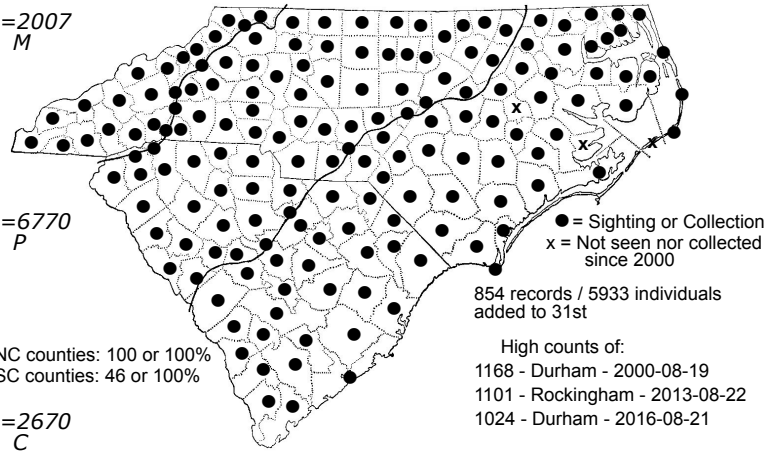
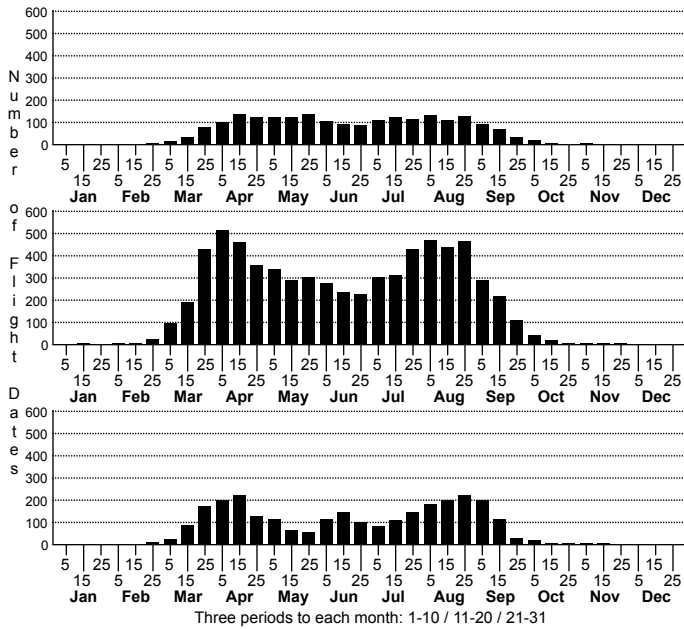


# Eastern Tiger Swallowtail *Pterourus glaucus*



NC counties: 100 or 100%  
 SC counties: 46 or 100%

Earliest date: Randolph 15 Jan 2020  
 Latest date: Randolph 28 Nov 2015  
 Synonym: *Papilio glaucus*

**Status and Rank**  
State      Global  
 S5              G5

**DISTRIBUTION:** Statewide, not obviously favoring one province over another. It is found in all 100 counties.

**ABUNDANCE:** Common to at times abundant across the state; one of the most often seen butterflies in NC, and a dozen or more swallowtails can often be seen in a single day.

**FLIGHT PERIOD:** Early March to early October (and exceptionally to November). At least two broods, and possibly three; the broods overlap, with no gaps. In the Coastal Plain and Piedmont, flight periods are apparently early March to late May, and early June to mid-September, with the "second" perhaps being composed of two broods. Mountain flights generally are from mid-March to mid- or late June, and late June into early October.

**HABITAT:** Very widespread. Typically along edges of deciduous or mixed woods, old fields, and meadows, but also commonly seen in gardens and suburban habitats. Not usually seen in deep shade, but often found along openings in woods, wide trails, etc.

**FOOD AND NECTAR PLANTS:** Many tree and shrub species, but apparently Tuliptree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*) and Black Cherry (*Prunus serotina*) are commonly used. (Females typically lay eggs on leaves well up in the trees and thus it is difficult for an observer to study the immature life stages of this species.) Nectar plants are very widespread, but the species prefers tall herbs such as Joe-pye-weeds (*Eutrochium* spp.), ironweeds (*Vernonia* spp.), and milkweeds (*Asclepias* spp.). In fact, this is by far the most commonly seen butterfly nectaring on Joe-pye-weed.

**COMMENTS:** This is perhaps the most familiar butterfly in NC to the novice, even though the Monarch is more famous. It is so widespread that the observer would have no idea of the foodplants of the larvae without reading about them in a book! Oddly, in 2014 the species was quite scarce over nearly all of the state, and numbers failed to rebound in the summer and fall. Most observers averaged seeing just one swallowtail every few weeks.

**NOTE:** A relatively new species -- Appalachian Tiger Swallowtail (*Papilio appalachiensis*) -- was described in 2002. As this species is locally common in the NC Mountains in May and June, observers can no longer assume that a tiger swallowtail in the Mountains during these months is an Eastern Tiger Swallowtail. In fact, the Eastern at times is in the minority at swallowtail "puddle parties"!

This species was approved by the N.C. State Legislature in 2012 as the "Official State Butterfly".