

A tentative table of Columbia County NY butterflies, with indications of their status.

C. Vispo (with input from Harry Zirlin & others) Aug. 2022

These pages are meant to help you learn the butterflies of the County. Alone they are, obviously enough, useless, but if you match them up with a good guide (we recommend Cech & Tutor's *Butterflies of the East Coast*), then they should help your learning. All the common, occasional or rare butterflies listed here have been observed by us or our collaborators, except for those marked "rare". The so marked butterflies are listed by Opler and colleagues (at the Butterflies and Moths of North America web site) as being recorded from Columbia County, but we have no recent records. Flight time and foods are from Cech and Tudor; habitat is from that work and our own observations. Species that seem to have experienced a net regional increase over the last 150 years are indicated by "UP", those which have apparently experienced a decline are indicated by "DOWN"; the remaining species have shown no obvious trends. These assessments of dynamics are based upon recently published butterfly faunas from the Northeast and a review of historical literature dating back to 1853. Glassberg's *Butterflies through Binoculars: Boston-New York-Washington Region* is also a good, regional guide.

Common Name	Apparent Abundance in County*	Trend	Flight Time	Caterpillar Food	Habitat
FAMILY HESPERIIDAE					
Common Sootywing	common		mid-May - mid June; late July-Aug	lamb's quarters & others	open
Duskywing, Juvenal's	common		late April-early June	oaks	varied open, usually not wet or disturbed
Skipper, European	common	UP	June-July	timothy & other introd grasses	fields
Skipper, Hobomok	common		late May - early July	grasses	old fields
Skipper, Least	common		June - Oct	grasses	wet, tall grass
Skipper, Peck's	common		late May - Sept	grasses	fields
Skipper, Silver-spotted	common		June-Aug	black locust	brushier fields
Skipper, Tawny-edged	common	UP	late May -mid July; early Aug - Sept	grasses	grassy oft moist
Cloudywing, Northern	occasional		late May - early July	clovers & other legumes	"scrubby fields"
Dash, Black	occasional		late April - early June	sedges	sedgy wetlands
Dash, Long	occasional		early June-early July; Aug	grasses	open grassy oft moist
Duskywing, Wild Indigo	occasional	UP	May-Aug	wild indigo and now vetch	in or near alfalfa fields
Little Glassywing	occasional	UP	late June-July	Purple Top & ?? Other grasses	old fields/pastures
Skipper, Broadwing	occasional	UP	mid-July - Aug	reeds, sedges, wild rice	wet areas with Phragmites
Skipper, Common Checkered	occasional	UP	mid May - Sept	mallows	short, sparse fields/lawns
Skipper, Crossline	occasional		late June-early Aug	grasses	dry and moist fields
Skipper, Dun	occasional		July-Aug	sedges, maybe grasses	old fields
