Alaska Natural Heritage Program
Conservation Status Report

**Plebejus idas** – (Linnaeus, 1761)

**Common Name:** Northern Blue

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<tr>
<th>ELCODE: IILEPG5010</th>
<th>Taxonomic Serial No.: 777920</th>
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**Synonyms:** *Lycaeides argyrognomon* (Bergstrasser, 1779), *Lycaeides idas* (Linnaeus, 1761)

**Taxonomy Notes:** Specimens from Alaska correspond to *Plebejus idas alaskensis* F. Chermock, 1945 (Philip & Ferris 2016). NatureServe (2017) indicates this taxon is extremely variable and in some regions it is almost indistinguishable from *P. melissa* (which does not occur in Alaska), except in genitalia and that it is possible some of the subspecies should be recognized as full species. 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. NatureServe concept reference: Opler & Warren (2002).

**Report last updated – 23 May 2017**

**Conservation Status**

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<th>G5 S5</th>
<th>ASRS: not yet ranked</th>
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**Occurrences, Range**

**Number of Occurrences:**
- number of museum records: 902 (KWP 2017, UAM 2017),
- number of EOs: 188

**AK Range Extent:** 916,546 km²

**Occupancy 4 km² grid cells:**
- 193

**Nowacki Ecoregions:** Arctic Coastal Plain, Seward Peninsula, through the interior and Alaska Range to the Kenai Peninsula and southeastern Alaska; encompassing Arctic Tundra,
Bering Tundra, Intermontane Boreal, Alaska Range Transition, Coast Mountain Transition, and Coastal Rainforest Ecoregions.

**North American Distribution:** Holarctic; in North America, from Alaska south through the western mountains to California and through the Rocky Mountains to Colorado; east through Canada and the upper Midwest to Nova Scotia (BAMONA 2017).

**Trends**

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

*Long-term:* Proportion collected has fluctuated between 16% and 2% since the 1930’s. No obvious trend present in the data.

![Plebejus idas Collections in Alaska](image)

**Threats**

*Scope and Severity:* Most threats (including development, pollution, biological resource use, etc.) are anticipated to be negligible in scope and unknown in severity. Climate change and severe weather has the potential to affect populations; however we cannot anticipate the scope or severity of such impacts.

**Ecology**

*Habitat:* Openings in mixed boreal forests and tundra to 2,000 feet elevation in Alaska (Philip & Ferris 2016); and elsewhere it is associated with meadows, bogs, and seeps (BAMONA 2017).
**Plant Hosts:** Members of the Ericaceae, including *Ledum (Rhododendron)*, *Kalmia*, and *Vaccinium*, and *Empetrum*; members of the Fabaceae, including *Astragalus, Lathyrus, Lotus*, and *Lupinus* have been reported as hostplants (Philip & Ferris 2016, BAMONA 2017).

**Life History:** Flight period is late June to late July (Philip & Ferris 2016). Males patrol near host plants to intercept females. Females lay eggs on the stems of hostplants or in debris below the plant. Winter hibernation is reported to occur as eggs in Alaska (Philip & Ferris 2016)

**Intrinsic Vulnerability:** Unknown

**Literature**


