS**

Purple False-Foxglove,
 Toadflax, Plantago

HABITATS

Savannas, Old Fields, Lawns,
 Forest Edges, Roadsides,
 Gardens, Parks

RANGE

Most of the Continental US.
 Across the Carolinas.

Similar Species

Unique in the Carolinas

ID FEATURES

Above, brown. Forewing with two orange dashes on the "shoulder", a light tan blotch around the tip, and one large tan, black, and blue eyespot at the bottom corner. Hindwing with an orange border and two prominent eyespots, the larger with pink in the center. Below, hindwing tan with diffused brown webbing and small, indistinct eyespots. Forewing with one large eyespot, but often hidden. In fall, some individuals may be brick-red below.

BEHAVIOR

Usually flies waist high or lower. Prefers to land on the ground.

DID YOU KNOW?

Its fall brood overwinters and can have a redder "Rosa" form.

RESIDENT**FLIGHT TIME**

JAN

FEB

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DEC

PEARL CRESCENT

Phyciodes tharos

SIZE

Spread-winged
1 to 1.5 in

RESIDENT

FLIGHT
TIME

JAN

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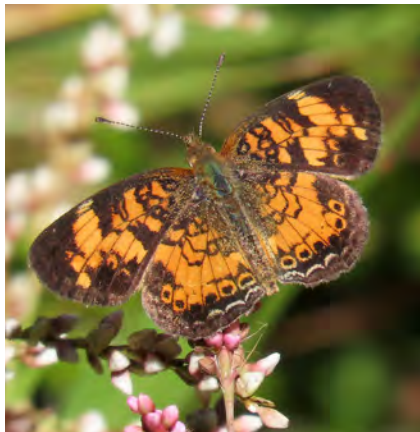
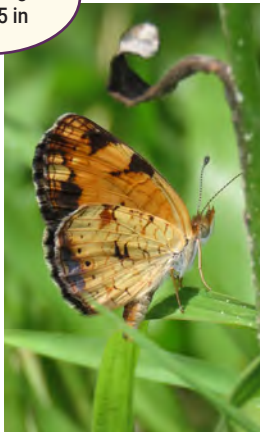
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Photos: T. Austin

HOST PLANTS

Asters and other
Composites

HABITATS

Forest Edges, Meadows,
Shaded Roadsides,
Savannas

RANGE:

Eastern US.
Across the Carolinas.

Similar Species

Silvery Checkerspot
Incognito Crescent
Phaon Crescent

ID FEATURES

Above, orange with black borders and varied black checkering and webbing across both wings. Hindwing with a row of solid black dots near the margin. Below, forewing orange with irregular dark markings. Hindwing light orange with fine dark brown webbing and a row of crescents along the margin, with one middle crescent distinctly lighter than the others.

BEHAVIOR

Usually flies low to the ground, seldom straying above waist height. Often slowly opens and closes its wings while perched.

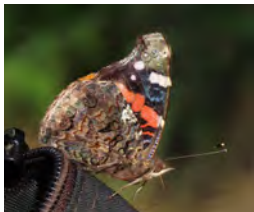
DID YOU KNOW?

*Its wing markings and body size
are highly variable.*

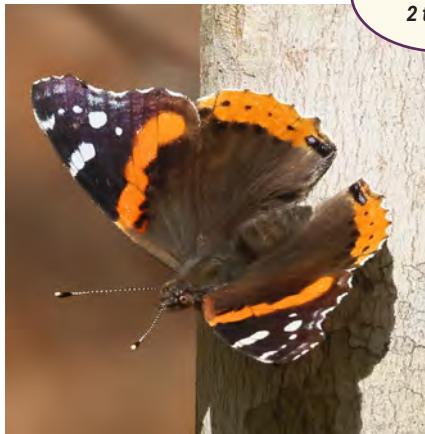
RED ADMIRAL

Vanessa atalanta

SIZE
Spread-winged
2 to 3 in



Photos: T.Austin; D.Kastner



HOST PLANTS

Nettle, False-Nettle

HABITATS

Moist Woodlands, Wetland
Margins, Stream Banks,
Moist Dirt Roads

RANGE

Continental US.
Across the Carolinas.

Similar Species

Unique in the Carolinas

ID FEATURES

Above, very dark brown. Forewing with white spots at tip, a black tip, and a red orange band through the middle. Hindwing with a red orange margin with small black dots. Below, well camouflaged mottled brown and white on hindwing. Forewing mottled brown at tip with white spots below, then a wide black band with an iridescent pale blue patch inside, bordered beneath by a red band.

BEHAVIOR

Often lands on bare ground or tree trunks.
Lingers on roads.

RESIDENT

**FLIGHT
TIME**

JAN

FEB

MAR

APR

MAY

JUN

JUL

AUG

SEP

OCT

NOV

DEC

DID YOU KNOW?

*Native to both North America
and Europe.*

AMERICAN LADY

Vanessa virginiensis

SIZE

Spread-winged
2.25 to 2.5 in

RESIDENT

FLIGHT
TIME

JAN

FEB

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JUN

JUL

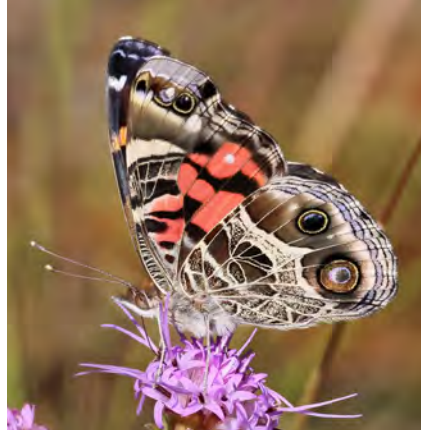
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Photos: D.Kastner

HOST PLANTS

Rabbit Tobacco,
Cudweed, Pussytoes

HABITATS

Fields, Lawns, Gardens,
Forest Edges, Meadows

RANGE:

Continental US.
Across the Carolinas.

Similar Species

Painted Lady [pg.39]

ID FEATURES

Above, orange. Forewing with black tip surrounding several white spots and a distinct small white dot in the orange cell just below the black tip. Hindwing with 4 blurry black spots along margin with pale blue centers. Below, brown with white markings. Forewing with red orange in center. Hindwing has a jagged white band across its middle and two large eyespots on the margin. Very similar to Painted Lady.

BEHAVIOR

Flies low in open areas, may wander without landing.

DID YOU KNOW?

American Lady caterpillars build silk tents, to hide in, by folding over the tips of host plant branches.

