



Maryland State Insect - Baltimore Checkerspot Butterfly



The Baltimore Checkerspot Butterfly (*Euphydryas phaeton*) has been the official arthropodic emblem of the State since 1973 (Chapter 253, Acts of 1973; Code State Government Article, sec. 13-301(a)). Although the law that made it the State Insect did not give a reason for the designation, certainly the Butterfly's name endears it to Marylanders.

Baltimore Checkerspot Butterfly. Photo by Mark S. Garland, Audubon Naturalist Society.

Butterflies, like bees, are pollinators of crops and wild flora, and the Baltimore Checkerspot is no exception. Its body or thorax is dark brown, a color which extends to its wings, spotted white and then orange on their edges. As part of the family *Nymphalidae* (Brush-footed Butterflies), it bears hairy forelegs too short for walking. The prominent knobs on its antennae also are a trait of this butterfly family.

Like other butterflies, the Baltimore Checkerspot searches for one kind of host plant from which it will gain nourishment during its period of growth. In this case, the Turtlehead (*Chelone glabra*) is the only host plant that this butterfly will use. In wet meadows and ditches, the Baltimore Checkerspot Butterfly seeks out the Turtlehead, a creamy white pink-rimmed flower of the snapdragon family. Here, it lays eggs on the undersides of the plant's leaves. In summer, the eggs hatch into orange and black caterpillars (larvae) which feed off this host plant.

Over a period of a few weeks, each caterpillar, as it grows, will molt or shed its skin several times before reaching its full size. Following the last molt, the pupa or chrysalis appears. Within a flexible shell, the chrysalis is a semiliquid in which the butterfly forms. From it emerges an adult butterfly.

All Information From: *The Maryland State Archives* -

www.mdarchives.state.md.us/msa/mdmanual/01glance/html/symbols/insect.html

Compiled by Elizabeth M. S. Hill
4-H Youth Development
University of Maryland Extension – Kent County

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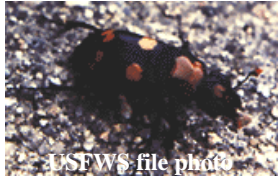




Threatened and Endangered Insects in Maryland



1. **Endangered:** The American Burying Beetle (or Giant Carrion Beetle) - *Nicrophorus americanus*



From the US Fish and Wildlife Service: “The American burying beetle, the largest of the North American carrion beetles, has so drastically declined in numbers and range that, in July 1989, it was added to the federal Endangered Species List.” “American burying beetles are scavengers, dependent on carrion for food and reproduction. They play an important role in breaking down decaying matter and recycling it back into the ecosystem. Reproduction involves burying a small vertebrate carcass, laying eggs on the carcass, and then larvae feeding on the carcass until mature. The American burying beetle is unusual in that both parents provide care to their young.” (From the American Burying Beetle, US Fish &T Wildlife Service, Oklahoma, www.fws.gov/ifw2es/Oklahoma/beetle1.htm).



More information is available at:

US Fish & Wildlife Service, Region 3: www.fws.gov/midwest/Endangered/insects/abb_fact.html

NatureServ Explorer: www.natureserve.org/

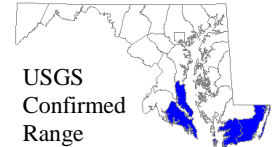
Ohio Department of Natural Resources: www.ohiodnr.com/wildlife/Resources/projects/beetle/beetle.htm

2. **Threatened:** The Northeast Beach Tiger Beetle – *Cicindela dorsalis dorsalis*

The NE Beach Tiger Beetles live on the beaches of Maryland and along the east coast, or did. It takes 2 years to develop into an adult and feeds on lice, flies and fleas. According to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, there are 50 sites in Maryland where the beetle occurs, half having less than 100 beetles. Increased vehicular and human traffic along beaches have decimated the populations. In MD, developmental pressure with beach alteration, stabilization and recreation have altered the beetle’s habitat. The beetle is listed as Endangered in MD, but Threatened nationally. This and additional information can be found at the NYDEC website: www.dec.state.ny.us/website/dfwmr/wildlife/endspec/nbtbfs.html The US Fish and Wildlife Service, www.fws.gov/, says the Northeastern beach tiger beetle was first listed on August 07, 1990. It is currently designated as Threatened in the Entire Range. The published range of this species includes: CT, MA, MD, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VA.



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USGS
Confirmed
Range

Other Source: USGS Tiger Beetles of Maryland - www.npwrc.usgs.gov/resource/distr/insects/tigb/md/26.htm

3. **Threatened:** Puritan Tiger Beetle – *Cicindela puritana*

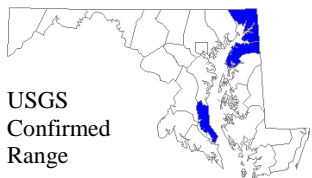
US Fish and Wildlife Service - The Puritan tiger beetle was first listed on August 07, 1990. It is currently designated as Threatened in the Entire Range. The published range of this species includes: Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maryland, New Hampshire, Vermont.



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The adult beetle hunts insects by running on the sand. The larvae live in burrows and are sit and wait predators. The beetles require habitat that is disturbed enough to remain open and plant free, but not so disturbed as to wash away. It takes the larvae 2 years to recover, making them susceptible to spring flooding. The beetles are limited in habitat areas and habitat disturbance, loss and heavy use are the causes of population decline.

Source: Wildlife in Connecticut Puritan Tiger Beetles Fact Sheet - <http://dep.state.ct.us/burnatr/Wildlife/pdf/ptbeet.pdf>



USGS
Confirmed
Range

Other Puritan Tiger Beetles Resource: US Geological Survey Recovery Plan: www.npwrc.usgs.gov/resource/wildlife/recoprogram/species/cicipuri.htm

Compiled by: Elizabeth M. S. Hill, Faculty Extension Assistant, 4-H Youth Development
University of Maryland Extension – Kent County, 11/18/09

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