

Dion Skipper (*Euphyes dion*)

Pennsylvania Invertebrate Species of Concern

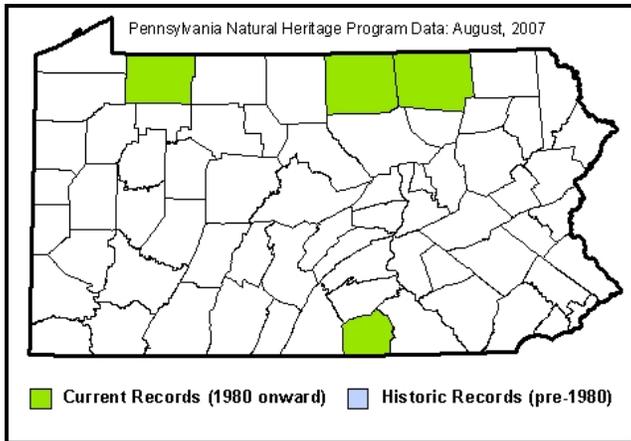
State Rank: S1 (critically imperiled) Global Rank: G4 (apparently secure)

Identification

The upper side of the forewing of a male Dion Skipper is dark brown with a central orange area with a black stigma; the female forewing is dark brown with light orange spots. The upper side of the hindwing is dark brown with a wide orange streak. The underside of hindwing is red-brown or orange brown with 2 yellow-orange streaks running from the base to the margins (Struttman 2005).

Habitat/Behavior

The Dion Skipper is generally found in open to shrubby sedge wetlands and occasionally in openings in red maple swamps. Subspecies *dion* occurs in the northern part of the range and is generally found on calcareous soils associated with large sedges like *Carex lacustris*. Coastal plain and southeastern populations (mostly subspecies *alabamae*) are found in a great variety of sedge situations from swales in wet pine barrens (especially in southern New Jersey), to bogs, roadside ditches and is a very good colonizer (NatureServe 2005).



Life history

Caterpillar hosts include various sedges including woolgrass (*Scirpus cyperinus*), hairy sedge (*Carex lacustris*), and shoreline sedge (*Carex hyalinolepis*). Third stage caterpillars hibernate, emerge in the spring to complete feeding and pupate in nests made of leaves and silk. Males have a quick flight, are territorial, and perch in marshes in the afternoons to await females. Adults feed on nectar from flowers of pickerelweed, sneezeweed, buttonbush, Alsike clover and others (Struttman 2005).

Status

Scattered populations occur along the Atlantic coast from western Massachusetts and southeastern New York south to northeastern Florida, west to northeast Texas, and north to southeastern North Dakota, northern Wisconsin, southern Ontario, and southern Quebec (Struttman 2005). Recent records of documented occurrences of this species in Pennsylvania include Adams, Bradford, Luzerne, and Tioga, counties. Additional surveys for this species are recommended.

Conservation Recommendations

Preserve the wetland habitat and avoid pesticide applications in or near wetlands containing this species.

References

- Cook, W. 2005. Will Cook's Photos www.duke.edu/~cwcook/pix/dionskipper.html (Accessed on 2-28-2005).
- NatureServe. 2005. NatureServe Explorer: An online encyclopedia of life [web application]. Version 4.2. NatureServe, Arlington, Virginia. Available <http://www.natureserve.org/explorer> (Accessed: February 28, 2005).
- Opler, P.A. and V. Malikul. 1992. A Field Guide to Eastern Butterflies. The Peterson Field Guide Series, Houghton-Mifflin Co., Boston, MA. 396 pp.
- Struttman, J.M. 2005. USGS Butterflies of North America web site: <http://www.npwrc.usgs.gov/resource/distr/lepid/bflyusa/usa/475.htm> (Accessed on 2-28-2005).



Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program