

Skipper Sides (A tribute to Sharon Wander, inspired by her work on dorsal field marks.)

Grass-Skippers: small butterflies, few larger than a quarter, with plump bodies, small wings, rapid flight. Named for caterpillars' hostplants: grasses or sedges. Declining in abundance as grasses replaced by forbs, wetlands degrade.

Orange Skippers with no dark pattern – Smaller Species. Smallest NJ skippers, typically in meadows.



Least (left)

Lower thorax & abdomen white. Abdomen longer & more pointed than European, wings more rounded. Slow meandering flight *through* vegetation. Spring to Fall.

European (right)

Body less contrasty, abdomen shorter & thicker than Least, wings more angular. Fresh, HW has pale frosting. Usually flies *above* vegetation. Summer.

Orange Skippers with no dark pattern – Larger Species.



Delaware

Bright orange-yellow, including fringes. Meadows, Summer.



Rare

Butterscotch-yellow. Dark FW cell-end bar often visible above HW. Vicinity of salt & brackish marshes, coastal S NJ, Summer.



Sachem M

Some bright, nearly unmarked. Trace of pattern usually present. FW more pointed than others in this group. Widespread, see below.



Photo: Wade Wander

Arogos

Not so bright as Delaware; veins pale, fringes white/tan not orange, narrow dark borders. ***May be extirpated N NJ.***

Southern Immigrants. Don't breed in NJ (yet!); migrate to NJ from the South, mid-Summer through Fall. Numbers variable; sometimes abundant; Sachem outnumbers Fiery. Any open area with nectar sources.



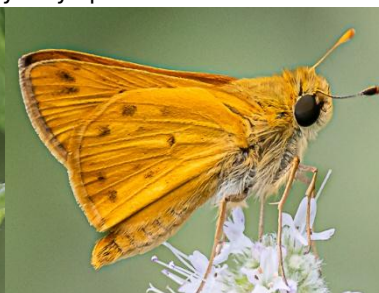
Sachem M

Variable. Most dull yellow-brown (some darker than photo, some bright orange, nearly unmarked). Irregular dark borders, angled sub-marginal band of pale elongate spots, more spots toward base. Dull orange central patch, large square stigma usually shows through along lower HW margin. FW more pointed than similar species.



Sachem F

Ground color yellowish- to medium-brown with variably-prominent pale chevron. Pair of pale spots below bracelet. Resembles Bluestem-Grass skippers (see below) but pattern differs from Dotted, color from Leonard's, the only such Skippers present Summer into Fall.



Fiery M

Bright yellow-orange, scattered black spots, thin black marginal line. FW bracelet *dark*. A few are nearly unspotted.



Fiery F

Like male but duller. FW may have two pale spots below bracelet.

Common Skippers of Open Areas – Bright Males with Prominent HW Bands.



Peck's MF

Small. Red-brown, two bands of brick-shaped yellow spots; irregular dark band between them often interrupted. Central spot of outer band elongate. Outer edges of spots square/rounded, inner edges concave. Spring – Fall.



Hobomok M

Frosting on outer FW & HW when fresh. Inner spot-band of Peck's replaced by single small spot. Both ends of spots square or rounded. Late Spring – early Summer.



Zabulon M

Orange & yellow. Irregular darker margin, Wide yellow band occupies most of HW; many of its spots with concave ends, scattered darker spots inside. Smudgy yellow patch in basal dark area. Spring – Fall.

All: Anterior margin of FW yellow; paired spots below bracelet. Typically more M seen than F.

Peck's: any open area with nectar sources.

Hobomok & Zabulon: woodland edges: trailsides, clearings, roadsides; also gardens, meadows, etc.

Peck's & Zabulon: Spring & Summer broods.

Hobomok: Spring brood only.

Common Skippers of Open Areas – Brown Females.



Hobomok F

Plain form with no HW markings. Bracelet, paler color distinguishes from Dun.



Hobomok F (Pocahontas)

Pattern and frosting like male but ground color darker brown, spots pale rather than yellow, pattern is often nearly obscured.



Zabulon F

Rich red-brown, frosting on wing edges and central HW. Chunky pale spots upper HW. *White HW apex, white "stitching" on anterior margin of FW.*

Common Skippers of Open Areas – Dark Species. Variable markings & wear may make ID difficult. Spring & Summer broods.



Dun

Uniform purple-black fresh, duller worn. Golden tinge on head. Usually *no bracelet*. Some have small obscure HW spots, and/or a hint of FW bracelet.



Little Glassywing

HW post-median band of small well-defined spots. Second spot from top elongate, Some with two small spots near bracelet. *Pale below antenna clubs a good field mark.*



Northern Broken-Dash

Compared to Little Glassywing, HW spots larger & less crisp. Band may give impression of a "3". No white below antennal club.



Southern Broken-Dash

Like Northern but ground color rusty. A few records from Cape May Co.

Glassywing named for large pale dorsal spot; **Broken-Dashes** for two-part stigma.

Sandy-Brown Skippers. Sandy-brown when fresh, with “matte” or “sanded” appearance, darken with wear. First three are widespread, mostly in dry meadows, Spring-Fall. Dotted is rare & local, Pine Barrens, Summer.



Swarthy

Smallest of the group.
Pale veins, no other markings.



Tawny-edged

Bright orange anterior FW, strong contrast with HW. FW orange may extend into yellow bracelet. Some have obscure HW spots.



