Alaska Natural Heritage Program
Conservation Status Report

**Agriades optilete** – (Knoch, 1781)

**Common Name:** Cranberry Blue

**ELCODE:** IILEPG9010

**Taxonomic Serial No.:** 777931

**Synonyms:** *Plebejus optilete* Knoch, 1781, *Vacciniina optilete* (Knoch, 1781)

**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 *Agriades* is applied here (see Philip & Ferris 2016). Specimens from Alaska correspond to *Agriades optilete yukona* (W. Holland, 1900) (Philip & Ferris 2016). 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 that corresponds to *Plebejus optilete* (Knoch, 1781): Opler & Warren (2002).

**Report last updated – 23 May 2016**

**Conservation Status**

| G5 | S5 | ASRS: not yet ranked |

**Occurrences, Range**

**Number of Occurrences:**
- number of museum records: 645 (KWP 2017, UAM 2017), number of EOs: 183

**AK Range Extent:** 938,410 km² (absence of records in southwestern Alaska is likely due to insufficient sampling – Philip & Ferris 2016)

**Occupancy 4 km² grid cells:**
- 180

**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:** from Alaska east to Yukon, British Columbia, and Northwest Territories (Philip & Ferris 2016).

**Trends**

*Short-term:* Proportion collected has increased significantly (>10% change).

*Long-term:* Proportion collected has remained relatively stable (<10% change) prior to the last decade.

![Agriades optilete 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:* Moist tundra, peatlands, boggy areas, and forest openings; to 3,000 ft in elevation in Alaska (Philip & Ferris 2016).

*Host Plants:* *Vaccinium* spp., including *V. oxycoccos* and *V. vitis-idaea* (Philip & Ferris 2016).
**Life History:** Flight period is late June and into July. This species flies close to the ground. Overwinter hibernation occurs as half-grown larvae (Philip & Ferris 2016).

**Intrinsic Vulnerability:** Unknown.

**Literature**


