

SCHAUS SWALLOWTAIL
Heraclides aristodemus ponceanus

Order: Lepidoptera
Family: Papilionidae
FNAI Ranks: G4T1/S1
Legal Status: US—Endangered
FL—Endangered



Alana Edwards

Description: A large (forewing measuring 1.6 - 2.3 in. = 40 - 58 mm), brown-black butterfly with yellow markings. Markings across the center of the forewing and hindwing appear as a pale yellow band that bifurcates toward the tip of the forewing. Markings along the trailing edge of both the forewing and hindwing appear as a series of crescents, with those on the hind wing larger and generally a deeper yellow. Underside of the hind wing has a large burnt orange patch; tails are black, trimmed with yellow.

Similar Species: The giant swallowtail (*Papilio cresphontes*) and Bahama swallowtail (*Papilio andaemon bonhotei*) have a central yellow spot on the tail tips.

SCHAUS SWALLOWTAIL *Heraclides aristodemus ponceanus*

Habitat: Tropical hardwood hammocks (rockland hammocks); host plant is torchwood (*Amyris elemifera*), rarely wild lime (*Zanthoxylum fagara*).

Seasonal Occurrence: Adults emerge in early summer as the rainy season begins; adult lifespan is generally 3 weeks; a second brood may emerge toward the end of the summer if favorable conditions prevail.

Florida Distribution: Key Largo and islands within Biscayne Bay that support tropical hardwood hammocks.

Range-wide Distribution: See Florida distribution.

Conservation Status: Protected within Key Largo Hammock Botanical State Park and Biscayne National Park.

Protection and Management: Prevent clearing of tropical hardwood hammocks; plant torchwood in restoration areas; eliminate mosquito spraying within areas known to support the subspecies.

Selected References: Deyrup and Franz 1994, Emmel and Minno 1988.