PAINTED LADY

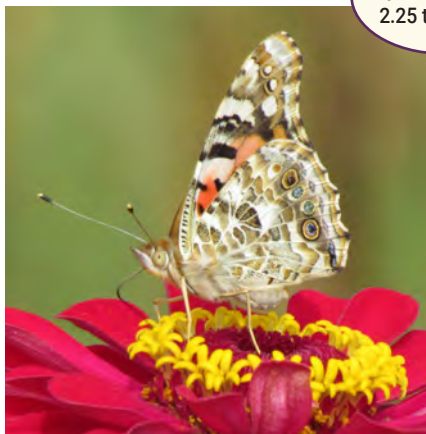
Vanessa cardui

SIZE

Spread-winged
2.25 to 2.75 in



Photos: T.Austin; D.Kastner



MIGRANT

FLIGHT TIME

JAN

FEB

MAR

APR

MAY

JUN

JUL

AUG

SEP

OCT

NOV

DEC

HOST PLANTS

Thistle, Mallows

HABITATS

Fields, Lawns, Gardens,
Forest Edges, Meadows,
Savannas

RANGE

All 50 US States.
Across the Carolinas.

Similar Species

American Lady [pg.38]

ID FEATURES

Above, orange. Forewing with an unbroken jagged black band near the center and a black tip surrounding several white spots. Hindwing with 4 blurry black spots along margin, usually without pale blue centers. Below, brown with white markings. Forewing with orange in center. Hindwing has a white cobweb pattern and 4 to 5 small eyespots along the margin. Very similar to American Lady.

BEHAVIOR

Flies low in open areas, may wander without landing.

DID YOU KNOW?

A cosmopolitan species with
a worldwide distribution.
They migrate to the Carolinas
from Mexico.

HACKBERRY EMPEROR

Asterocampa celtis

SIZE

Spread-winged
1.75 to 2.5 in

RESIDENT
**FLIGHT
TIME**

JAN

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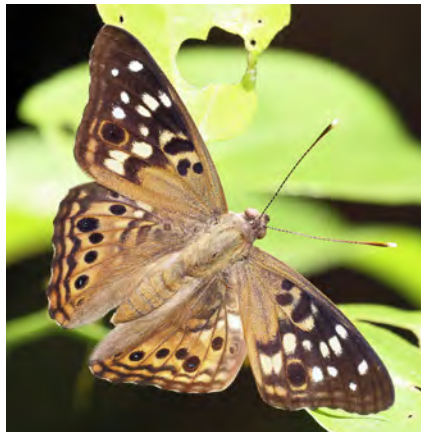
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Photos: T. Austin, D. Kastner

HOST PLANTS

Hackberry

HABITATS

Floodplain Forests,
Forested Streams

RANGE:

Most of the Eastern US.
Most of the Carolinas,
except portions of
the NC Coastal Plain.

Similar Species

Tawny Emperor [pg.41]

ID FEATURES

Above, brown. Both forewing and hindwing appear pointed. Forewing has dark tips with white spots. Hindwing has a row of black spots along margin. Below, pale tan with irregular dull brown markings. Hindwing has a row of small yellow, black, and light blue eyespots along margin. Forewing has a single eyespot and a white spot near the tip, a black spot near the bottom corner, and two more white spots between them.

BEHAVIOR

Quick flier. When disturbed, usually perches off the ground on a leaf or trunk.

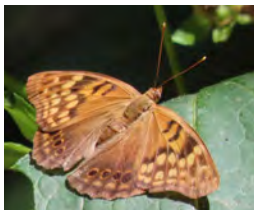
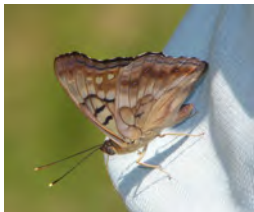
DID YOU KNOW?

Will often land on people to drink
their sweat for salts.

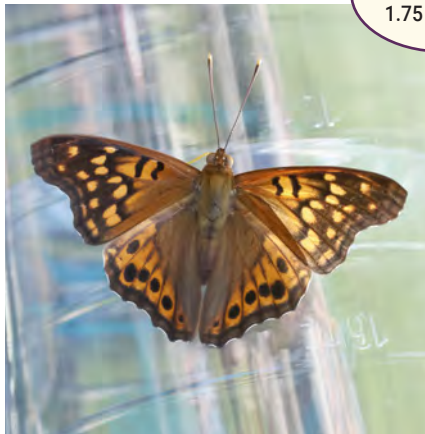
TAWNY EMPEROR

Asterocampa clyton

SIZE
Spread-winged
1.75 to 2.5 in



Photos: T. Austin; D. Kastner



HOST PLANTS

Hackberry

HABITATS

Floodplain Forests,
Forested Streams

RANGE

Most of the Eastern US.
Most of the Carolinas,
except portions of
the NC Coastal Plain.

Similar Species

Hackberry Emperor [pg.40]

ID FEATURES

Above, orange with black markings towards outer half of both wings. Forewing is pointed with pale orange spots on outer half. Hindwing can be pointed or rounded and has a row of black spots along margin. Below, tan or ruddy brown with variable brown markings. Hindwing with a row of small dark eyespots with pale blue centers along margin. Forewing has tan spots along margin.

BEHAVIOR

Quick flier. When disturbed, usually perches off the ground on a leaf or trunk.

RESIDENT

FLIGHT TIME

JAN

FEB

MAR

APR

MAY

JUN

JUL

AUG

SEP

OCT

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DID YOU KNOW?

Not seen as often as the
Hackberry Emperor, although
just as widespread.

QUESTION MARK

Polygonia interrogationis

SIZE

Spread-winged
2 to 2.75 in

RESIDENT

FLIGHT
TIME

JAN

FEB

MAR

APR

MAY

JUN

JUL

AUG

SEP

OCT

NOV

DEC



Photos: D. Kastner

HOST PLANTS

Hackberry, Elm, Nettles

HABITATS

Bottomlands, Floodplains,
Forested Streams

RANGE:

Eastern and Midwestern US.
Across the Carolinas.

Similar Species

Eastern Comma [pg.43]

ID FEATURES

Above, orange with scattered black spots and a dark brown border to both wings. Hindwing usually with a heavier border and pale fringe. Forewing has four black spots in a line near the margin, with the top spot distinctly elongated. Wings have a jagged margin and the hindwing has sharp tails. Below, well camouflaged mottled browns. Hindwing has a central white crescent with a dot beside it, like the question mark [?] symbol. Very similar to Eastern Comma.

