

JAMAICAN KITE
(*Protographium* [syn. *Eurytides*] *marcellinus*)

The Jamaican kite is threatened with extinction due to its limited range, restricted distribution of its food plant, and intense agricultural development near Kingston, Jamaica.

Status

This swallowtail is listed as Vulnerable by the IUCN.

Description

This is a relatively small swallowtail with long, slender tails and stripes of black and blue-green along its wings.

Natural history

Larvae of this species feed on Black lancewood, *Oxandra lanceolata*, a tree that occurs in a very small area. This swallowtail has two broods per year, but typically maintains a very low population. However, on some years it is very productive and males migrate across the island. Unfortunately, no hostplants occur elsewhere on the island to support new populations.

Distribution

The Jamaican kite occurs primarily at one site called the Roselle colony.

Threats

Limited range, restricted distribution of food plant and intense deforestation for agricultural development.

Conservation

This species may only occur at a single site where its population undergoes drastic swings. Measures must be taken to protect this site and the important larval host plant. This species and Roselle Falls is included in the National Strategy and Action Plan on Biological diversity in Jamaica (1997). See page 54 at the website <http://www.biodiv.org/doc/world/jm/jm-nbsap-01-p5-en.pdf>.

References

Much of the information on this species is taken almost directly from the following resources:
Collins, N. Mark and Michael G. Morris (1985) *Threatened Swallowtail Butterflies of the World: The IUCN Red Data Book*. IUCN, Cambridge, U.K. 401 pp. (see pp. 206 to 207).
Tyler, Hamilton, Keith S. Brown, Jr. and Kent Wilson (1994) *Swallowtail Butterflies of the Americas*. Scientific Publishers, Inc. Gainesville, Florida. 376 pp. (see pp. 181 and 182).

Prepared by the Xerces Society (May 12, 2004)