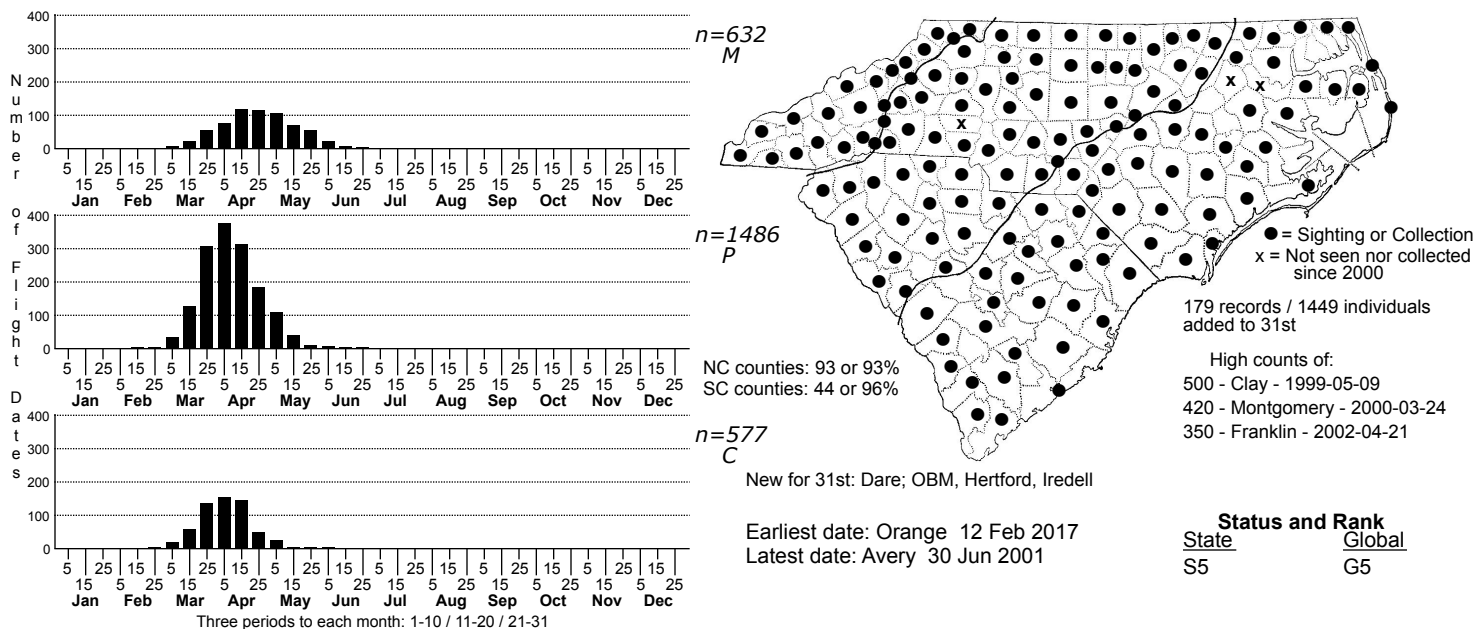


Juvenal's Duskywing *Erynnis juvenalis*



DISTRIBUTION: Apparently statewide, though distribution is spotty in the northeastern and far eastern counties. I did not see the species during my 1994 surveys in the Dismal Swamp. Finally, in 2006, a report came from the Outer Banks, where the species seems mysteriously rare (at best).

ABUNDANCE: A notable decline since about 2013, though still one of our most common spring butterflies. Common to abundant in the Piedmont and Mountains. Fairly common to common in the western half of the Coastal Plain, but it is generally uncommon to fairly common in the lower parts of the Coastal Plain and rare in the northeastern corner. This is the most numerous skipper in NC in the spring. The recent decline is likely due to severely cold weather in late February and March in both 2013 and 2014. In fact, there were just three reports in 2014 from the entire Coastal Plain.

FLIGHT PERIOD: A single brood; early March (rarely in late February) to mid-May (very rarely into June) downstate, and from mid- or late March into the first half of June in the Mountains.

HABITAT: The species favors edges and openings of hardwood and mixed forests, both dry and somewhat moist. It also occurs well inside forests, the only duskywing normally to do so. Unlike with the similar Horace's Duskywing, it does not occur in gardens or other quite open places. As with all duskywings, adults are often seen perched on dirt roads, trails, and other bare ground.

FOOD AND NECTAR PLANTS: The foodplants are oaks (*Quercus* spp.), presumably of many species. Adults may be seen nectaring at many flowers in spring, as well as taking moisture on the ground.

COMMENTS: This is the ubiquitous dark butterfly of the spring season in or near forests and woodlots. Observers must sort through the Juvenal's to find more desired species such as Sleepy and Wild Indigo duskywings. It is so numerous that trying to find the nearly identical Horace's Duskywing in the spring can be frustrating. Needless to say, all spring-season duskywings cannot be identified by sight. Some are reported in summer in the region, even from gardens, but these are all Horace's Duskywings. Juvenal's Duskywings are finished by June in the Mountains and by May downstate; and they essentially never stray to gardens, at least those in cities and towns (whereas the other species is a frequent garden visitor).