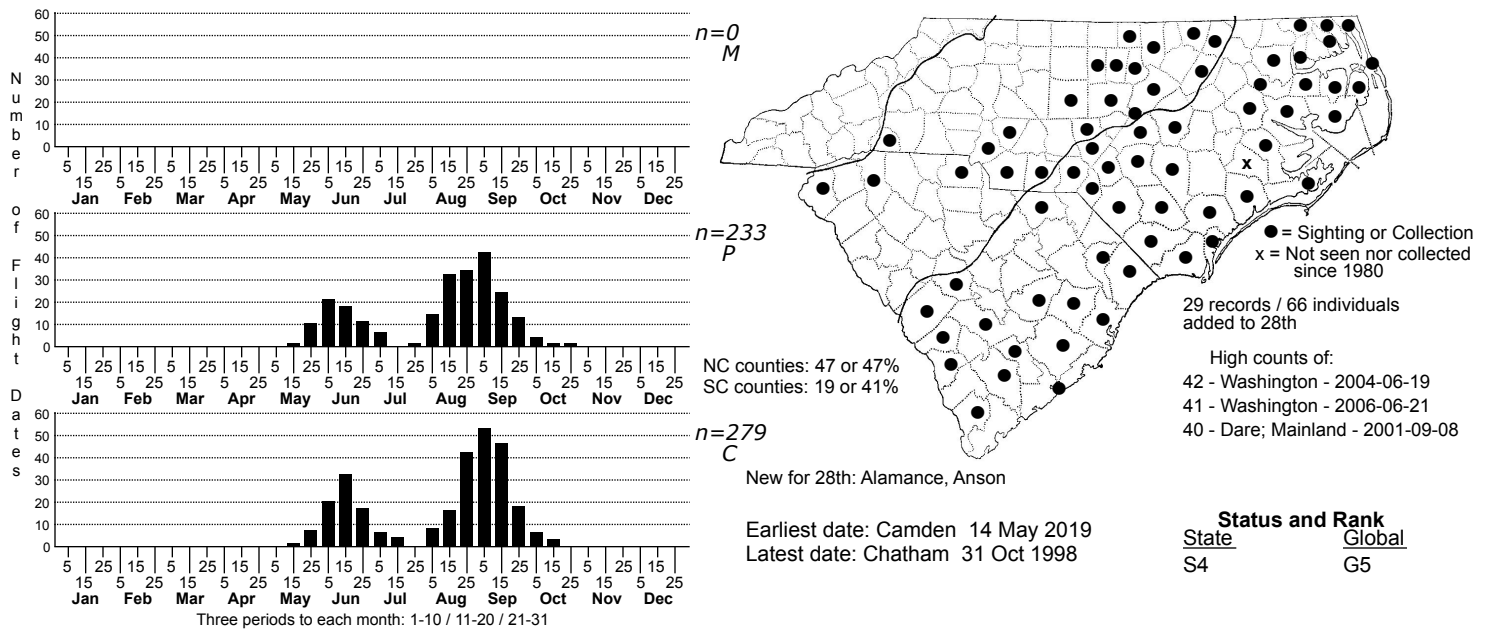


Dion Skipper *Euphyes dion*



DISTRIBUTION: Scattered throughout the Coastal Plain (both tidewater and inland); also found in the southeastern 40% of the Piedmont, inland to Person, Alamance, Randolph, Cabarrus, Mecklenburg, and Polk counties. Absent from the mountains and the northwestern 50-60% of the Piedmont. The range has been expanding westward in recent years, perhaps only figuratively with more field work, though there does seem to be a slow expansion in progress; for example, Alamance County was newly added to the range in 2020.

ABUNDANCE: Uncommon to locally common in the lower Coastal Plain; uncommon elsewhere in the Coastal Plain, but rare to uncommon in the Sandhills. Uncommon but widespread (and increasing) in the eastern/southern Piedmont, seemingly more numerous in the northeastern Piedmont than elsewhere in the province.

FLIGHT PERIOD: Two broods in NC; late May to early July, and early August to early October, casually to late October. It is most numerous in mid-June and in the first 10 days of September.

HABITAT: This is a wetland species, mainly a freshwater marsh inhabitant. It is found in wet savannas, ditches and canals, marshy lake and pond margins, beaver pond marshes, and (of course) freshwater to slightly brackish marshes. It is not as associated with forested wetlands as much as the Dukes' or Yehl skippers, though it is often found nectaring on Pickerelweed (*Pontederia cordata*) in ditches next to swamps and bottomlands.

FOOD AND NECTAR PLANTS: The foodplants are various tall sedges (*Carex* and *Scirpus* spp.), which are characteristic of open wetlands; Woolgrass Bulrush (*S. cyperinus*) is a favored foodplant. It nectars on many plants, such as Buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*), Pickerelweed, milkweeds (*Asclepias* spp.), and others. On rare occasions it can move to feed at gardens close to wetlands.

COMMENTS: This species is found in small colonies in a fairly wide range of open to somewhat open wetlands. In the Piedmont, colonies have been found along the margins of man-made lakes and ponds, and at beaver ponds in Moore, Durham, and Orange counties, for example. Chris McEwen photographed several at a quarry in Mecklenburg County in 2007, to considerably extend the range westward in the Piedmont. Shay Garriock found the species in adjacent Union County in 2007, for another rare southern Piedmont record. Simon Thompson and others found the species in Polk County in 2010, a notable range extension, to near the base of the mountain province.