

JULY 1 - 14, 2018 NATURAL HISTORY NOTES FOR EASTVIEW

By Dick Harlow

TWELVE-SPOTTED SKIMMER



(1) Twelve-spotted Skimmer, *Libellula pulchella*, South Pond, EastView. © Dick Harlow

The myriad of Dragonflies that one can observe during the summer are numerous. When you want to try and identify what you are looking at, Dragonfly identification is daunting. However, there are some easy ones and the above species is one of those!

No other dragonfly in our area has these alternating white and dark/black spots (1 & 3) on the wing ending with dark/black wingtips.



(2) Common Whitetail, *Libellula lydia*, South Pond, EastView, © Dick Harlow

The Common Whitetail, *Libellula lydia*, Picture (2) has black in the middle of its wing, but not alternating white and dark/black and doesn't have dark/black wingtips. Although the body of the Twelve-spotted is light gray, the Whitetail is much more prominent with standout white dashes along the side of the abdomen. The Common Whitetail can be seen regularly around EastView. Notice that images (1,2,3) have the same Genus name. All dragonflies that have this Genus name are put into the common name group called Skimmers.

Twelve-spotteds will perch either near the water or in fields, meadows or in openings in upland areas. They will definitely stand out due to their wing pattern.

Looking closely, you can see that the wings of picture (1) are fairly pristine. Whereas in picture (3) the wings are notched and beat-up. Probably why it is on the lawn rather than higher up on a blade of tall grass.

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(3) Twelve-spotted Skimmer, *Libellula pulchella*,
EastView lawn. © Dick Harlow

Even though the wings in picture (3) seem shorter in length than picture (1) you can definitely tell that even though they are different individuals they are of the same species.

Please understand that all Dragonflies are predators. They will catch a mosquito, fly, beetle, any insect that suits their fancy. They are amazing flyers, so agile and quick. Both species of skimmers should be easily identifiable. Good luck!

TIGER SWALLOWTAIL



(1) Canadian Swallowtail, *Papilio canadensis*,
© Dick Harlow

There are two Tiger Swallowtails we have in our area that look almost identical. They are so similar that when they are on the wing they are darned near impossible to separate. The two are *Papilio glaucus*, Eastern Tiger Swallowtail and *Papilio canadensis*, Canadian Tiger Swallowtail. Yet, there is a way you can separate the two species. You need to see them with their wings closed.

Pictures (1) and (2) are of the same butterfly feeding on Miss Kim Lilac late May of this year. For a time, I used to think that any Tiger Swallowtail that flew in early summer in middle to northern Vermont was a Canadian, but have found a fairly easy identifiable character, to determine the difference to be accurate.

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(2) Canadian Tiger Swallowtail, *Papilio canadensis*,
© Dick Harlow



(3) Eastern Tiger Swallowtail, *Papilio glaucus*,
© Fred Goodwin

When the wings are closed as in picture (2) Notice the forewing back edge. The edge has a black trim, with a yellow band and a gray/black band.

Compared with the black bands in picture (3) you can see a definite difference between those gray bands in the underwing of pictures (2), and (4) as compared to (3).

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(4) Canadian Tiger Swallowtail, *Papilio canadensis*
© Ron Nuehring

However, it should be said, and that it is generally accepted, in areas where these species overlap, that a Tiger Swallowtail flying at the end of July or in August and beyond is probably an Eastern Tiger Swallowtail, whereas Canadian Tigers fly early in the summer up to the middle of July.

OBSERVATIONS

MAMMALS

White-tailed Deer
Eastern Cottontail
Meadow Vole

AMPHIBIANS

American Bullfrog
American Toad

LEPODOPTERA

Canadian Tiger Swallowtail
Cabbage White
Clouded Sulphur
Monarch

Weather Tidbits

Month of JULY 1-14, 2018

All Measurements taken at solar noon (1230 EST).

PRECIPITATION

Total Precipitation: 20.4 mm or 0.80 inches
Historic Average = 1.2 inches

Overcast Days: 3