

Florida Duskywing

(Ephyriades brunnea floridensis)

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The **Florida Duskywing** (*Ephyrades brunnea floridensis*) is a small brown skipper restricted to extreme South Florida. Males are uniform dark brown above with small transparent spots on each forewing. Females have extensive brown mottling and larger forewing spots. Both sexes display a lovely purplish sheen on their wings when freshly emerged. Adults have a rapid, erratic flight but regularly pause to feed or perch with their wings open.

The Florida Duskywing inhabits pine rocklands that support populations of its larval host plant, Long Key Locustberry (*Byrsonima lucida*). The developing larvae construct individual shelters on the host by folding leaves together with silk. While rare throughout its range, this species can at times be locally somewhat common, particularly in Everglades National Park and the National Key Deer Refuge. It can also be found in many of the remaining pine rockland fragments within Miami-Dade County. Research efforts are underway to better understand the population biology of the Florida Duskywing and the overall connectivity of the remaining pine rockland conservation lands across the South Florida mainland and the Florida Keys.

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Cover photo by: Susan Kolterman

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