



**Natural Heritage
& Endangered Species
Program**

www.mass.gov/nhesp

Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

**Dion Skipper
*Euphyes dion***

State Status: **Threatened**
Federal Status: **None**

DESCRIPTION: The Dion Skipper (*Euphyes dion*) is a butterfly with a wingspan of 32-41 mm (Pyle 1981). It is distinguished from other skipper butterflies in the genus *Euphyes* by the presence of two yellow, radial rays on the ventral side of the hind wing, extending from the basal area to the wing margin. The ventral side of both the forewing and hind wing are otherwise a uniform, bright orange. In the male, the dorsal side of the forewing is orange with a prominent black dash and a wide black band along the outer wing margin; the dorsal side of the hind wing has an orange center and a wide black margin. In the female, the dorsal side of the forewing is mostly black with yellowish-orange spots; the dorsal side of the hind wing has an orange center as in the male, but with a wider black margin.

HABITAT: In Massachusetts, the Dion Skipper inhabits sedge wetlands, including calcareous fens, riparian marshes, wet meadows, and shrub swamps. Adult butterflies nectar in infrequently-mowed fields near the wetland.

LIFE HISTORY: In Massachusetts, Dion Skipper butterflies fly in July. Adults nectar at flowers in the wetland such as northern blue flag iris (*Iris versicolor*)

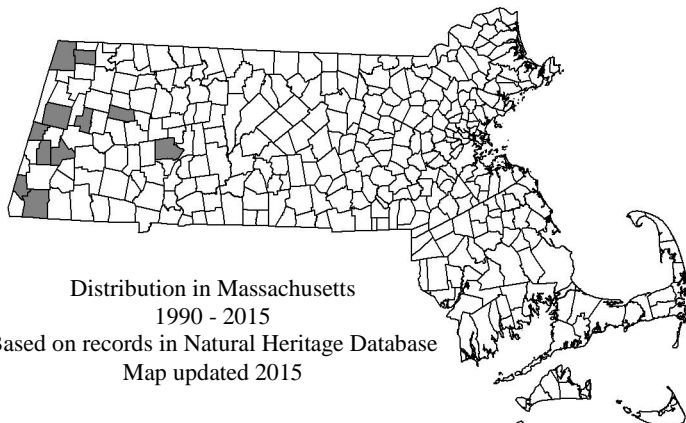


Euphyes dion, ventral ▪ MA: Berkshire Co., Sheffield ▪ 12 Jul 2003 ▪ Photo by M.W. Nelson



Euphyes dion, dorsal, male ▪ MA: Berkshire Co., Sheffield ▪ 17 Jul 2003 ▪ Photo by M.W. Nelson

Euphyes dion, dorsal, female ▪ MA: Berkshire Co., Sheffield ▪ 7 Jul 2004 ▪ Photo by M.W. Nelson



Distribution in Massachusetts
1990 - 2015
Based on records in Natural Heritage Database
Map updated 2015

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

Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

1 Rabbit Hill Road, Westborough, MA 01581; tel: 508-389-6300; fax: 508-389-7890; www.mass.gov/dfw

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.

www.mass.gov/nhesp

and swamp milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*), and visit nearby fields to nectar at common milkweed (*A. syriaca*) and other flowers. Larvae feed on sedges (*Carex*) in the wetland. There is one brood per year in Massachusetts, with larvae overwintering and pupating in June.

Adult Flight Period in Massachusetts

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

GEOGRAPHIC RANGE: Massachusetts is at the northeastern edge of the Dion Skipper’s range, which extends south to northern Florida and west to eastern North Dakota and eastern Texas (Opler 1998). In Massachusetts, this species occurs in Berkshire County and western Hampshire County.

STATUS AND THREATS: The Dion Skipper is threatened by habitat loss and hydrologic alteration that disrupts the natural flooding of its habitat. Common reed (*Phragmites australis*) and other invasive exotic plants degrade and ultimately destroy habitat. Other potential threats include introduced generalist parasitoids, eutrophication or other water pollution, aerial insecticide spraying, non-target herbiciding, and off-road vehicles.

Literature Cited

Opler, P.A. 1998. *A Field Guide to Eastern Butterflies*. Peterson Field Guide Series. Houghton Mifflin, Boston, Massachusetts. 486 pp.

Pyle, R.M. 1981. *National Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Butterflies*. Chanticleer Press, New York, New York. 924 pp.

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

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

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.