BEHAVIOR

Skittish. Often lands either on the ground or high up on a tree trunk.

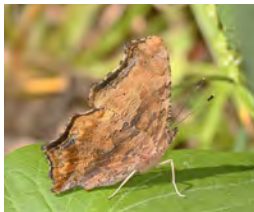
DID YOU KNOW?

Overwinters as an adult and can sometimes be seen flying on warm winter days.

EASTERN COMMA

Polygonia comma

SIZE
Spread-winged
 2 to 2.5 in



Photos: D. Kastner

**HOST PLANTS**

Hackberry, Elm, Nettles

HABITATS

Bottomlands, Floodplains,
 Forested Streams

RANGE

Eastern and Midwestern US,
 except much of the Gulf
 Coast. Across the Carolinas.

Similar Species

Question Mark [pg.42]

ID FEATURES

Above, orange with scattered black spots and a dark brown border to both wings. Hindwing usually with a heavier border. Forewing has three black spots in a line near the margin. Wings have a jagged margin and the hindwing has stubby tails. Below, well camouflaged mottled browns. Hindwing has a central white crescent, like the comma [,] symbol. Very similar to Question Mark.

BEHAVIOR

Skittish. Often lands either on the ground or high up on a tree trunk.

RESIDENT**FLIGHT TIME**

JAN

FEB

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JUL

AUG

SEP

OCT

NOV

DEC

DID YOU KNOW?

*Females often lay eggs in stacks,
 one atop the other.*

SOUTHERN PEARLY-EYE

Lethe portlandia

SIZE

Closed-winged
1.25 to 1.75 in

RESIDENT

FLIGHT
TIME

JAN

FEB

MAR

APR

MAY

JUN

JUL

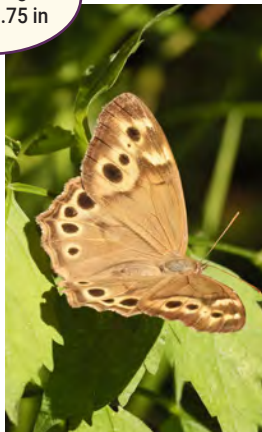
AUG

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DEC



Photos: D. Kastner

HOST PLANTS

Cane

HABITATS

Bottomlands, Floodplains,
Moist Forests

RANGE:

Southeastern US.
Piedmont and Coastal
Plain of the Carolinas.

Similar Species*Creole Pearly-eye* [pg.45]*Northern Pearly-eye**Appalachian Brown* [pg.46]

ID FEATURES

Overall brown with both dark and light bands. Forewing slightly hooked and hindwing edge scalloped. Above rarely shown but brown with black spots on margin. Below, forewing generally has 4 eyespots and hindwing 6 that are black with a gold edge and white, elongated centers. On forewing, the upper third of the middle brown band is nearly straight. Very similar to Creole Pearly-eye.

BEHAVIOR

Holds wings closed, perches near ground, and doesn't visit flowers.

DID YOU KNOW?

Most abundant in the
Coastal Plain of the Carolinas.

CREOLE PEARLY-EYE

Lethe creola

SIZE

Closed-winged
1.25 to 1.75 in

RESIDENT

FLIGHT
TIME

JAN

FEB

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APR

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JUL

AUG

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DEC

Photos: T. Austin



HOST PLANTS

Cane

HABITATS

Bottomlands, Floodplains,
Moist Forests

RANGE

Southeastern US.
Piedmont and Coastal
Plain of the Carolinas.*Similar Species**Southern Pearly-eye* [pg.44]*Northern Pearly-eye**Appalachian Brown* [pg.46]

ID FEATURES

Overall brown with both dark and light bands. Forewing slightly hooked and hindwing edge scalloped. Above rarely shown but brown with black spots on margin. Below, forewing generally has 5 eyespots and hindwing 6 that are black with a gold edge and white, circular centers. On forewing, the upper third of the middle brown band is curved outward with a central bump. Very similar to Southern Pearly-eye.

BEHAVIOR

Holds wings closed, perches near ground, and doesn't visit flowers.

DID YOU KNOW?

Most abundant in the
Piedmont of the Carolinas.

APPALACHIAN BROWN

Lethe appalachia

SIZE

Closed-winged
1 to 1.5 in

RESIDENT

FLIGHT TIME

JAN

FEB

MAR

APR

MAY

JUN

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AUG

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DEC



Photos: T. Austin, D. Kastner

HOST PLANTS

Various Sedges

HABITATS

Bottomlands, Swamps,
Forested Wetland Margins,
Stream Banks

RANGE:

Eastern US.
Mainly found in the
Piedmont of the Carolinas.

ID FEATURES

Overall gray-brown with rounded wings. Below, fine wavy lines on underside, and uniformly sized eyespots on both wings. There is a faint pale band between the eyespots and the first wavy line on both wings. Above, rarely shown but eyespots and pale band can be seen.

BEHAVIOR

Holds wings closed, perches near ground, and doesn't visit flowers.

Similar Species

Pearly-eyes [pg. 44-45]
Little Wood-Satyr

DID YOU KNOW?

Feeds on tree sap, rotting fruits,
droppings, and carrion.

GEMMED SATYR

Cyllopsis gemma

SIZE
Closed-winged
0.75 in

Photos: T. Austin



HOST PLANTS

Various forest grasses

HABITATS

Forested Wetland Margins,
Forested Streams,
Floodplains

RANGE

Southeastern US.
Much of the Carolinas but
most abundant in Piedmont.

ID FEATURES

Above rarely shown but uniformly brown.
Below, a warm gray brown with faint wavy lines
across both wings. Hindwing margin has a
silver crescent-shaped marking with a brown
fringe and four small yellow, black, and white
eyespot.

BEHAVIOR

Flies low, holds wings closed, perches near
ground, and doesn't visit flowers.

Similar Species

Carolina Satyr [pg.48]

Intricate Satyr [pg.49]

Georgia Satyr

DID YOU KNOW?

