



**Natural Heritage
& Endangered Species
Program**

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Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

**Orange Sallow Moth
*Pyrrhia aurantiago***

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

DESCRIPTION: The Orange Sallow Moth (*Pyrrhia aurantiago*) is a noctuid moth with a wingspan of 25-33 mm (Covell 1984). The forewing is orange, the outer wing margin pink in the male. The postmedial and antemedial lines consist of wavy lines of black spots. An obscure median line may be present, especially toward the inner margin. The reniform and orbicular spots are faintly, often incompletely, outlined in black. The hind wing is yellowish-tan, shaded with orange at the outer margin (reddish-orange in the male). The head and thorax are concolorous with the orange of the forewing, and the abdomen is the same yellowish-tan color of the hind wing, often tinged with orange or reddish-orange.

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, utility line rights-of-way, and other openings within such habitat.

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



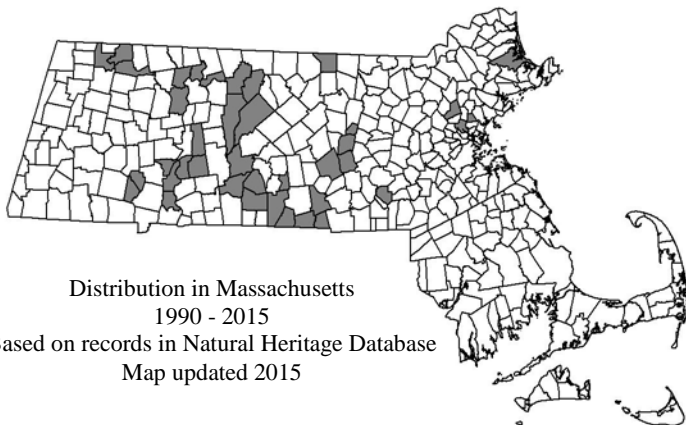
Pyrrhia aurantiago, male • Specimen from MA: Hampden Co., Holyoke, larva collected 30 Sep 2002 by L. Harper, adult emerged 20 Aug 2003

Adult Flight Period in Massachusetts

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

GEOGRAPHIC RANGE: The Orange Sallow Moth is spottily distributed from Maine south to Florida, west to Wisconsin and Texas (Covell 1984). In Massachusetts, this species occurs in scattered colonies from the North Shore and Boston west to the Berkshires, but is absent from the southeast coastal plain.

STATUS AND THREATS: The Orange Sallow Moth is threatened by habitat loss and fire suppression. Other potential threats include introduced generalist parasitoids, aerial insecticide spraying, non-target herbiciding, excessive deer browse of larval host plants, off-road vehicles, and light pollution.



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

Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

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REFERENCES:

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

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