

Alaska Natural Heritage Program

Conservation Status Report

Icaricia saepiolus – (Edwards, 1863)

Common Name: Greenish Blue (Kodiak Blue)

FI CODE, III EDC6010	Toxonomic Sorial No . 000 777024
ELCODE, IILLE U0010	Taxononnu Seriai 190 See 777924

Synonyms: Plebejus saepiolus (Boisduval, 1852)

Taxonomy Notes: More recent systematic studies have suggested that generic assignments within *Plebejus* sensu lato are warranted (see Talavera et al. 2013), thus the name *Icaricia* is applied here (see Philip & Ferris 2016). Specimens in Alaska correspond to subspecies *amica*; however, the majority of butterfly records were determined only to species. We therefore only treat this butterfly at the species level for conservation assessment while recognizing that currently Alaskan specimens are considered to fall under (name of subspecies) - as treated by Ferris 2016.

Report last updated – 21 May 2016

Conservation Status



Alaska; encompassing Arctic Tundra, Intermontane Boreal, Alaska Range Transition, Coast Mountain Transition, and Coastal Rainforest Ecoregions.



North American Distribution: Widespread in North America, from Alaska south through the western states to California and New Mexico, east through Canada and northern states to Maine (BAMONA 2017).

Trends

Short-term: Proportion collected has remained stable (<10% change).

Long-term: Proportion collected has remained stable (<10% change).



<u>Threats</u>

Scope and Severity: Most threats (pollution, biological resource use, etc.) are anticipated to be negligible in scope and unknown in severity. However this species is likely to respond positively to some level of anthropogenic development and other disturbances. As this species is associated with non-native *Trifolium* and *Lotus* that are now common roadside weeds in the state, it is likely that some level of anthropogenic development has a positive impact on populations of this species. Overall, we suggest that threats for this species are low.

Comments:

Ecology

Habitat: A range of open habitats, including bogs, forest margins, road edges, and moist meadows (Philip & Ferris 2016, BAMONA 2017). In Alaska populations occur from 400 – 1,300 ft elevation (Philip & Ferris 2016).



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Host Plants: Members of the Fabaceae, particularly: Trifolium and Lotus (Philip & Ferris 2016, BAMONA 2017). There are no native Trifolium or Lotus species in Alaska and it is not clear if this butterfly used an alternative hostplant prior to the establishment of *Trifolium* or *Lotus* species in Alaska.

Life History: Flight period is in June to mid-July in Alaska (Philip & Ferris 2016). Typically, males patrol near the host plants in search of females. Females lay eggs on flowers of host plants, and the larvae feed on flowers and developing leaves. This species hibernates as a pupa (Philip & Ferris 2016, BAMONA 2017).

Intrinsic Vulnerability: One subspecies (Plebejus saepiolus areolus) from the San Gabriel Mountains in southern California is listed as T1 – "Critically Imperiled"; and is not suspected to be extinct following the loss of meadow habitat (BAMONA 2017, NatureServe 2017). This cases in southern California is unlikely to reflect intrinsic vulnerability to populations in Alaska, however.

Literature

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