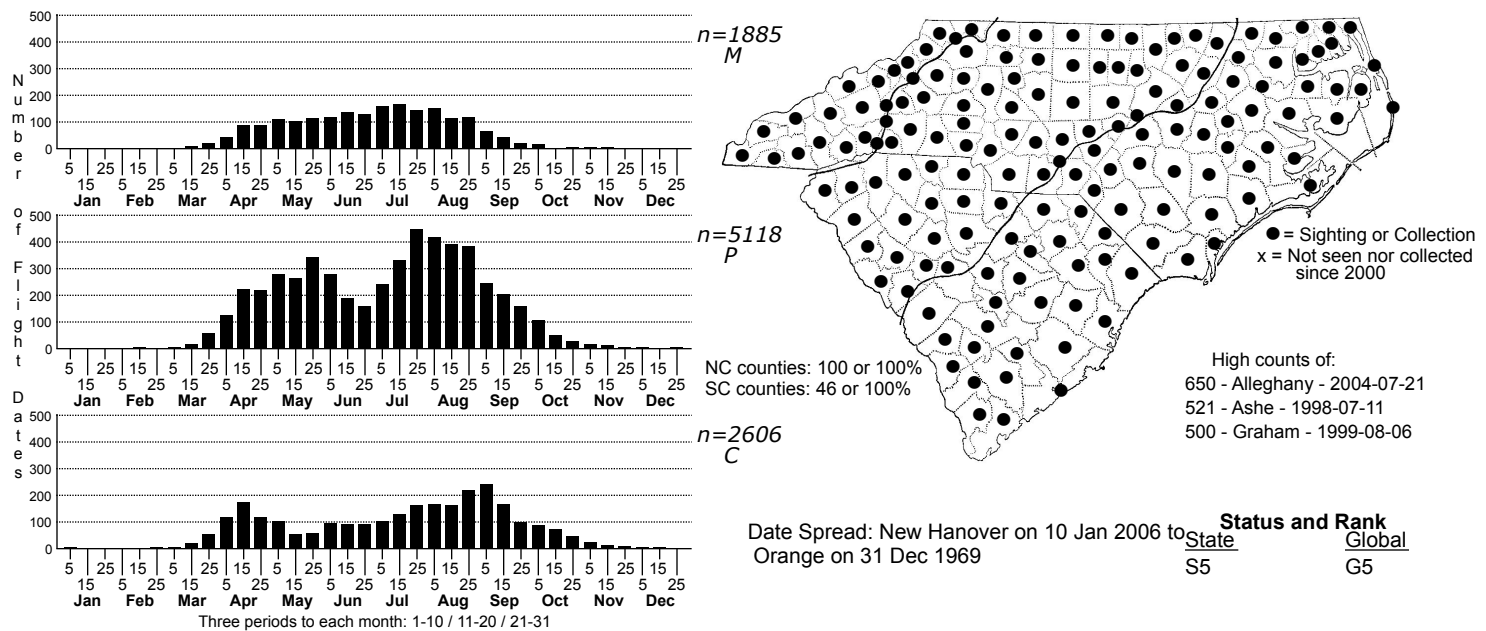


Silver-spotted Skipper *Epargyreus clarus*



DISTRIBUTION: Statewide; occurs in every county in the state.

ABUNDANCE: Common to abundant; one of the most often encountered skippers anywhere in NC, from the high Mountains to the coast. It is often abundant in the Mountains, and is least common in the eastern counties, but it is certainly common in the latter region.

FLIGHT PERIOD: Two, to probably three, broods; however, downstate it is continuously on the wing from mid-March to late October, and sparingly into mid-November. The first flight in the Mountains begins in late March or early April.

HABITAT: Extremely widespread, in nearly all "skipper" habitats, except for salt marshes. Found along woodland borders, clearings, old fields, savannas, coastal scrub, high mountain rocky areas, gardens, etc. It is quite common at sunlit spots and at wet spots along dirt roads through hardwood forests, especially in the Mountains.

FOOD AND NECTAR PLANTS: The foodplants are legumes (Fabaceae) -- favoring woody species or larger herbaceous species -- such as locusts (*Robinia* spp.), sennas (*Senna* spp.), wisterias (*Wisteria* spp.), etc. The species nectars on a very wide variety of flowers, including butterfly-bushes (*Buddleja* spp.) in gardens. It often perches on damp ground to sip moisture.

COMMENTS: Along with the Pearl Crescent, this is probably the most widespread butterfly in the state, in terms of range from mountaintop to shore and in choice of habitats. It is one of the few NC skippers, along with the Long-tailed, that can be identified in flight at great distances, because of the conspicuous large white (not silver!) under wing patch.