



Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program

Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

Route 135, Westborough, MA 01581

tel: (508) 389-6360; fax: (508) 389-7891

www.nhesp.org

Orange Sallow Moth

Pyrrhia aurantiago

NOTE: Formerly *Rhodoecia aurantiago*

State Status: **Special Concern**

Federal Status: **None**

Description: The Orange Sallow Moth (*Pyrrhia aurantiago*) is a noctuid moth with orange forewings spotted with black, the outer wing margins pink in the male; the hind wings are yellowish-tan, the outer wing margins shaded with pink in both sexes. Wingspan is 24-28 mm.

Habitat: The Orange Sallow Moth inhabits xeric and open oak woodland on rocky uplands (ridges, hilltops, and steep slopes), and the edges of old fields, power line cuts, and other openings within such habitat.

Life History: Adult moths fly in August. Eggs hatch soon after they are laid, and larvae feed on the flowers, seeds, and foliage of false foxgloves (*Aureolaria pedicularia* and *A. flava*) through early October. Pupae overwinter and diapause through the following spring and summer.

Geographic Range: The Orange Sallow Moth is spottily distributed from southern New England south to Florida, west to Wisconsin and Missouri. In Massachusetts, this species occurs in scattered colonies from Boston west to the Berkshires, but is absent from the southeast coastal plain.



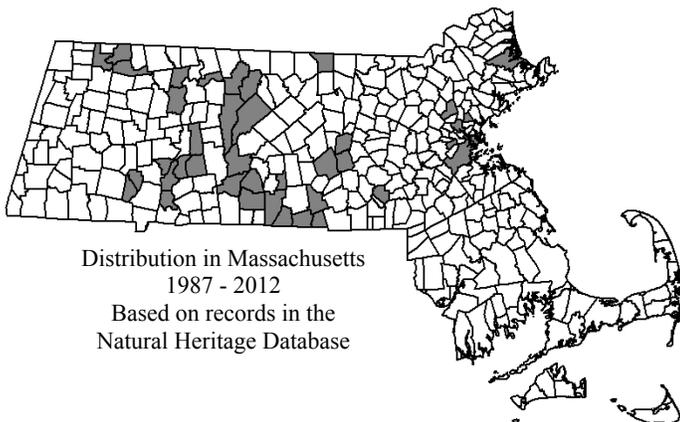
Pyrrhia aurantiago, male • Specimen from MA: Hampden Co., Holyoke, larva collected 30 Sep 2002 by L. Harper, adult emerged 20 Aug 2003

Adult Flight Period in Massachusetts

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

Threats

- Habitat loss
- Fire suppression
- Invasion by exotic plants
- Introduced generalist parasitoids
- Insecticide spraying
- Clear-cut timber harvest
- Excessive browse of larval host plants by deer
- Off-road vehicles
- Light pollution



Updated December 2012

M.W. Nelson

Please allow the Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program to continue to conserve the biodiversity of Massachusetts with a contribution for 'endangered wildlife conservation' on your state income tax form, as these donations comprise a significant portion of our operating budget.