*Its hindwing markings mimic a
jumping spider's face in order to
ward off predators.*

RESIDENT

**FLIGHT
TIME**

JAN

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CAROLINA SATYR

Hermeuptychia sosybius

SIZE

Closed-winged
0.75 in

RESIDENT

FLIGHT
TIME

JAN

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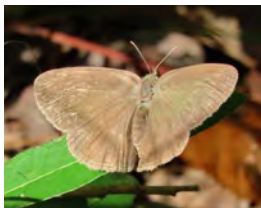
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Photos: T.Austin

HOST PLANTS

Rosette Grass and many other grasses

HABITATS

Mixed Forests,
Shaded Lawns

RANGE:

Southeastern US.
Across the Carolinas.**Similar Species***Intricate Satyr* [pg.49]*Little Wood-Satyr**Gemmed Satyr* [pg.47]

ID FEATURES

Below, hindwing with 6 eyespots and two dark vertical lines. The outer vertical line on the hindwing is "S" shaped towards the top, with a bulge away from the second eyespot. Above rarely shown but brown and nearly unmarked. However, forewing in males is darker towards the body. Extremely similar to Intricate Satyr.

BEHAVIOR

Flies low, holds wings closed, perches on ground often, and doesn't visit flowers. Often skittish and energetic in flight.

DID YOU KNOW?

Will host on many non-native grasses, including many types of turf.

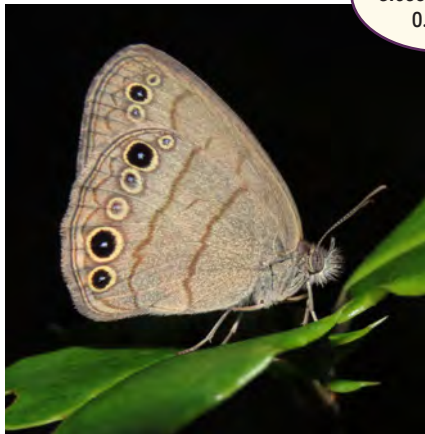
INTRICATE SATYR

Hermeuptychia intricata

SIZE
Closed-winged
0.75 in



Photos: T. Austin



HOST PLANTS

Rosette Grass, Wood-Oats, and various forest grasses

HABITATS

Floodplains, Creek Margins, Wetland Margins, Moist Hardwood Forests

RANGE

Deep South US.
Coastal Plain and Piedmont of the Carolinas.

Similar Species

Carolina Satyr [pg.48]

Little Wood-Satyr

Gemmed Satyr [pg.47]

ID FEATURES

Below, hindwing with 6 eyespots and two dark vertical lines. The outer vertical line on the hindwing is straight towards the top, with a small outward bump by the fourth eyespot. Above, rarely shown but uniformly brown and unmarked. Extremely similar to Carolina Satyr.

BEHAVIOR

Flies low, holds wings closed, perches on ground often, and doesn't visit flowers. Relatively easy to approach and photograph for a Satyr.

RESIDENT

FLIGHT TIME

JAN

FEB

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DEC

DO YOU KNOW?

This is a cryptic species, only just discovered in 2014.

SILVER-SPOTTED SKIPPER

Epargyreus clarus

SIZE

Closed-winged
1 to 1.5 in

RESIDENT

**FLIGHT
TIME**

JAN

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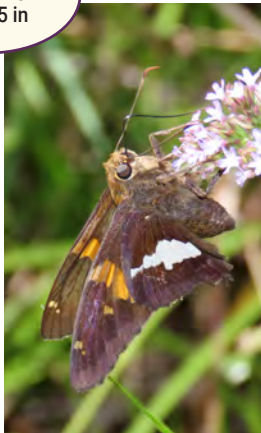
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Photos: T. Austin

HOST PLANTS

Wisteria, Kudzu,
Black Locust, and
many other Legumes

HABITATS

Woodland Borders,
Thickets, Fields, Gardens,
Powerline Clearings

RANGE

Most of the Continental US.
Across the Carolinas.

Similar Species

Hoary Edge

Golden Banded-Skipper

ID FEATURES

Large for a skipper. Above, brown with a band of bronze orange in middle of forewing. Below, dark brown with faint purple silver iridescence along wing borders. Large white patch in middle of hindwing. Forewing showing same bronze band as above.

BEHAVIOR

Flight is strong, rapid, and sometimes erratic.

DID YOU KNOW?

Caterpillars use silk to
fold over host plant leaves
to create a shelter.

LONG-TAILED SKIPPER

Urbanus proteus

SIZE

Spread-winged
1.5 to 2.25 in

MIGRANT

FLIGHT TIME

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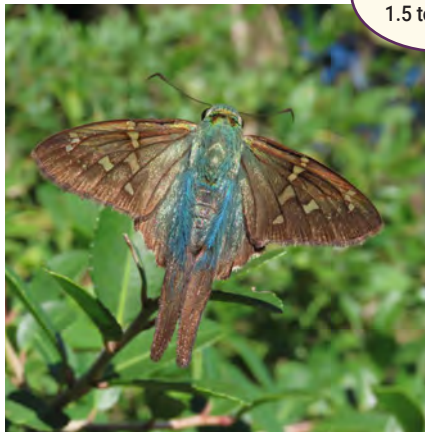
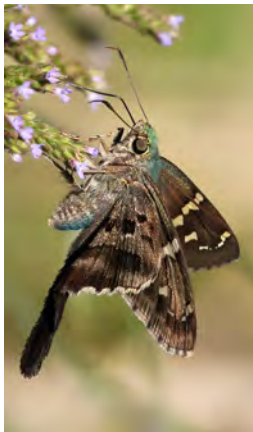
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Photos: T.Austin; D.Kastner



HOST PLANTS

Spurred Butterfly Pea, Kudzu, Wisteria, Garden Beans, and many other Legumes

HABITATS

Gardens, Fields, Meadows, Powerline Clearings, Roadsides

RANGE

Southeastern US.
Across the Carolinas.

ID FEATURES

Overall, brown with long hindwing tails. Above, brown with an arch of pale hourglass-shaped spots in the middle of the forewing and blue green iridescence on and around the body. Below, brown with two dark brown bands on the hindwing. Forewing with pale spots near tip.

BEHAVIOR

Fast and often with an unpredictable flight pattern.

Similar Species

Dorantes Longtail

DID YOU KNOW?

A common garden pest on green bean plants in summer.

COMMON SOOTYWING

Pholisora catullus

SIZE

Spread-winged
1 to 1.25 in

RESIDENT

FLIGHT TIME

JAN

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SEP

OCT

NOV

DEC



Photos: T.Austin, D.Kastner

HOST PLANTS

Pigweed, Goosefoot

HABITATS

Pastures, Prairies,
Meadows, Old Fields,
Field Borders

RANGE

Much of Continental US.
Mainly the Piedmont
of NC and rare in SC.

Similar Species

Duskywings [pg.53-55]

ID FEATURES

Both above and below, solid dark brown or black with many small white dots on outer half of forewing. The white markings on top of its head and its white "beard" are distinct.

