

Threats

Remaining populations of Taylor's checkerspot are at risk from:

- habitat loss,
- invasion by non-native weeds,
- tree and shrub encroachment, and
- elimination of natural disturbance.



Encroachment of non-native shrubs into upland prairie habitat

How can I help?

Benton County has developed a voluntary Prairie Conservation Strategy to help land owners conserve prairie and oak savanna habitats. Use the Strategy to find a menu of possible actions you can take, as well as sources of technical and financial assistance.

Inside the Strategy you will find maps showing where conservation efforts are most needed and learn how to help a variety of species identified in the Oregon Conservation Strategy, the overarching state plan for conserving fish and wildlife.

The Strategy is part of Benton County's Prairie Species Habitat Conservation Plan, which describes how the County will avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts to Threatened & Endangered species and establishes a network of Prairie Conservation Areas throughout the County.

What to do if you find this species

For more information or to report Taylor's checkerspot butterfly sightings, contact one of the following:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Oregon Fish and Wildlife Office
(503) 231-6179

or

Oregon Biodiversity Information Center
Institute for Natural Resources
Portland State University, Mail Stop: INR
PO Box 751
Portland, Oregon 97207-0751
(503) 725-9950

For a copy of Benton County's Prairie Conservation Strategy please visit:

www.co.benton.or.us/parks/hcp



Benton County:

At Your Service
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Cover photo of Taylor's checkerspot butterfly by Dana Ross.

This brochure was developed for
Benton County by:



Taylor's checkerspot butterfly

(Euphydryas editha taylori)



Status

Taylor's checkerspot was classified as a candidate for Endangered Species Act protection in 2001 and is currently known to survive in only 13 populations.



Pair of Taylor's checkerspot butterflies.

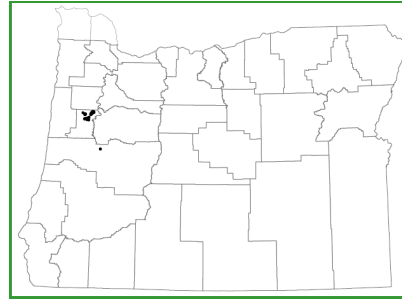
Description

Taylor's checkerspot is a sub-species of Edith's checkerspot (*Euphydryas editha*). It is a medium sized butterfly, with a wingspan of less than 2.25 inches. The name "checkerspot" comes from the checkered pattern of orange, white, and black on the upper and lower surface of the wings.

The life cycle of Taylor's checkerspot lasts approximately one year. Adult butterflies appear in April and May to mate and lay eggs. They are one of the first butterflies to appear in the spring, but they only live for a week or two. Larvae emerge and feed on host plants until mid-June to early July, then enter diapause through the winter. During diapause no feeding, growth, or development occurs. Larvae emerge the following spring to finish maturing, pupate, and finally emerge as butterflies.

Habitat

This species is known to have occurred historically in grasslands or oak savanna in the Willamette Valley of Oregon, the Puget Sound area of Washington, and southeast Vancouver Island in British Columbia, Canada. Currently it is known from a total of two sites in Oregon (both in Benton County), 10 sites in Washington, and one newly discovered site in British Columbia.



Distribution of Taylor's checkerspot.



Upland prairie habitat at Beazell Memorial Forest.

Taylor's checkerspot occurs in upland prairie habitats. Upland prairies are open grasslands with abundant wildflowers and well-drained soils occurring in the valley lowlands and surrounding foothills. Less than 1% of native Willamette Valley prairies remain.

The open structure of prairies will persist only if a regular disturbance such as fire or mowing prevents the natural encroachment of trees and shrubs which shade and kill the low growing native plants.

Host plants and nectar sources

Suitable habitat for Taylor's checkerspot must have specific food plants for the butterfly's larvae and for adult butterflies. Butterflies will typically lay their eggs on a specific type of "host" plant. Nearly all caterpillars that hatch from eggs laid on a non-host plant die. Checkerspot butterflies lay their eggs on paintbrush (*Castilleja* spp.) and introduced species of plantain (*Plantago* spp.).

Adult butterflies in Oregon nectar most frequently on wild strawberry (*Fragaria virginiana*), Tolmie's mariposa lily (*Calochortus tolmiei*), and seablush (*Plectritis congesta*). Female butterflies are able to recognize their host plant species by the size, color, and shape of the leaves as well as by detecting certain chemicals in the plants.



English plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), larval host plant



Taylor's checkerspot nectaring on a strawberry plant (*L*) and Tolmie's mariposa lily