

USACE Natural Resource Management

Insects



Dakota Skipper & Poweshiek Skipperling

Dakota Skipper (*Hesperia dacotae*): The Dakota skipper is a small to medium-sized butterfly. Wingspan ranges from 0.9-1.3 inches. This species has hooked antennae. Markings vary among adults. Male wings range in color from tawny-orange to brown with a prominent mark on the forewing. The ventral surface of male wings is yellow-orange. The dorsal surface of adult females is dark brown with tawny orange and white spots within the margin of the forewing. The ventral surfaces of female wings are dusty gray-brown with a faint white spotband across the middle. (USFWS)

Status: *Threatened, listed 2014*

NatureServe: *Imperiled*



Poweshiek Skipperling (*Oarisma poweshiek*): The Poweshiek skipperling is a small, slender-bodied butterfly. The wingspan of adults ranges from 0.9-1.2 inches. The upper wing is dark brown with a band of orange along the leading edge of the forewing. The lower wing is also dark brown, but the veins of most of the lower wing are outline in white, giving the wing an overall white appearance. Larvae are predominantly grass-green with a distinct darker green middorsal stripe in addition to seven cream-colored strips on each side. Poweshiek skipperling eggs are pale yellowish green and mushroom shaped with a flattened bottom. (USFWS)

Status: *Endangered, listed 2014*

NatureServe: *Critically Imperiled*



Family: *Hesperiidae* contains species commonly known as skippers. They are called skippers due to their quick, darting style of flight. There are more than 3,500 species within the family across the world with around 275 of those species being found in North America. (Encyclopedia of Insects, 2009)

Photos Left to Right: Dakota Skipper (MN Zoo), Dakota Skipper (USFWS), Poweshiek Skipperling (USFWS), & Poweshiek Skipperling (Vince Cavaliere, USFWS)

Management and Protection:

- The Dakota skipper inhabits remnants of tallgrass prairie and mixed-grass prairie in the northcentral U.S. and into southern Saskatchewan and Manitoba Provinces of Canada. Species requires high quality habitat conditions with diverse native grassland plant communities. (USFWS)
- The number, health, and distribution of Dakota skipper populations have declined and are projected to continue to decline into the future. (USFWS)
- Conservation of the Dakota skipper will depend on protecting remaining habitat patches from conversion or degradation, grassland management practices that maintain and restore high quality habitat that facilitates population growth, dispersal, and minimizes inbreeding and other deleterious processes, and the minimization of threats from factors such as pesticide drift. (USFWS)
- The Poweshiek skipperling once inhabited native prairie in Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin and in fens in Michigan. However, it is thought to have been extirpated from the Dakotas, Minnesota, and Iowa within the last 20 years. (USFWS)
 - Poweshiek skipperling larvae may be vulnerable to desiccation during dry summer months and require movement of shallow groundwater to the soil surface or wet low areas to provide relief. (USFWS)



USACE ROLE: On June 20, 2014, a Presidential Memorandum titled, "Creating a Federal Strategy to Promote the Health of Honey Bees and Other Pollinators" directed agencies to develop plans to enhance pollinator habitat. Under section 3, subsection K of the Memorandum, "The Army Corps of Engineers shall incorporate conservation practices for pollinator habitat improvement on the 12 million acres of lands and waters at resource development projects across the country, as appropriate." In response to the Memorandum, the USACE set out to work with others to promote education, awareness, and management practices that provide for improved bee and pollinator populations and habitat. Efforts were made to identify existing policy and/or guidance and modify it for pollinator health. Additionally, USACE strived to implement conservation and best management practices for pollinator health.

What is USACE NRM Doing: Within the states that have reported occurrences of either species are 30 USACE projects. In the FY20 NRM Assessment, these projects reported that over 3,700 acres of project lands were actively being managed or maintained specifically for pollinators. Additionally over 1,500 acres had been reported to be improved, restored, or enhanced for pollinators by these projects in FY20.

Seven projects occur within the overlapping portion of the species' ranges and are actively managing for pollinators. For instance, Cross Lake in Minnesota installed an interpretive pollinator garden in 2015 using a \$30,000 Handshake Partnership Program grant. Another Minnesota project, Sandy Lake, completed the Linda Ulland Memorial Garden in 2017. It is a unique collection of representational gardens including forest foraging, wildflower, butterfly gardens, deer-resistant garden plantings, rain garden, and a 'house' garden for bees, bats, toads, and insects. The garden was designed and planted via a collaborative effort of local landscapers, gardeners, partners and volunteers, and is a result of numerous volunteer hours.



Photo: A small section of the Linda Ulland Memorial Gardens located at St. Paul District's Sandy Lake Project.

This fact sheet has been prepared as an unofficial publication of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). This online publication is produced to provide its readers information about best management practices related to special status species. Editorial views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army. Mention of specific vendors does not constitute endorsement by the Department of the Army or any element thereof.

