

***Hesperopsis graciellae* (MacNeill), 1970**
MacNeill's Sootywing
(Hesperiidae: Pyrginae)

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SUMMARY

MacNeil's Sootywing is found in desert washes, alkali flats, and arid canyons, particularly if they support scrub or chaparral vegetation, along the Colorado River from southwest Utah through southern Nevada and western Arizona. This sootywing is also found in the Coachella Valley, California, and south into Baja California and Sonora, Mexico. Larval hostplants are various saltbushes. Specific threats are not documented, though it is likely that MacNeill's Sootywing is susceptible to human disturbance from activities such as recreation, development, and livestock grazing.

CONSERVATION STATUS

Xerces Red List Status: Vulnerable

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:	G2G3
IUCN Red List:	N/A

SPECIES PROFILE

DESCRIPTION

MacNeil's Sootywing is a small, dark butterfly in the family Hesperiidae (skippers). Its wingspan is 20 to 32 mm ($\frac{3}{4}$ to $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches).

The wings are black above and below with a checkered fringe. On the upperside, the forewing is mottled with gray and has a submarginal row of dark bars and the hindwing may have pale spots. The underside of the hindwing has a few pale spots.

TAXONOMIC STATUS

Hesperopsis graciellae (MacNeill), 1970. This is usually treated as a full species. Scott (1986) considered it a subspecies of *H. alpheus* (W. H. Edwards), 1876, but this is not generally accepted. Common names include MacNeill's Saltbush Sootywing and MacNeil's Sootywing.

LIFE HISTORY

Habitat for MacNeil's Sootywing is desert washes, alkali flats, and arid canyons, particularly if they support scrub or chaparral vegetation. Larval hostplants are various saltbushes, including fourwing saltbush (*Atriplex canescens*), big saltbush (*A. lentiformis*), and silverscale saltbush (*A. argentea* ssp. *expansa*).

Adults fly between April and October, particularly in the two periods of April to May and July to October. Males patrol hostplant patches and gulches to find females. Females lay eggs directly on the hostplants, on the leaves of which the caterpillars will feed. They probably hibernate as fully fed caterpillars.

DISTRIBUTION

Along the Colorado River from southwest Utah through southern Nevada and western Arizona. This sootywing is also found in the Coachella Valley, California, and south into Baja California and Sonora, Mexico.

THREATS

Specific threats are not documented, though it is likely that MacNeill's Sootywing is susceptible to human disturbance from activities such as recreation, development, and livestock grazing.

CONSERVATION STATUS

MacNeill's Sootywing is uncommon with a restricted range.

CONSERVATION NEEDS

Maintain suitable habitats and minimize human disturbance in areas of known populations.

RESEARCH NEEDS

Little is known of this butterfly. Life stage history studies to elucidate phenology and habitat use would be valuable. Surveys should be conducted through its known range to establish details of distribution and population status.

RESOURCES

CONTACTS

REFERENCES

Opler, P. A., and V. Malikul. 1992. *A Field Guide to Eastern Butterflies*. Peterson Field Guide #4. 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.

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WEBSITES

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

<http://www.npwrc.usgs.gov/resource/distr/lepid/bflyusa/usa/637.htm>

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New Mexico Department of Game & Fish/Virginia Tech; Biota Information System of New Mexico (BISON): MacNeill's Sooty Wing.

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Nearctica; Butterflies and Skippers of North America: McNeill's Sootywing.

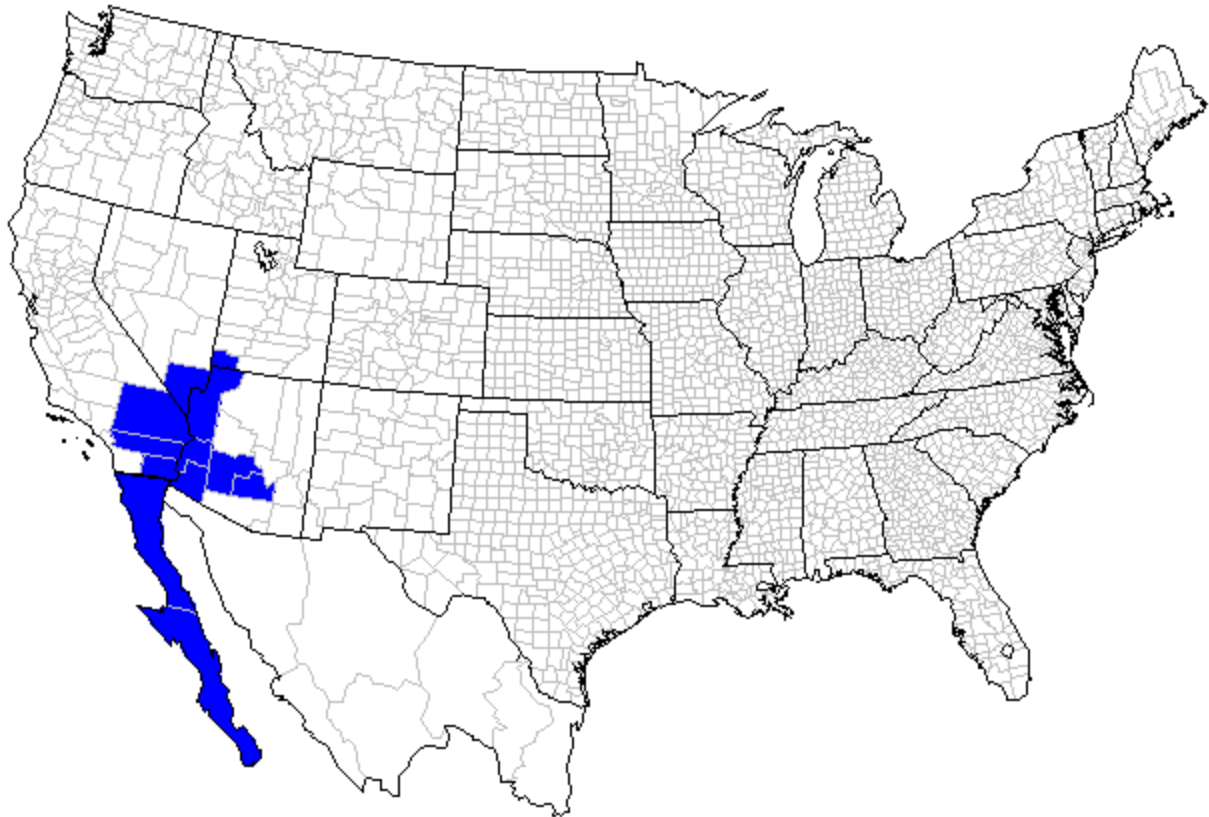
<http://www.nearctica.com/butter/plate26/Hgracie.htm>

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DISTRIBUTION MAP

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

<http://www.npwrc.usgs.gov/resource/distr/lepid/bflyusa/usa/637.htm>; accessed 5/11/05)



Confirmed Records **Unconfirmed or Dubious Records** **Data Not Yet Available**