



**Natural Heritage
& Endangered Species
Program**

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Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

**Pale Green Pinion
*Lithophane viridipallens***

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

DESCRIPTION: The Pale Green Pinion (*Lithophane viridipallens*) is a noctuid moth with a wingspan of 38-42 mm. The forewing is pale, greenish-gray, with fine, double, gray to black postmedial and antemedial lines that are sometimes obscure. A diffuse, rust-colored to black median line is often present. There is a fine, black basal dash. The reniform spot is finely outlined in black, sometimes filled with rust-colored shading. A black patch of scales proximal to the reniform spot separates it from the orbicular spot, which is also finely outlined in black, sometimes filled with pale shading, but often obscure. The hind wing is grayish-brown, darker toward the outer margin and with a dark discal spot. The head and thorax are concolorous with the greenish-gray of the forewing, and the abdomen is of a color similar to the hind wing.

HABITAT: In Massachusetts, the Pale Green Pinion inhabits acidic, shrubby wetlands, including wooded swamps, shrub swamps, shrubby bogs, and coastal plain pondshores.

LIFE HISTORY: In Massachusetts, adult Pale Green Pinion moths emerge in October and early November and overwinter, flying on warm nights in late winter and early spring, at which time mating and oviposition occur. Larval



Lithophane viridipallens • Specimen from NJ: Cumberland Co., Dividing Creek, collected 26 Oct 1993 by D.F. Schweitzer

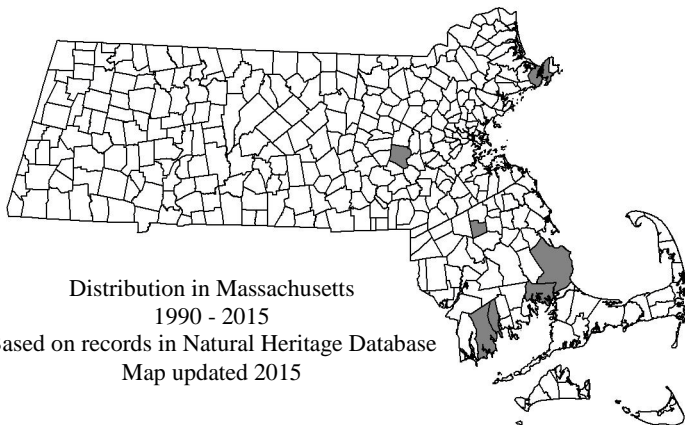
Adult Flight Period in Massachusetts

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

host plants have not been documented in Massachusetts, but presumably consist of a variety of acidic wetland shrubs (Wagner et al. 2011). Larvae complete development and pupate by June.

GEOGRAPHIC RANGE: The Pale Green Pinion is spottily distributed along the coastal plain from Massachusetts south to New Jersey, with a more continuous range from New Jersey south to Georgia and west to Louisiana (Wagner et al. 2011). In Massachusetts, this species is restricted to areas of suitable habitat in the eastern part of the state.

STATUS AND THREATS: The Pale Green Pinion is threatened by habitat loss and hydrologic alteration that disrupts the natural seasonal flooding of its habitat. Other potential threats include invasion by exotic plants, introduced generalist parasitoids, eutrophication or other



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

Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

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water pollution, aerial insecticide spraying, non-target herbiciding, off-road vehicles, and light pollution.

Literature Cited

Wagner, D.L., D.F. Schweitzer, J.B. Sullivan, and R.C. Reardon. 2011. *Owlet Caterpillars of Eastern North America*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey. 576 pp.

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

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