Crossline

HW spot-band sharp angle “hocky-stick”. Usually more sandy than rusty; many faintly marked. Anterior FW may be orange, not so bright as Tawny-Edged, less contrast with HW. Named for diagonal stigma of M



Dotted

Rusty to sandy brown, markings sparse dots; some individuals unmarked. Crossline: duller spots, lacks pair below bracelet.

Boldly Patterned Wetland Skippers. First three are bright rusty, darker when worn. Prominent HW band, wider near middle.



Long Dash

HW band resembles “toppling stack of bricks”, small spots in basal dark patch where Peck’s has full band, Hobomok a single small spot. Rare and local in wet meadows with Blue Flag *Iris versicolor*. Summer.



Mulberry Wing

Smallest of the group. Band very wide at center, creating “airplane” or “Texas” silhouette. In/near sedge marshes, often with Black Dash. Summer.



Black Dash (bright)

HW band: four spots, second from top larger, split by vein. In/near sedge marshes, often with Mulberry Wing. Summer.



Black Dash (dark)

Similar pattern but ground color dark brown, variation not related to sex. Typical F Hobomok has more extensive markings.

Dash refers to black stigma on M dorsal FW; **Mulberry** to purplish-black upperside.

Subtly Patterned Wetland Skippers. Rusty when fresh, darker when worn. HW has central pale ray. Breed in wetlands, may move to drier areas for nectar.



Broad-winged

Large. HW wide spots above/ below ray, FW small bracelet. Some almost unmarked. Wetlands with hostplant Common Reed *Phragmites communis*, wanders far. Midsummer-Fall.



Aaron's

Smaller & duller than Broad-winged, no bracelet, FW apex less angular. HW ray fades before margin. Near coastal marshes S, Atlantic to Gloucester Cos. Spring-Fall.



Dion

HW has two rays, FW no bracelet. Uncommon & local, near freshwater wetlands, Summer.



Two-spotted:

Pale brown, no spots/ray/bracelet, white fringes, bold white lower HW border. Extremely rare/local in Pine Barrens bogs, Summer.

Photo: Wade Wander

Bluestem-Grass Skippers. Uncommon and local in dry areas with Big/Little Bluestem *Andropogon/Schizachyrium*.

Single broods, short flight times. FW: two small spots below bracelet. HW: sharp-angled band of markings, central spot(s) inside it.



Cobweb

Darkish sandy brown, white "cobwebbing" along veins. Rare and local. Late Spring-early Summer.



Indian

Orange-yellow, pattern recalls Long Dash but less contrasting; central spot *projects rearward*. Habitats & flight times differ. Rare & local N, late Spring-early Summer.



Dotted

Pale rusty/sandy brown, darker with wear. Markings reduced to dots; some individuals are unmarked. Rare/local in Pine Barrens, Summer.



Leonard's

Spectacular: large, bright chestnut with bold white chevron. Late Summer-early Fall, Rare/local, extreme NW.

Roadside-Skippers. Small and dark; rare and local. Fringes are checkered, bracelet curves outward.



Common (left)

Black, wings frosted, HW extensively. Bracelet widens toward edge. White "stitching" on anterior edge of FW above bracelet, white HW apex. Far NW, Spring-Summer. Seldom if ever on roadsides.



Pepper and Salt (right)

Dark, gray-green overscaling when fresh. Two variable bands of irregular spots on both wings. Northern NJ, late Spring-early Summer. Often nectars on Wild Geranium *Geranium maculatum*.

Larger Frosted Skippers: Warmer color, frosting on outer wings; on HW, split by dark band; pattern reduced with age & wear.



Dusted

Some with lone dot on FW; white FW edge may extend full-length. White face, black mask. Late Spring-early Summer.



Clouded

Some with indistinct pale spot(s) above dark "tornado" between HW frosting. Rare S immigrant, Cape May Co., late Summer/Fall.



Zabulon F

Two spots near thick FW bracelet. Chunky spots above "tornado".

Dusted & Clouded: bracelet thinner than Zabulon; often curves outward.

Clouded & Zabulon: white "stitching" on FW margin above bracelet.

Zabulon: white HW apex.

Dusted: Uncommon & local; hostplants Bluestem grasses; may be found with Cobweb, Indian.

Long-winged Skippers



Salt Marsh

Brown, pale veins, long narrow white spot. Breeds salt marshes, forages inland. Summer-Fall.



Ocola

Brown, distal 1/3 of wings subtly darker. Some have band of indistinct HW spots. S immigrant, Midsummer-Fall, widespread, more common S.



Brazilian

Large, rusty, big square pale spots on HW. Episodic colonist S NJ, on/near hostplants, cultivated Cannas.

Salt Marsh & Ocola

(genus *Panoquina*): dark/light stripes on body.

Brazilian: pale spots on body.

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Abbreviations: **F/M** female(s)/male(s); **FW/HW** forewing/hindwing; **N/NW/C/S** north/northern, northwest, central, south/southern; **Co/Cos** County/Counties.

Terms: **Bracelet:** row of spots perpendicular to anterior margin of FW, near wingtip. **Cell:** basal region of wing, surrounded by veins. **Stigma:** black patch of specialized scales on dorsal FW of M, secretes pheromones.

Flight times: general; vary year-to-year with weather. Species fly earlier in S than in N NJ.

Ranges: general; if not specified, found throughout NJ.

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Photos: by Mike Newlon, two by Wade Wander. All from NJ except Southern Broken-Dash and Clouded, from SC.

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New Jersey Butterfly Club <https://njbutterflies.org/images.html>

South Jersey Butterfly Project <https://sjbutterflies.org/>