Duskywing, Horace's	rare		May, June, Sept	oak	dry, open oak woods
Mulberry Wing	rare		mid July - early Aug	sedges	sedgy wetlands
Northern Broken-dash	rare		early June-mid Aug	panic grasses	old fields
Skipper, Arctic	rare		late May to Mid-June	grasses	grasses near woods
Skipper, Cobweb	rare		May - June	bluestem	dry fields
Skipper, Deleware	rare	UP	mainly July	Little Bluestem, Switch Grass, other grasses?	varied, dry to wet
Skipper, Dion	rare		July	sedges	wetlands
Skipper, Fiery	rare		Sept-Oct	grasses	sunny upland
Skipper, Indian	rare	UP	May - June	grasses, inc. bluestem	dry, often shrubby, fields
Skipper, Leonard's	rare	DOWN	end of Aug/early Sept	native grasses such as Little Bluestem	dry upland grassland near wet area
Skipper, Ocola	rare		Sept-Oct in our area	Rice Cut Grass, other grasses?	widespread
Skipper, Pepper & Salt	rare		May - June	grasses	woodland openings
Skipper, Zabulon	rare		late May-mid June; mid Aug-mid Sept	grasses	shrubby, roadside
Cloudywing, Southern	rare*	UP	early June-mid July	legumes	open areas
Duskywing, Dreamy	rare*		mid-May - June	willows, aspen, black locust	open woods & edges
Duskywing, Mottled	rare*	DOWN	May-June, July-August	NJ Tea	open, dry woods
Hoary Edge	rare*		June-July	legumes, e.g tick trefoil	old field brush, edges
Skipper, Roadside	rare*	DOWN	late May-mid June	grasses	woodland openings
Duskywing, Columbine	unseen but possible	DOWN	May-June, July	Columbine	where host plant
Duskywing, Sleepy	unseen but possible		May	scrub oak	balds, barrens
Skipper, Dusted	unseen but possible		May - June	bluestems	dry, open
Skipper, Two spotted	unseen but possible		late June-July	sedges, esp. hairy-fruited sedge	wetlands
FAMILY LYCAENIDAE					
Azure, Spring-Summer	common		April-Sept	lots	mainly fields
Copper, American	common		May-Sept	dock species	drier fields
Eastern Tailed Blue	common		May-Sept	legumes	open, disturbed low growth
Copper, Bronze	occasional		mid June-mid July; early Aug - mid Sept	docks	the wetlands around ponds or streams
Hairstreak, Banded	occasional		May-Aug	oaks and hickories	edges, opens
Hairstreak, Grey	occasional		early May - mid June	various field/brush plants	open, weedy, disturbed
Hairstreak, Hickory	occasional		late June-early Aug	hardwoods	edges of rich, deciduous forests
Elfin, Eastern Pine	rare		May-June	pinos	near pine woods
Elfin, Brown	rare	DOWN	May	heath family	barrens, dry woods
Hairstreak, Coral	rare	UP	June	cherries, plums	old field, second growth
Hairstreak, Juniper	rare		mid May - June; Aug	red cedar	open uplands with Juniperus
Hairstreak, Red-banded	rare	UP	May-June; Aug-Sept	rotting leaves	open
Hairstreak, Striped	rare		late June - mid July	roses, cherries, hawthorn, heath, Carpinus	openings & edges in woods
Hairstreak, White M	rare	UP	May, Sept	oaks	oak forest