BEHAVIOR

Flies in open areas and often lands on or close to ground.

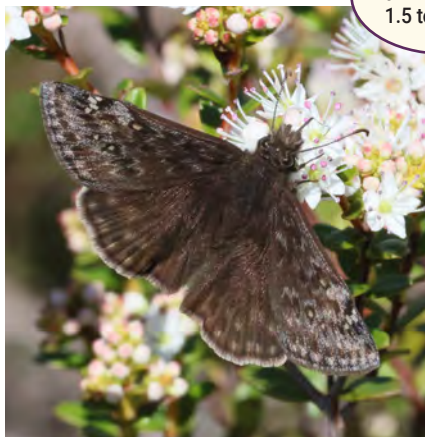
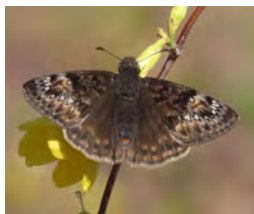
DID YOU KNOW?

Rarely found in natural habitats,
as its host plants depend on
soil disturbance.

JUVENAL'S DUSKYWING

Erynnis juvenalis

SIZE
Spread-winged
1.5 to 1.75 in



Photos: T.Austin; D.Kastner

HOST PLANTS

Oak

HABITATS

Open Woods, Savannas,
Forest Openings,
Forested Roads

RANGE

Eastern US.
Across the Carolinas.

Similar Species

Horace's Duskywing [pg.54]

Zarucco Duskywing [pg.55]

ID FEATURES

Both above and below, dark brown. Can be uniformly colored or mottled. Above, forewing with silver frosting, a full line of translucent spots near the margin, and one translucent "wrist" spot. Below, hindwing often has two pale spots near its tip.

BEHAVIOR

Flies quickly low to the ground, often lands on dirt roads.

RESIDENT

FLIGHT TIME

JAN

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DID YOU KNOW?

Only has a single brood,
which flies in spring.

HORACE'S DUSKYWING

Erynnis horatius

SIZE

Spread-winged
1.5 to 1.75 in

RESIDENT

FLIGHT TIME

JAN

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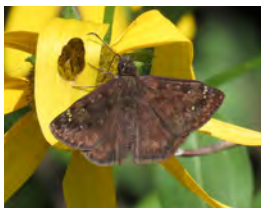
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Photos: T.Austin, D.Kastner

HOST PLANTS

Oak

HABITATS

Forests, Savannas,
Roadsides, Lawns,
Field Borders

RANGE

Eastern US.
Across the Carolinas.

Similar Species

Juvenal's Duskywing [pg.53]

Zarucco Duskywing [pg.55]

ID FEATURES

Both above and below, dark brown. Can be uniformly colored or mottled. Above, forewing has a partial line of translucent spots near the margin and one translucent "wrist" spot that is more prominent in females. Below, hindwing without spots.

BEHAVIOR

Flies quickly low to the ground, often lands on dirt roads.

DID YOU KNOW?

One of the most widespread butterflies in the Carolinas.

ZARUCCO DUSKYWING

Erynnis zarucco

SIZE
Spread-winged
1.5 to 1.75 in

RESIDENT

**FLIGHT
TIME**

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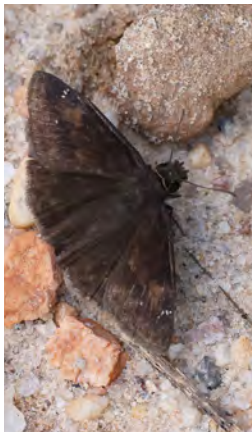
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Photos: T.Austin; D.Kastner



HOST PLANTS

Black Locust, Riverhemp, Indigo, and other shrubby Legumes

HABITATS

Savannas, Old Fields, Sand Barrens, Pine Forests, Roadsides, Forest Edges

RANGE

Southeastern US.
Mainly the Coastal Plain of the Carolinas.

ID FEATURES

Both above and below, dark brown to near black in males. Above, forewing has a partial line of translucent spots near the margin. There is no translucent forewing "wrist" spot, although females may have a tan speck in the same place. Below, hindwing without spots.

BEHAVIOR

Flies quickly low to the ground, often lands on dirt roads.

Similar Species

Juvenal's Duskywing [pg.53]

Horace's Duskywing [pg.54]

Common Sootywing [pg.56]

DID YOU KNOW?

Its caterpillars fold leaves into a tent using silk.

WHITE CHECKERED-SKIPPER

Burnsius albezans

SIZE

Spread-winged
1 to 1.25 in

RESIDENT

FLIGHT TIME

JAN

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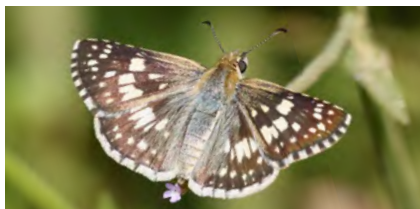
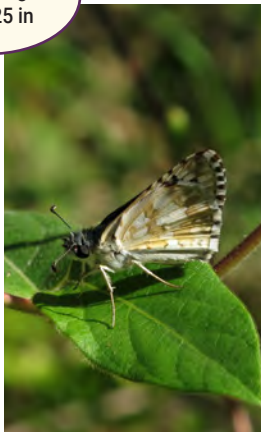
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Photos: T.Austin, D.Kastner

HOST PLANTS

Cuban Jute and other
Mallows

HABITATS

Lawns, Gardens,
Field Borders, Roadsides,
Old Fields, Disturbed Sites

RANGE

Southwest and Deep South
US. All of SC.

Similar Species

Common Checkered-Skipper
Tropical Checkered-Skipper
[pg.57]

ID FEATURES

Above, brown with large blocky white spots and blue green on body. Males often with more white and blue. Forewing lacks an oval spot on the "wrist" beyond the middle hourglass-shaped spot. Below, mainly white brown blocks and bands. The leading edge of the hindwing is white at the center. The Common Checkered-Skipper and White Checkered-Skipper are indistinguishable in the field. Only dissection can tell them apart.

BEHAVIOR

Flies rapidly near the ground in open areas. Rarely perches for long and quite skittish.

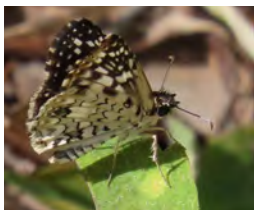
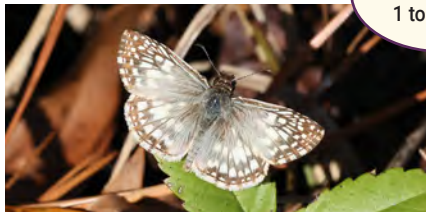
DID YOU KNOW?

