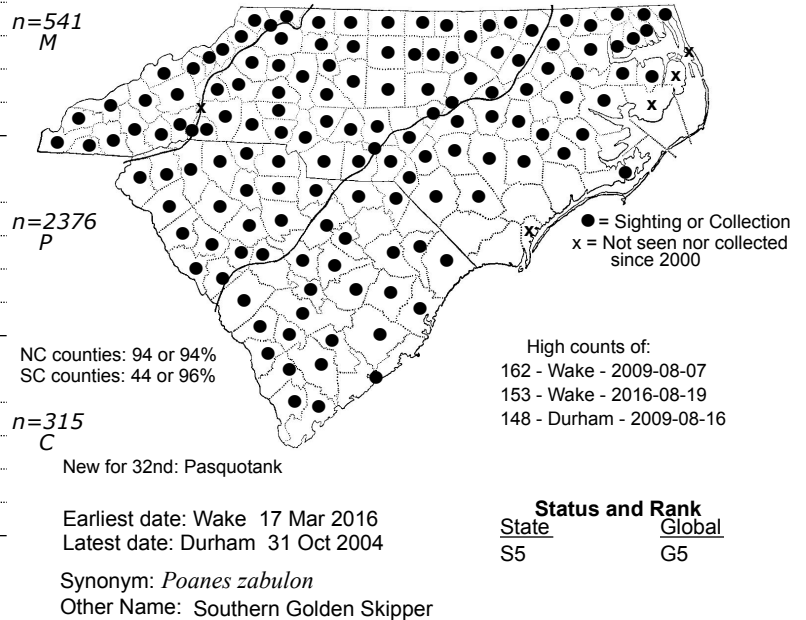
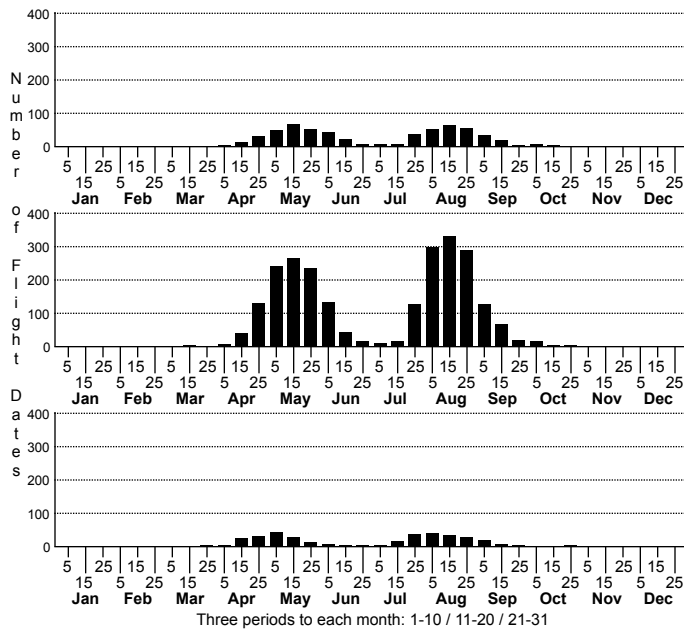


Zabulon Skipper *Lon zabulon*



DISTRIBUTION: Essentially statewide, but only one known record for the extreme southeastern Coastal Plain. This scarcity there is bizarre (but real), as there are a number of records for the lower Coastal Plain of SC. Thus, ranges eastward to the northern coast, but farther south ranges eastward to perhaps just 30-50 miles of the coast.

ABUNDANCE: Common to locally very common in the Piedmont; fairly common to common in the Mountains; uncommon to fairly common in the northern half of the Coastal Plain, but seemingly very rare south of Cumberland and Craven counties. The species is clearly more common west of the Fall Line than in the Coastal Plain.

FLIGHT PERIOD: Two distinct broods. Downstate, mainly from mid- or late April to mid-June (Coastal Plain) or late June (Piedmont), and mid- or late July to late September, sparingly into late October. In the Mountains, the brood periods are very similar to those in the Piedmont, which is quite unusual for grass skippers; most such skippers have peak mountain flights in midsummer rather than a hiatus in July.

HABITAT: This species, closely related to the Hobomok Skipper, clearly favors damp places near hardwoods. It is often found along moist wooded edges, powerline or sewerline clearings in bottomlands, along dirt roads or wide trails in moist areas, along sunlit streams, and along marsh and lake edges. It does occur into upland places, but it shows a strong affinity for partly shaded wet places.

FOOD AND NECTAR PLANTS: The foodplants are various grasses. The species nectars frequently, on a great variety of flowers. It does move occasionally into gardens to find nectar, but more so where the gardens are near moist hardwood forests.

COMMENTS: The males are the commonest of the orange skippers of damp wooded areas of the Piedmont. The females, however, are dark and look like Clouded Skippers. They are much less frequently seen than the males. Males characteristically perch on sunlit leaves along the margin of a moist forest or in sunlit openings in a bottomland forest, and dart out after anything that flies. They can often be identified by their behavior, without seeing the distinctive markings on the under hind wing, which is often held parallel to the leaf surface and may be difficult to see well.