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The butterflies: Skippers Grass-Skippers

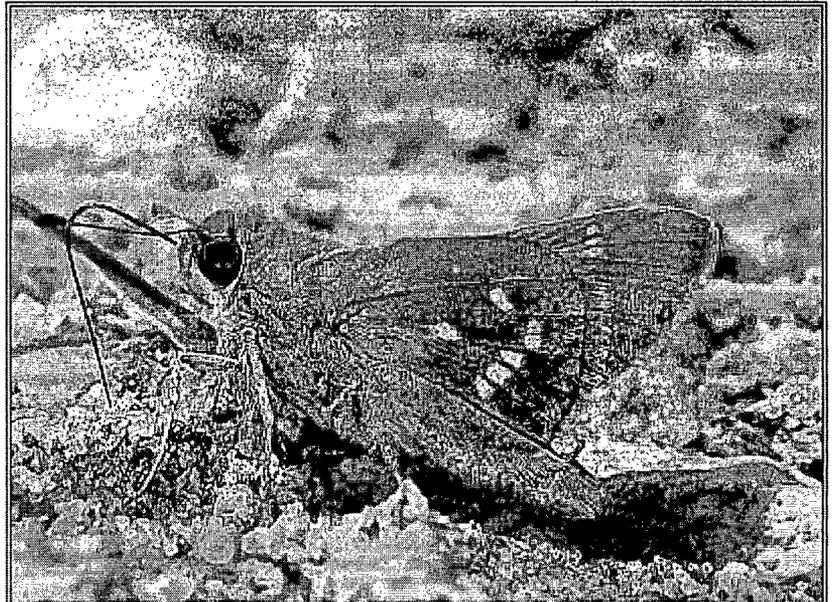
Leonard's Skipper (*Hesperia leonardus*)

This has always been my favorite skipper as it makes its first appearance of the year as the main butterfly season is waning. In addition, it uses blazing star as a nectar source, making it easier to locate. I often look for this species by using my binoculars and carefully scanning all the blazing stars looking for this species nectaring. After finding it, it doesn't guarantee that it will be easy to photograph as this species is very active and moves around a lot while nectaring.

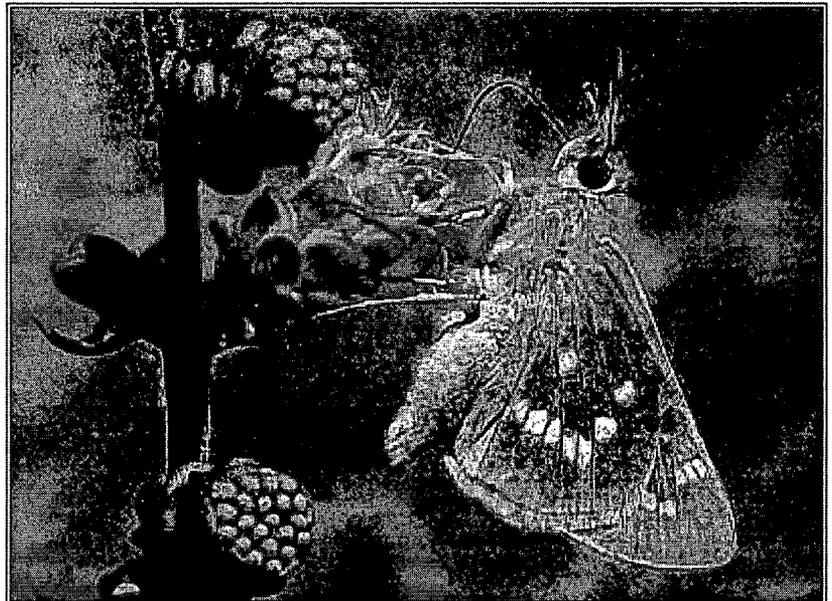
Identifying characteristics: Below, this species is orange with, especially in fresh individuals, a reddish tinge that seems to highlight the lighter spots.

Above the males are orange with a wide black margin and a stigma through the middle of the front wing. The female is much darker with light colored spots.

Similar species: This species is very similar to the Common Branded Skipper. Above, the Common Branded Skipper and Leonard's Skipper are very much alike. Below the Leonard's Skipper has a reddish tinge that contrasts greatly with the light spots. On the Common Branded Skipper this ground color has some light greenish coloring to it that makes it much lighter looking than the Leonard's Skipper.



Mecan Springs, Waushara Co., WI, August 18, 2004.



Muralt SNA, Green Co., WI, September 3, 2005.

Habitat: Prairie and barren areas, usually with abundant nectar sources.

Flight: This species is single-brooded and may be seen from early August to early September.

Abundance: This species is fairly common in some areas, but it is still unusual to see more than 20 individuals in a day.

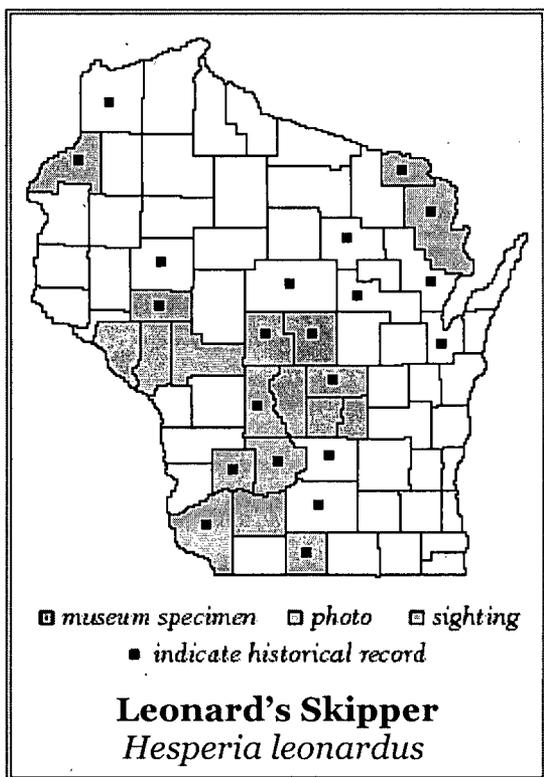
[Submit a Leonard's Skipper sighting »](#)



Male, Muralt SNA, Green Co., WI, September 3, 2005.



Female, Muralt SNA, Green Co., WI, September 3, 2005.





Muralt SNA, Green Co., WI, September 3, 2005.

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