



**Natural Heritage
& Endangered Species
Program**

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Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

**Herodias Underwing
*Catocala herodias gerhardi***

State Status: **Special Concern**
Federal Status: **None**

DESCRIPTION: The Herodias Underwing is an erebid moth with a wingspan of 56-65 mm (Covell 1984). The forewing is brown with dark longitudinal streaks along the veins, alternating with white streaks distally, prominent white shading along the costal margin, an elongated dark brown patch extending from just proximal to the reniform spot, through the reniform spot nearly to the apex, and gray shading overlying the brown along the inner margin. The reniform spot is obscure, matching the dark brown patch surrounding it, but often faintly outlined with white. The hind wing is bright crimson with two black bands and a white fringe. The head and thorax are grayish-brown, matching the inner margin of the forewing, and the abdomen is tan.

HABITAT: In Massachusetts, the Herodias Underwing inhabits xeric, open pitch pine-scrub oak barrens and scrub oak thickets on sandy soil or rocky summits and ridges.

LIFE HISTORY: In Massachusetts, the Herodias Underwing flies in July and August. Eggs are laid on the stems of scrub oak (*Quercus ilicifolia*), where they overwinter, hatching in early spring. Larvae feed on catkins and new leaves of scrub oak, and pupate in June.



Catocala herodias gerhardi • Specimen from MA: Plymouth Co., Plymouth, adult female collected 27 Jul 2002 by M.W. Nelson, reared from egg, adult emerged 9 Jul 2003

Adult Flight Period in Massachusetts

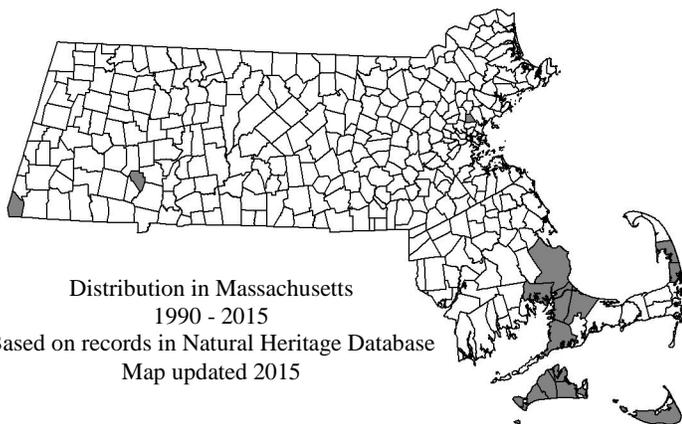
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec

GEOGRAPHIC RANGE: The Herodias Underwing occurs in sandplain habitats in southeastern Massachusetts, on eastern Long Island, New York, and in southern New Jersey; as well as on rocky summits and ridges from Massachusetts south through the Appalachian Mountains to North Carolina (Schweitzer et al. 2011).

STATUS AND THREATS: The Herodias Underwing is threatened by habitat loss and fire suppression. Other potential threats include introduced generalist parasitoids, aerial insecticide spraying, non-target herbiciding, off-road vehicles, and light pollution.

Literature Cited

Covell, C.V. 1984. *A Field Guide to Moths of Eastern North America*. Peterson Field Guide Series. Houghton Mifflin, Boston, Massachusetts. 496 pp.



A Species of Greatest Conservation Need in the Massachusetts State Wildlife Action Plan

Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

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Schweitzer, D.F., M.C. Minno, and D.L. Wagner. 2011.
Rare, Declining, and Poorly Known Butterflies and Moths (Lepidoptera) of Forests and Woodlands in the Eastern United States. Forest Service, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Washington, DC. 517 pp.

Authored by M.W. Nelson, NHESP Invertebrate Zoologist, March 2015

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