

***Fixsenia polingi* (Barnes & Benjamin), 1926**
Poling's Hairstreak
(Lycaenidae: Theclinae: Eumaeini)

Profile Prepared by Mace Vaughan and Matthew Shepherd
The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation

SUMMARY

Poling's Hairstreak is restricted to a very small area on three isolated, "sky islands" mountain ranges—the Davis and Chisos mountains of Texas and the Organ mountains of New Mexico—and south into the state of Coahuila, Mexico. Habitat for this hairstreak is dry oak forest. Threats have not fully been evaluated but include grazing of hostplants, invasive weeds, and wildfires.

CONSERVATION STATUS

Xerces Red List Status: Imperiled

Other Rankings:

Canada – Species at Risk Act:	N/A
Canada – provincial status:	N/A
Mexico:	None
USA – Endangered Species Act:	None
USA – state status:	None
NatureServe:	G2
IUCN Red List:	N/A

SPECIES PROFILE

DESCRIPTION

Poling's Hairstreak is a small butterfly in the family Lycaenidae. Its wingspan is 25 to 30 mm (1 to 1 1/4 inches).

The upperside of the wings are a uniform dark brown with a pale fringe. There are two tails on each hindwing. The underside of the wings is also dark brown, although there are a few markings. A narrow, wavy, postmedian band of black-edged white crosses both wings. On the hindwing this forms a W near the base of the tails. There is a blue tail-spot capped narrowly with orange and a submarginal line of orange spots.

TAXONOMIC STATUS

Fixenia polingi (Barnes & Benjamin), 1926. Since some experts consider *Fixenia* to be congeneric with *Satyrium* Scudder, 1876, it is likely that *Fixenia* will be transferred to *Satyrium*.

LIFE HISTORY

Habitat for this hairstreak is dry oak forest. Larval hostplants are gray oak (*Quercus grisea*) and Emory oak (*Q. emoryi*).

There are two flight periods, from mid-May to June and from mid-August to early-September. The second flight may be partial and is very unusual for *Fixenia*. Eggs are laid singly on twigs and overwinter. Caterpillars feed on leaves, buds, and male catkins.

DISTRIBUTION

Poling's Hairstreak is found only in the Davis and Chisos mountains of Texas, the Organ mountains of New Mexico (all "sky islands"), and south into the state of Coahuila, Mexico.

THREATS

Threats are not fully identified. Grazing maybe a threat when animals browse seedlings of the hostplants. Invasive weeds is a second potential threat, although the significance of this needs to be assessed. A more significant potential threat may be wildfires. Poling's Hairstreak lives on isolated "sky island" mountains and a major fire could significantly impact habitat.

CONSERVATION STATUS

The population status is unknown, but this butterfly is restricted to a very small area on three isolated mountain ranges.

CONSERVATION NEEDS

Excessive grazing in its habitat may threaten regeneration of both oak species. Adult nectar plants and larval hostplants should be protected.

RESEARCH NEEDS

Surveys and monitoring of known populations should be done to establish population size and status, and surveys to establish how widespread the butterfly is within currently unoccupied habitat. Dispersal should be studied to understand the population dynamics and the butterfly's ability to move between habitat patches. Because of the rarity of this species, host oak populations and available nectar sources should be studied.

RESOURCES

CONTACTS

REFERENCES

Neck, R.W. 1996. *A Field Guide to Butterflies of Texas*. Gulf Publishing Co., Houston, TX.

Opler, P.A. 1999. *A Field Guide to Western Butterflies*. Houghton-Mifflin Co., Boston, MA.

Scott, J. A. 1986. *The Butterflies of North America*. Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA.

Stanford, R. E., and P. A. Opler. 1993. *Atlas of Western USA Butterflies Including Adjacent Parts of Canada and Mexico*. Denver and Fort Collins, CO.

WEBSITES

U.S. Geological Survey, Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center; Butterflies of North America: Poling's Hairstreak.

<http://www.npwrc.usgs.gov/resource/distr/lepid/bflyusa/usa/799.htm>

(Accessed 5/10/05)

Nearctica; The Butterflies and Skippers of North America: Poling's Hairstreak.

<http://www.nearctica.com/butter/plate8/Spoling.htm>

(Accessed 5/10/05)

NatureServe Explorer.

<http://www.natureserve.org/explorer/>

(Accessed 5/10/05)

DISTRIBUTION MAP

(From: U.S. Geological Survey, Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center.

<http://www.npwrc.usgs.gov/resource/distr/lepid/bflyusa/usa/799.htm>; accessed 5/10/05.)

