

***Satyrrium kingi* (Klots & Clench), 1952  
King's Hairstreak  
(Lycaenidae: Theclinae: Eumaeini)**

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**SUMMARY**

King's Hairstreak is found along the Atlantic coastal plain from Maryland south to Florida and west through the Gulf states, both along the coast and inland, to eastern Texas. Its habitat is damp to swampy woodland and stream edges in a range of forest types. Adults are found mainly close to the larval hostplant, sweetleaf. King's Hairstreak is uncommon or rare throughout its range and found only in small, localized populations. The principal threat is forest clearance leading to destruction or fragmentation of habitat.

**CONSERVATION STATUS**

**Xerces Red List Status: Vulnerable**

**Other Rankings:**

Canada – Species at Risk Act:	N/A
Canada – provincial status:	N/A
Mexico:	N/A
USA – Endangered Species Act:	None
USA – state status:	DE, MD: Endangered
NatureServe:	G3G4
IUCN Red List:	N/A

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**SPECIES PROFILE**

**DESCRIPTION**

King's Hairstreak is a small butterfly in the family Lycaenidae (goassamer-wings). It's wingspan is 1? to 1½ inches (3.0 to 3.8 cm).

The uppersides of its wings are brown with a whitish fringe and a pair of dark spots at the base of its twin tails (one long, one short). The hindwing margin is indented above the second (shorter) tail. The undersides of the wings are pale brown with a postmedian row of darker, white-edged spots and a submarginal band of dark spots that become crescent-

shaped toward the trailing edge of the hindwing. At the base of the tails are two tail spots, black by the short tail and blue by the long tail; each is capped with orange.

#### **TAXONOMIC STATUS**

*Satyrium kingi* (Klots & Clench), 1952.

#### **LIFE HISTORY**

Habitat for King's Hairstreak is damp to swampy woodland and stream edges in a range of forest types—hardwood, conifer or mixed. Adults are found mainly close to the larval hostplant, sweetleaf (*Symplocos tinctoria*).

There is one adult flight period between May and July, although the exact timing varies with latitude. Eggs are laid singly and overwinter before hatching the following spring. Larvae feed on new foliage. The pupal stage is probably spent in leaf litter.

#### **DISTRIBUTION**

This butterfly is found along the Atlantic coastal plain from Maryland south to Florida and west through the Gulf states, both along the coast and inland, to eastern Texas.

#### **THREATS**

The principal threat is forest clearance leading to destruction or fragmentation of habitat. If gypsy moth continues its spread, then spraying to control this forest pest could become a threat. There are also reports of fire impacting colonies.

#### **CONSERVATION STATUS**

King's Hairstreak is uncommon or rare throughout its range and found only in small, localized populations. It is also not as widespread as its larval hostplant and often missing from what appears to be suitable habitat. It does not appear to be facing imminent decline but is not demonstrably secure.

Both Delaware and Maryland list King's Hairstreak as endangered under state statute.

#### **CONSERVATION NEEDS**

All known populations and their habitat should be protected and managed appropriately. Although this is not confirmed, it is suspected that use of prescribed fire may explain the absence of this butterfly from many suitable sites. A lack of fire may be an important feature, because King's Hairstreak is unlikely to be found at sites where fires have burned over entire stands of sweetleaf.

#### **RESEARCH NEEDS**

Surveys to identify additional populations and to monitor known populations should be done. Ecological studies are needed to understand why apparently suitable sites with the sweetleaf hostplant are not occupied. A better understanding of the impacts of fire would be valuable.

## RESOURCES

### CONTACTS

### REFERENCES

Opler, P. A., and G. O. Krizek. 1984. *Butterflies East of the Great Plains*. Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, MD.

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.

### WEBSITES

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

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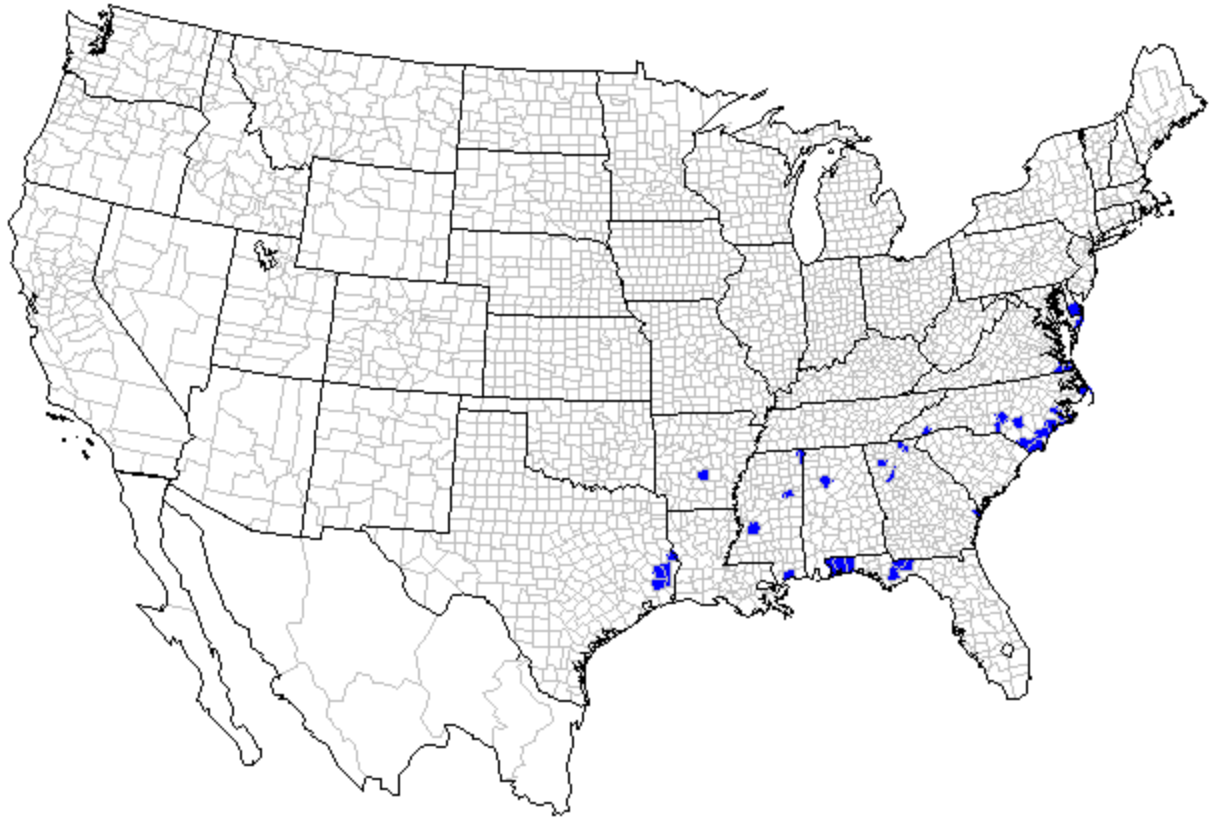
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## DISTRIBUTION MAP

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

<http://www.npwrc.usgs.gov/resource/distr/lepid/bflyusa/usa/362.htm>; accessed 5/13/05.)



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