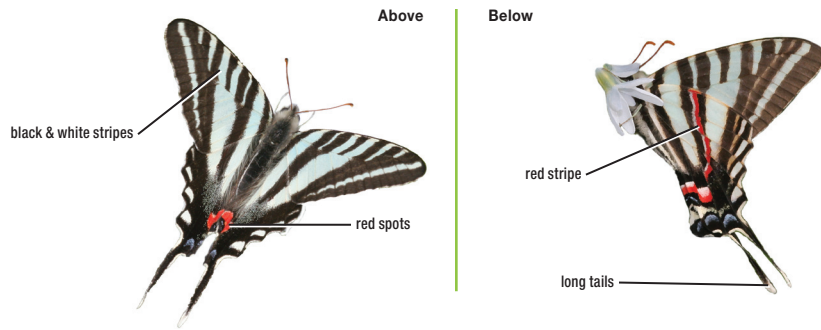


ZEBRA SWALLOWTAIL (*Eurytides marcellus*)

DESCRIPTION

This exquisite butterfly is our state butterfly! Think of black and white zebra stripes. There are red spots at the wing bases and blue spots near the tails. Below, there are red racing stripes on the hindwings. Zebra Swallowtails that emerge in the summer have longer tails than those that emerge in the spring.



YOUNG

Females lay single round, pale green eggs on new pawpaw leaves. Caterpillars are smooth and either light green or black with thin bands of yellow, orange, and white and are found underneath pawpaw leaves. They may eat their siblings. Caterpillars defend themselves during attacks by giving off stinky odors from their protective, Y-shaped organs (osmeterium), which are yellow. They also defend themselves by thrashing about or by moving to another location (avoidance). The chrysalises are either green or brown and are usually found underneath the pawpaw leaves. Chrysalises overwinter.

HABITAT

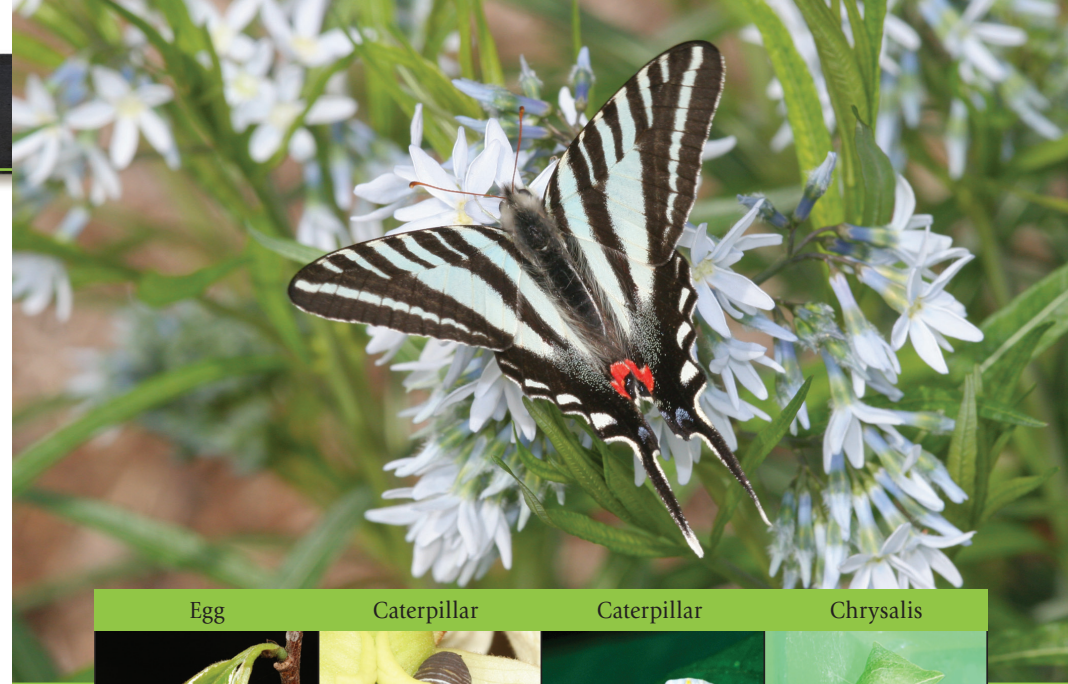
Zebra Swallowtails fly in rich forests with creeks or rivers where pawpaw grows. Males fly along forest roads, trails, and hilltops searching for females, which are searching for pawpaw. Zebras nectar in gardens, weedy fields, meadows, campgrounds, wooded swamps, or along roadsides. The sociable male Zebras puddle in damp areas at lake edges or riverbanks with other Zebras, other swallowtails, other butterflies, and even bees.

HOSTPLANTS

Zebra Swallowtails lay eggs on and the caterpillars feed on pawpaw trees, which grow in groves. Pawpaw trees provide chemicals that protect caterpillars, and eventually adults, from bird predation. Despite the poisons in the leaves, the pawpaw fruit is edible and is the largest native fruit in the United States.

GARDEN TIPS

For the caterpillars, plant pawpaw trees which grow to 15-20 feet or more and like part shade. Zebra Swallowtails nectar on redbud, hoary puccoon, pawpaw, zinnias, buttonbush, daisy fleabane, blue star, Jacob's ladder, white clover, orange and common milkweeds, lowbush blueberry, peppervine, and purple phacelia. The short adult proboscis cannot access long-tubed flowers.



Nancy Garden

Jan. | Feb. | Mar. | Apr. | May | June | July | Aug. | Sept. | Oct. | Nov. | Dec.

Fun Fact



The Zebra Swallowtail became Tennessee's state butterfly thanks to Mrs. Sherrill Charlton, biology teacher at Gallatin High School, and her students. The Zebra Swallowtail was chosen because of its southern distribution and for its dependence on the native pawpaw tree. Mrs. Charlton approached her state senator from Sumner County, Don Wright, who brought the state butterfly bill before the Tennessee legislature, and it was approved in 1994.

