

ARIZONA GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT
HERITAGE DATA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Invertebrate Abstract

Element Code: IILEP87230

Data Sensitivity: No

CLASSIFICATION, NOMENCLATURE, DESCRIPTION, RANGE

NAME: *Agathymus neumogeni*

COMMON NAME: Orange-giant skipper; Neumogen's giant skipper; Neumogen's Agave Borer;
Neumogen's Moth Skipper; Tawny Giant Skipper

SYNONYMS:

FAMILY: HesperIIDae

AUTHOR, PLACE OF PUBLICATION: Edwards, W.H., 1882.

TYPE LOCALITY: 9 miles south of Prescott, Yavapai County, Arizona.

TYPE SPECIMEN:

TAXONOMIC UNIQUENESS: There are 6 to 20 species in this genus. Unlike many taxa in this subfamily this one is rather clear-cut. The only major disagreement is that Scott (1986) tentatively includes *A. chisoensis* as a subspecies, which most other workers reject. (NatureServe).

DESCRIPTION: The upper sides of the wings are orange to yellow-orange with black borders and black patches. In the male the spots are orange, forming a band on both the forewing and the hind wing. The outer end of spot 7 overlaps inner end of spot 6 on forewing. The orange band is wider in females, and the inner end of spot 9 on the forewing is pointed. The underside of the hind wing is dark gray with a faint pale band. The wingspan is 1 3/4 to 2 3/8 inches (4.5-6.1 cm).

AIDS TO IDENTIFICATION: The upper sides of the wings are orange to yellow-orange with black borders and black patches. In the male the spots are orange, forming a band on both the forewing and the hind wing. The outer end of spot 7 overlaps inner end of spot 6 on forewing. The orange band is wider in females, and the inner end of spot 9 on the forewing is pointed.

ILLUSTRATIONS: Color photo (Carey *in*
<http://www.npwrc.usgs.gov/resource/distr/lepid/byflyusa/usa/414.htm>)
Color photo (Nearctica *in*
<http://www.nearctica.com/butter/plate33/Aneumo.htm>).
Color drawing (Tilden, 1986: pl. 38).

TOTAL RANGE: Central Arizona to west-central New Mexico and southern New Mexico to west Texas.

RANGE WITHIN ARIZONA: Central Arizona.

SPECIES BIOLOGY AND POPULATION TRENDS

BIOLOGY: A young caterpillar crawls to a leaf tip and burrows inside where it eats pulp and then hibernates. In the spring the caterpillar makes a new burrow in a leaf base where it feeds on sap until becoming inactive for the summer. Before pupating, the caterpillar enlarges the opening of its burrow and makes a silk trap door from which the adult can emerge. Unlike most butterflies, skippers pupate in a cocoon of leaves and silken strands. And in contrast to true butterflies, which hold both wings either vertically or horizontally at rest, skippers often rest with forewings open at about 45 degree angle and hind wings horizontal. Their rapid, direct and bouncing flight is aptly suggested by the name “skipper”

REPRODUCTION: From early morning until noon the males perch near host plants to wait for receptive females. Eggs are laid singly on the host and fall to the base of the plant. A young caterpillar crawls to a leaf tip and burrows inside where it eats pulp and then hibernates. They have one brood from September to October.

FOOD HABITS: The host plant for caterpillars is Parry’s agave (*Agave parryi*). Young caterpillars eat plant pulp before hibernating. Adult females do not feed and males take moisture from mud or manure.

HABITAT: Desert, shrubland/chaparral, shrub-grassland or open woodland-conifer, woodland or mixed. Dry mountains with food plants (NatureServe).

ELEVATION:

PLANT COMMUNITY:

POPULATION TRENDS:

SPECIES PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT STATUS:

STATE STATUS:

OTHER STATUS:

Forest Service Sensitive (USDA, FS Region 3
1999)

MANAGEMENT FACTORS:

PROTECTIVE MEASURES TAKEN:**SUGGESTED PROJECTS:****LAND MANAGEMENT/OWNERSHIP:****SOURCES OF FURTHER INFORMATION****REFERENCES:**

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- BIOTA. 2002. Biota Information System of New Mexico BISON. Available at http://www.cnr.vt.edu/fishex/nmex_main/species/212065.htm.
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- NatureServe Explorer: An online encyclopedia of life [web application]. 2001. Version 1.6. Arlington, Virginia, USA: NatureServe. Available: <http://www.natureserve.org/explorer>. (Accessed: May 22, 2002).
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- Tilden, J.W. 1986. A Field Guide to Western Butterflies. Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, MA. pp. 206-207.
- USDA, Forest Service Region 3. 1999. Regional Forester's Sensitive Species List.

MAJOR KNOWLEDGEABLE INDIVIDUALS:**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

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