FAMILY LYCAENIDAE (cont'd.)

Blue, Silvery	rare		April-June	legumes	openings in moist forest
Harvester	rare		May-Sept	alder aphids	alder swamps
Copper, Bog	unseen but possible	DOWN	late June-July	cranberries	acid wet meadows
Hairstreak, Acadian	unseen but possible		July	willows	where willow
Hairstreak, Early	unseen but possible	DOWN	May-June, July-August	beechnuts	beech forests
Hairstreak, Edward's	unseen but possible		July	scrub oak	scrub oak forest
Hairstreak, Oak	unseen but possible		June-July	oaks	oak forest
FAMILY NYMPHALIDAE					
Fritillary, Meadow	common	DOWN	May-Sept	violets	moister fields
Checkerspot, Baltimore	common		mid June-mid July	turtlehead and now English plantain	some fields
Comma, Eastern	common	UP	3 flights, April - Sept?	elms and nettles	woods, especially floodplain forests
Common Ringlet	common	UP	late May-early July; late July-Aug	grasses	old fields
Common Wood Nymph	common		July-early Sept	grasses	fields with shrubs or other tall vegetation
Fritillary, Great Spangled	common		late June-early Sept	violets	forest edges
Lady, Painted	common		May-Oct	various field plants	circa any opening
Little Wood Satyr	common		late May-early Aug	grasses	edges, clearings of woods, thence into open
Monarch	common		mid June-Sept	milkweed	old fields, edges
Mourning Cloak	common		year around; most common in summer	willows and other trees	wanders
Northern Pearly Eye	common		late June-early Aug	grasses	forests, oft near water
Pearl Crescent	common		mid May-early Sept	asters	a variety of fields
Viceroy	common		late May-early Oct	willow	moist, shrubby
Common Buckeye	occasional		July-Sept	plantains, scrophs, vervains	open with some bare ground
Brown, Appalachian	occasional		late June-Aug	sedges	wooded wet areas, near sedges
Lady, American	occasional		mid May-late Oct	composites	circa anywhere
Question Mark	occasional		late June-Oct	elms	forests and edges
Red Admiral	occasional		May-Oct	nettles	moist woods and meadows, esp floodplain forests
Red-spotted Purple	occasional		mid June-early Aug; mid Aug-mid Sept	cherry	near deciduous, often moist forest
Tortoiseshell, Compton	occasional		March-fall	birches and willows	forest openings and edges
Tortoiseshell, Milbert's	occasional		mid June-Oct?	nettles	wet/damp near woods
Brown, Eyed	rare	DOWN	late June-early Aug	sedges	sedgeland
Comma, Grey	rare		3 flights, April - Sept	Ribes, elm	woodland clearings
Emperor, Hackberry	rare	DOWN	July-Aug	hackberries	floodplains with hackberry
Fritillary, Aphrodite	rare		late June-early Sept	violets	upland acid soils, moist grasslands
Fritillary, Variegated	rare		July-Oct	violet, thyme, plantain, purslane etc	open areas
Snout, American	rare		late June-mid Oct	Hackberry	river bottoms, wooded stream edges
White Admiral	rare		mid June-early Aug; mid Aug-mid Sept	cherry	forests, edges, shrub
Checkerspot, Harris'	rare*	DOWN	June-July	flat top aster	wet, open areas
Fritillary, Silver-bordered	rare*		June-Sept	wetland violets	overgrowing wet areas, marshes, bogs etc
Fritillary, Atlantis	rare*	DOWN	mid June-mid Sept	northern blue violet	woodside openings
Fritillary, Regal	rare*, regionally extinct	DOWN	late June-mid Sept	violets	extensive open areas with some wetness
Crescent, Tawny	regionally extinct?	DOWN	June-July	certain asters	rocky, scrubby areas
Checkerspot, Silvery	unseen but possible		July	sunflowers	edges, stream banks
Comma, Green	unseen but possible		3 flights, April - Sept?	Ribes	"boreal woodlands"
Emperor, Tawny	unseen but possible	DOWN	July-Aug	hackberries	where hackberry
FAMILY PAPILIONIDAE					
Swallowtail, Eastern Tiger	common		late May-Oct	black cherry, tuliptree, ash	near deciduous trees
Swallowtail, Black	common	DOWN	May-Sept	parsely, carrot and other umbels	mainly open fields
Swallowtail, Spicebush	occasional		May-Aug	Spicebush	varied open space, usually near forest
Swallowtail, Canadian Tiger	occasional		May-early June?	birch, aspen, cherry	near deciduous trees
Swallowtail, Giant	rare		May -Sept	plants in the Rue family (or Rutaceae)	various, often semi-open
Swallowtail, Pipevine	rare		June-early Oct	pipevine, Virginia Snakeroot	in our area, gardens
FAMILY PIERIDAE					
Sulphur, Orange	common		mid May - early Oct	alfalfa and other fabaceae	open, weedy, alfalfa
Cabbage White	common	UP	May-Oct	crucifers	pastures or cultivated fields
Sulphur, Clouded	common	UP	May-mid Oct	legumes	open, prefers more natural areas than orange
Little Yellow	rare	DOWN	mid Aug-early Sept	senna family	fields and waste areas
White, West Virginia	rare	DOWN	early April-late May	mainly Dentaria/Cardamine diphyllo	rich moist woods
Falcate Orange Tip	unseen but possible	DOWN	May	mustards, rock cresses, two-leaved toothwort	"trap rock hills"
Mustard White	unseen but possible	DOWN	as early as late April - Aug	mustards, eg cut-leaved toothwort (dentaria), arabis, cardamine	edges, streamside, old fields
Sulphur, Cloudless	unseen but possible		Aug-Oct migrant	senna family	open
White, Checkered	unseen but possible	DOWN	late Aug-Sept	crucifers	weedy, open
FAMILY RIONIDAE					
Northern Metalmark	unseen but possible		July	round-leaved raqwort	limestone outcrops

