



**Natural Heritage
& Endangered Species
Program**

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Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

**The Pink-streak
*Dargida rubripennis***

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

DESCRIPTION: The Pink-streak (*Dargida rubripennis*) is a noctuid moth with a wingspan of 32-37 mm (Covell 1984). The forewing is light tan in color, with a bright pink streak that is narrow at the wing base, gradually broadening across the median area, and further broadening to encompass the entire outer margin; the streak is bisected by a whitish-tan line along the cubital vein. The forewing has an additional pink streak along the outer one-third to one-half of the costal margin, and a black, narrow and elongate basal dash. The hind wing is a tan shade of white. The head, thorax, and abdomen are tan in color; the front of the thorax is frosted with white.

HABITAT: In Massachusetts, the Pink-streak inhabits sandplain grasslands and dunes, and occasionally anthropogenic grasslands such as airports and utility line rights-of-way on sandy soils.

LIFE HISTORY: In Massachusetts, the Pink-streak flies from mid-July to early August. The preferred larval host plant is switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*). Larvae feed primarily on the developing seeds of this grass, becoming fully grown by late August or early September. The pupa overwinters beneath the surface of the soil.



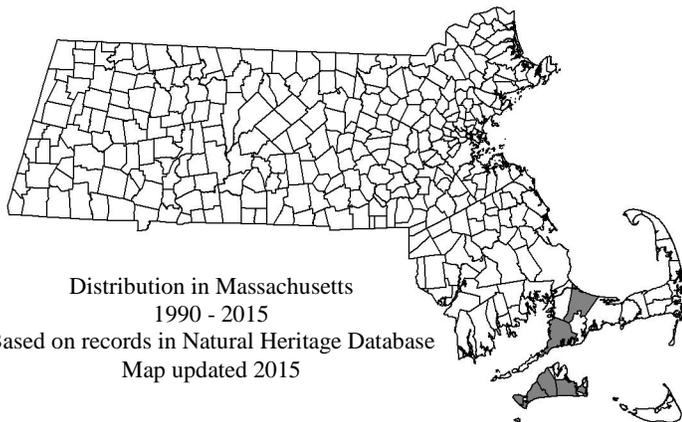
Dargida rubripennis • Specimen from MA: Dukes Co., Chilmark, larva collected 29 Aug 2007 by M.W. Nelson and Tim Simmons, adult emerged 6 Aug 2008

Adult Flight Period in Massachusetts

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

GEOGRAPHIC RANGE: The Pink-streak occurs from southeastern Massachusetts south to Florida, and west to Minnesota and Texas (Covell 1984). In Massachusetts, this species is only known to occur on Cape Cod and the island of Martha’s Vineyard.

STATUS AND THREATS: The Pink-streak is threatened by habitat loss and suppression of fire, which is needed to maintain the open structure of its habitat and promote growth of its host plants. Other potential threats include invasion by exotic plants, introduced generalist parasitoids, aerial insecticide spraying, non-target herbiciding, 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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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.

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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.

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

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