Since the 1990s the White Checkered-Skipper has displaced the Common Checkered-Skipper from almost the entirety of SC, but not yet from NC.

TROPICAL CHECKERED-SKIPPER

Burnsius oileus

SIZE
Spread-winged
1 to 1.25 in



Photos: T.Austin; D.Kastner

HOST PLANTS

Cuban Jute and other
Mallows

HABITATS

Lawns, Gardens,
Field Borders, Roadsides,
Old Fields, Disturbed Sites

RANGE

Deep South of US.
Mainly in SC Coastal Plain.

Similar Species

White Checkered-Skipper [pg.56]
Common Checkered-Skipper

ID FEATURES

Above, brown with large blocky white spots and blue green on body. Males often with more white and blue. Forewing has a singular oval spot on the "wrist" beyond the middle hourglass-shaped spot. Below, mainly white brown blocks and bands. The leading edge of the hindwing has a brown patch at the center.

BEHAVIOR

Flies rapidly near the ground in open areas.
Rarely perches for long and is quite skittish.

RESIDENT

FLIGHT TIME

JAN

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DID YOU KNOW?

This species is expanding northward into NC.

DION SKIPPER

Euphyes dion

SIZE

Closed-winged
0.75 to 1 in

RESIDENT

**FLIGHT
TIME**

JAN

FEB

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Photos: T. Austin

HOST PLANTS

True Sedge, Bulrush

HABITATS

Open Wetlands, Ditches,
Freshwater Marshes,
Swamp Margins

RANGE

Eastern US.
Mainly the Coastal Plain
of the Carolinas.

Similar Species

Dukes Skipper

ID FEATURES

Below, brown with two pale rays on the hindwing, one along the body, which may be hard to see, and one in the middle that doesn't reach the wing margin. Above on males, a heavy dark brown border with orange center on both wings. Orange on forewing with a central black dash. Above on females, mostly dark brown with forewing having an orange leading edge near body and a row of pale orange blocks near center.

BEHAVIOR

Nectars frequently and prefers to perch on flowers or vegetation.

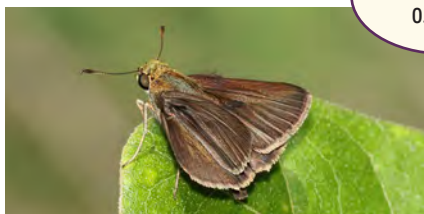
DID YOU KNOW?

May venture into upland habitats
to find nectar.

DUN SKIPPER

Euphyes vestris

SIZE
Closed-winged
0.75 in



Photos: T.Austin; D.Kastner

HOST PLANTS

Various Sedges

HABITATS

Flatwoods, Floodplains,
Ditches, Roadsides and
Moist Forest Edges

RANGE

Much of the continental US.
Across the Carolinas.

Similar Species

Little Glassywing

Northern Broken-Dash

Clouded Skipper

ID FEATURES

Above and below, a uniform dark brown with no clear markings. Head gold on fresh individuals, most often males. Below, especially in females, a faint band of spots may appear on the outer third of the hindwing. Above on the forewing in females, there are two pale spots in the center of the wing and a faint "wrist bracelet".

BEHAVIOR

Usually stays in the shade. Flies low to the ground and nectars frequently.

DID YOU KNOW?

Worn individuals can appear to have no markings at all.

RESIDENT

FLIGHT TIME

JAN

FEB

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DEC

CLOUDED SKIPPER

Lerema accius

SIZE

Closed-winged
0.75 in

RESIDENT

**FLIGHT
TIME**

JAN

FEB

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JUN

JUL

AUG

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DEC



Photos: D.Kastner

HOST PLANTS

Various grasses

HABITATS

Wet Meadows, Ditches,
Floodplains, Flatwoods,
Shaded Roadsides

RANGE

Southeastern US.
Across the Carolinas.

Similar Species

Zabulon Skipper [pg. 61]

ID FEATURES

Below, dark brown with "clouds" of silver frosting on both wing borders as well as towards the body and the center of the hindwing. Above, solid dark brown with two pale spots in center of forewing. These spots are often larger in females. Prominent white "wrist bracelet" on forewing seen both above and below.

BEHAVIOR

Stays in shade, often low. Can be remarkably sedentary on flowers.

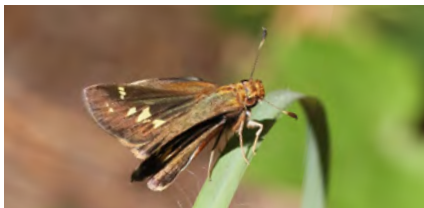
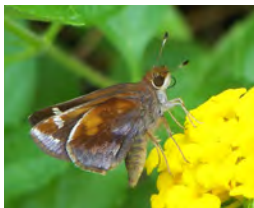
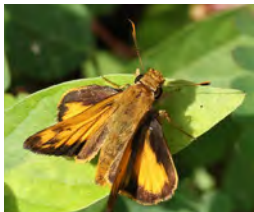
DID YOU KNOW?

Has a very long proboscis, which it uses to drink nectar from large flowers that few other skippers can access.

ZABULON SKIPPER

Lon zabulon

SIZE
Closed-winged
0.75 in



Photos: D. Kastner

HOST PLANTS

Various grasses

HABITATS

Creek Banks, Wetland
Margins, Moist Forest Edges,
Damp Roadsides

RANGE

Eastern US except much of
the Gulf Coast. Mainly in the
Piedmont of the Carolinas.

Similar Species

Clouded Skipper (female) [pg.60]
Hobomok Skipper (male)

ID FEATURES

Males and females are distinctly colored.
Below in males, yellow orange in center of
wings with warm brown border and two brown
blocks near body. Above in males, pale orange
with a black border on both wings. Below in
females, warm dark brown with silver blue
frothing to both wing borders. Hindwing tip
with a white fringe. Forewing with a prominent
light "wrist bracelet" both above and below.
Above, hindwing dark brown with a dull orange
center. Forewing with a diagonal line of 4 large
pale blocks.

BEHAVIOR

Males often stand guard on a selected sunlit
leaf and will fiercely patrol a territory around it.
Females usually stay low to the ground.

RESIDENT

**FLIGHT
TIME**

JAN

FEB

MAR

APR

MAY

JUN

JUL

AUG

SEP

OCT

NOV

DEC

WHIRLABOUT

Polites vibex

SIZE

Closed-winged
0.5 to 0.75 in

RESIDENT

**FLIGHT
TIME**

JAN

FEB

MAR

APR

MAY

JUN

JUL

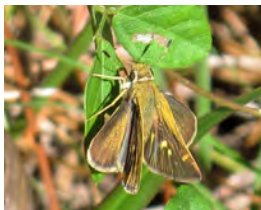
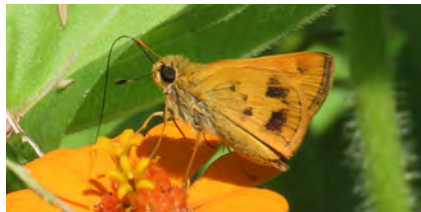
AUG

SEP

OCT

NOV

DEC



Photos: T.Austin; D.Kastner

HOST PLANTS

Various grasses, including non-native grasses

HABITATS

Savannas, Field Borders, Roadsides, Powerline Clearings, Old Fields

RANGE

Deep South US.
All of SC and mainly Coastal Plain of NC.

Similar Species

Fiery Skipper [pg.63]
Huron Sachem

ID FEATURES

Below, orange and hindwing has a distinct pale band in the center surrounded by 4 brown patches. Males are more vibrant orange with a greater pattern contrast. Females are more brown and have a pale "wrist bracelet" both above and below. Above in males, hindwing bright orange with a dark border. Forewing bright orange with a jagged dark margin and two black dashes in center. Above in females, mainly dark brown. Forewing with a dull-orange leading edge towards the body and a line of pale blocks down the center.

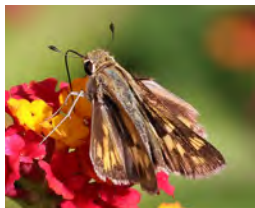
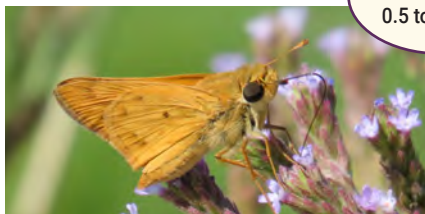
BEHAVIOR

Lands on or near the ground. Quick to take flight and flies fast. Has a hard to follow spiraling flight pattern that "whirls about".

FIERY SKIPPER

Hylephila phyleus

SIZE
Closed-winged
0.5 to 0.75 in



Photos: T.Austin; D.Kastner

HOST PLANTS

Various grasses, including non-native grasses

HABITATS

Lawns, Old Fields, Roadsides, Savannas, Powerline Clearings

RANGE

Eastern and Southwest US. Across the Carolinas.

Similar Species

Whirlabout [pg.62]

Huron Sachem

Delaware Skipper

ID FEATURES

Below in males, bright orange with scattered black dots. Above, bright orange with jagged black borders. On forewing, leading edge orange with two rectangular dashes in center. Below in females, orange tan with scattered black dots and a faint pale arch on outer third of hindwing. Above, dark brown with orange arrow on hindwing. Forewing with orange "wrist bracelet", leading edge orange near body with orange spot at its end, and line of orange blocks diagonal through center.

BEHAVIOR

Drinks nectar frequently and visits almost any flower. Usually perches low.

DID YOU KNOW?

The most common and widespread skipper in the Carolinas.

RESIDENT

FLIGHT TIME

JAN

FEB

MAR

APR

MAY

JUN

JUL

AUG

SEP

OCT

NOV

DEC

EUFALA SKIPPER

Lerodea eufala

SIZE

Closed-winged
0.5 in

RESIDENT

**FLIGHT
TIME**

JAN

FEB

MAR

APR

MAY

JUN

JUL

AUG

SEP

OCT

NOV

DEC



Photos: T. Austin

HOST PLANTS

Various grasses, including some non-native grasses

HABITATS

Savannas, Sand Barrens, Powerline Clearings, Dry Roadsides, Clear Cuts

RANGE

Southern US.
Coastal Plain and Piedmont of the Carolinas.

Similar Species

Swarthy Skipper

ID FEATURES

Below, gray tan sometimes silvery. Wings elongated. Above, light brown with an arch of 4 white dots at the center of the forewing. Both above and below, leading edge of forewing may be tan and has a white "wrist bracelet".

BEHAVIOR

Often skittish. Usually perches on the ground or on low vegetation.

DID YOU KNOW?

One of the least marked and palest of the skippers in the Carolinas.

OCOLA SKIPPER

Panoquina ocola

SIZE

Closed-winged
0.75 to 1.25 in

MIGRANT

FLIGHT TIME

JAN

FEB

MAR

APR

MAY

JUN

JUL

AUG

SEP

OCT

NOV

DEC

Photos: D. Kastner



HOST PLANTS

Various grasses

HABITATS

Old Fields, Meadows,
Roadsides, Gardens,
Wetlands, Nearly Anywhere

RANGE

Southeastern US.
Across the Carolinas.

ID FEATURES

Above and below, brown sometimes with hint of gold. Wings very elongate, with bottom corner of forewing extending past hindwing. Below, prominent wing veins. Outer third of hindwing often with a faint band of dots. Small white "wrist bracelet" visible both above and below. Above, large arrowhead-shaped pale spot in center of forewing with a smaller spot beyond it.

BEHAVIOR

Flies very fast and difficult to follow. Drinks nectar frequently.

Similar Species

Salt Marsh Skipper

DID YOU KNOW?

A prolific tropical migrant and strong flier that migrates to the Carolinas from Florida every year.

LEAST SKIPPER

Ancyloxypha numitor

SIZE

Closed-winged
<0.5 in

RESIDENT

**FLIGHT
TIME**

JAN

FEB

MAR

APR

MAY

JUN

JUL

AUG

SEP

OCT

NOV

DEC



Photos: D. Kastner

HOST PLANTS

Various wetland grasses

HABITATS

Freshwater Marshes,
Ditches, Isolated Wetlands,
Bogs, Stream Banks

RANGE

Most of the Continental US.
Across the Carolinas.

Similar Species

Southern Skipperling [pg.67]

ID FEATURES

Somewhat elongated wings and very small.
Below, bright orange with prominent pale veins.
Above, black wing borders with bright orange
centers. Body white beneath.

BEHAVIOR

Flies low, slow, and close to vegetation.
Often perches within dense vegetation.

DID YOU KNOW?

Seemingly avoided by most
predators due to its aposematic
black and orange coloration,
although not known to be toxic.

SOUTHERN SKIPPERLING

Copaeodes minimamidea

SIZE
Closed-winged
<0.5 in

RESIDENT

FLIGHT TIME

JAN

FEB

MAR

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MAY

JUN

JUL

AUG

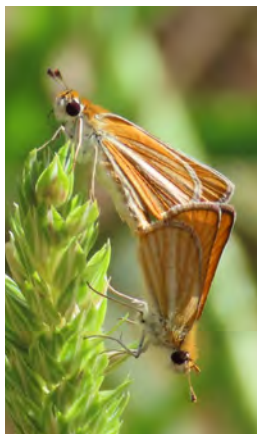
SEP

OCT

NOV

DEC

Photos: T.Austin



HOST PLANTS

Various grasses

HABITATS

Fields Margins, Lawns,
Sand Barrens, Pastures,
Savannas, Roadsides

RANGE

Deep South US.
Coastal Plain of Carolinas
and SC Piedmont.

ID FEATURES

Very small with elongated wings. Below, bright orange with a white ray down the center of the hindwing. Above, bright orange, with black on the shoulders of the hindwing. Body white beneath.

BEHAVIOR

Flies low and close to the ground, but moves relative quick for its size.

Similar Species

Least Skipper [pg.66]

DID YOU KNOW?

Our smallest species of butterfly
in the Carolinas.

OTHER SPECIES FOUND REGIONALLY

SWALLOWTAILS

Palamedes Swallowtail
Eastern Giant Swallowtail
Zebra Swallowtail

WHITES, SULPHURS, & YELLOWS

Checkered White
Southern Dogface

GOSSAMER-WINGED BUTTERFLIES

Great Purple Hairstreak
White-M Hairstreak
Juniper Hairstreak
Hessel's Hairstreak
Brown Elfin
Frosted Elfin
Henry's Elfin
Eastern Pine Elfin
Coral Hairstreak
Oak Hairstreak
King's Hairstreak
Banded Hairstreak
Holly Azure
Iryna's Azure

BRUSHFOOTS

Zebra Longwing
Mourning Cloak
Silvery Checkerspot
Texan Crescent
Little Wood-Satyr
Georgia Satyr
Common Wood-Nymph

SKIPPERS

Dorantes Longtail
Hoary Edge
Southern Cloudywing
Northern Cloudywing
Confused Cloudywing
Hayhurst's Scallopwing
Sleepy Duskywing
Wild Indigo Duskywing
Common Checkered-Skipper
Delaware Skipper
Byssus Skipper
Crossline Skipper
Tawny-edged Skipper
Southern Broken-Dash
Northern-Broken Dash
Little Glassywing
Huron Sachem
Cobweb Skipper
Dotted Skipper
Meske's Skipper
Yehl Skipper
Reversed Roadside-Skipper
Lace-winged Roadside-Skipper
Dusky Roadside-Skipper
Common Roadside-Skipper
Swarthy Skipper
Brazilian Skipper
Yucca Giant-Skipper
Cofaqui Giant-Skipper



183 Butterfly Species

have been recorded in the Carolinas as of publication time. Maybe you will add to the count!

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WHERE YOU CAN LEARN MORE

Carolina Butterfly Society



CBS spans both North Carolina and South Carolina and promotes the appreciation, study, and conservation of butterflies in the Carolinas. CBS hosts butterfly walks and NABA counts through its local chapters across both states, publishes a quarterly newsletter sharing butterfly records and trip reports, and hosts an annual symposium for experts and enthusiasts to share their work and stories.

North Carolina Biodiversity Project



promotes public awareness, appreciation, and conservation of the rich biodiversity found in NC. The project, through their partnership with NC State Parks, hosts the "Butterflies of North Carolina", a tremendous resource and reference for anyone studying or watching butterflies in the Carolinas.



North American Butterfly Association

NABA spans the whole of North America. NABA advocates for the conservation, research, and monitoring of butterfly populations continent-wide and oversees the NABA counts program and database.

Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation



is an international organization that promotes the protection of the natural world through invertebrate conservation. They provide many resources for learning about all types of pollinators and on how to build pollinator gardens or restore habitat.

REFERENCES

In addition to the authors' first-hand experiences and collective expertise, several outside sources were consulted for the creation of this guide book to provide supplemental information, reference distribution records, and affirm the material presented herein. Further, this booklet contains merely a quarter of the butterfly species found in the Carolinas. The below resources and field guides can provide you a tremendous wealth of detail and information for expanding your knowledge and understanding of butterflies across the Eastern United States.

Online Resources

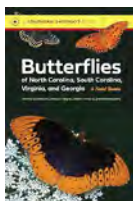


Butterflies of North Carolina: 33rd Approximation 2026
https://auth1.dpr.ncparks.gov/nbnc/nbnc_33.php

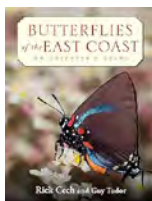


Alabama Butterfly Atlas
<https://alabama.butterflyatlas.usf.edu/>

Field Guides



*Butterflies of
North Carolina,
South Carolina,
Virginia, and Georgia.*
2024
LeGrand, Phippen, Carter,
& Howard.



*Butterflies of the
East Coast:
An Observer's Guide.*
2005
Cech & Tudor.



*Field Guide to
Butterflies of
North America.*
2003.
Brock & Kaufman.



Southern 8ths Preserve

One can't help but notice a butterfly – Mother Nature's gift to make-you-look. No matter where you are... a big field of flowers and grasses, in the middle of a town in a flower bed alongside a house or on a strip of weeds alongside a parking lot, you can't help but stop and look at a brightly colored, erratic flying butterfly. Butterflies just catch your attention and almost always make you smile.

Some may say that butterflies are pretty cool, but they are not in the same league as moths. After all there are estimated to be over 160,000 moth species worldwide compared to only 17,500 butterfly species - and only about 750 species or just 4% of all butterfly species live in the U.S.

But while smaller in the quantity department, they make up in the make-you-look department. Butterflies normally are active in the daytime, while moths prefer the cloak of darkness. So, no hanging sheets and special lights for you to look at them. Just take a daytime stroll and there's a good chance they'll be around making you smile.

With the Carolina Butterfly Society's help, we wrote this book hoping we can help you learn even more about how special butterflies are, how to identify some of them and how to make your butterfly strolls even more enjoyable.

Pati & Brad

Jackson Road West, Chesterfield, South Carolina