

ARIZONA GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT  
HERITAGE DATA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Invertebrate Abstract

Element Code: IILEW0N070

Data Sensitivity: No

**CLASSIFICATION, NOMENCLATURE, DESCRIPTION, RANGE**

**NAME:** *Automeris patagoniensis*

**COMMON NAME:** Patagonia Eyed Silkmoth

**SYNONYMS:**

**FAMILY:** Saturniidae

**AUTHOR, PLACE OF PUBLICATION:** LeMaire, Smith, and Wolfe, Tropical Lepidoptera 3 (2): 123. 1992.

**TYPE LOCALITY:** Holotype collected 4 miles SE of Patagonia, Harshaw Creek, Santa Cruz County, Arizona, United States of America.

**TYPE SPECIMEN:** HT: LACM-161827, 161829. T. Kral & J. Slotten, 2 Aug 1989.

**TAXONOMIC UNIQUENESS:** According to NatureServe (2003), *Automeris patagoniensis* is a valid taxon, but may only be a subspecies of *Automeris colenon*.

**DESCRIPTION:** Their wingspan is 2.25-2.75 inches (5.8-7.0 cm). Females are larger than males. Upper side is orange to brownish orange, with an occasional yellow male. The female's forewing is darker than the hind wing. Forewing of both sexes has faint post-median lines. The hind wing has a small white, gray, and black eyespot. Larvae are large caterpillars, with spines on the body.

**AIDS TO IDENTIFICATION:**

**ILLUSTRATIONS:** Color photo of caterpillar (Singer *in*

[Http://methusela.calsnet.arizona.edu:8080/imagedb/servlet/DBImage?image\\_name=Automeris](http://methusela.calsnet.arizona.edu:8080/imagedb/servlet/DBImage?image_name=Automeris))

Color photo (Opler *in*

<http://www.npwrc.usgs.gov/resource/distr/lepid/moths/usa/960.htm>)

Color photo (*In* <http://www.worldleps.apatagoniensis.htm>)

Color photo of adult and caterpillar (Wolfe *in*

<http://www.insectcompany.com/silkmoth/kwapatagoniensis.htm>)

**TOTAL RANGE:** Endemic to Arizona. Known only from Harshaw Creek, in the Patagonia Mountains of Santa Cruz County, and in the Huachuca Mountains, in Cochise County.

**RANGE WITHIN ARIZONA:** See “Total Range.”

### **SPECIES BIOLOGY AND POPULATION TRENDS**

**BIOLOGY:** Adults are nocturnal. Cocoons are spun at the base of the host plant and have a slit through which the adult can emerge.

**REPRODUCTION:** Adults are reported from mid July to early August. Larvae are therefore probably mature around September to early October, to perhaps as late as November.

**FOOD HABITS:** As adults they are non-feeding and as immatures they are herbivorous. Young caterpillars feed in groups and older caterpillars feed alone. The host plants are Bermuda grass (*Cynodon dactylon*) and bluegrass (*Poa* species).

**HABITAT:** According to NatureServe (2003), “Madrean oak woodland with other woody broad-leaved shrubs (Opler, pers. Comm., 2000). Tuskes et al. (1996) imply grasslands but may mean savanna or woodland.” Others say grassy areas in oak woodlands.

**ELEVATION:** 4,400-5,100 ft (1342-1556 m).

**PLANT COMMUNITY:** The host plants are Bermuda grass (*Cynodon dactylon*) and bluegrass (*Poa* species).

**POPULATION TRENDS:** Unknown.

### **SPECIES PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION**

**ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT STATUS:** None

**STATE STATUS:** None

**OTHER STATUS:** None

**MANAGEMENT FACTORS:** Threats include: few populations, lack of protection, and potential of invasive weeds replacing host plant grasses.

**PROTECTIVE MEASURES TAKEN:**

**SUGGESTED PROJECTS:** It is suggested that all populations should be monitored and conserved.

**LAND MANAGEMENT/OWNERSHIP:**

**SOURCES OF FURTHER INFORMATION****REFERENCES:**

Borror, D.J. & R.E. White. 1970. A Field Guide to Insects, America north of Mexico. Houghton Mifflin Company. Boston, Massachusetts. Pp. 232.

<http://www.phorid.net/type%20database/details.asp?key=LACM> ENT 161827. *Automeris patagoniensis*.

<http://www.phorid.net/type%20database/details.asp?key=LACM> ENT 161829. *Automeris patagoniensis*.

[Http://www.worldleps.com/apatagoniensis.htm](http://www.worldleps.com/apatagoniensis.htm).

NatureServe. 2003. An online encyclopedia of life [web application]. Version 1.8. Arlington, Virginia, USA: NatureServe. Available: <http://www.natureserve.org/explorer>. (Accessed: March 15, 2004).

Opler, P. Available: <http://www.npwrc.usgs.gov/resource/distr/lepid/moths/usa/960.htm>.

Singer, M. Available:

[Http://methusela.calsnet.arizona.edu:8080/imagedb/servlet/DBImage?image\\_name=Automeris](http://methusela.calsnet.arizona.edu:8080/imagedb/servlet/DBImage?image_name=Automeris).

USGS. Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center. Available:

<http://www.npwrc.usgs.gov/resource/distr/lepid/moths/usa/960.htm>.

Wolfe, K. Available: <http://www.insectcompany.com/silkmoth/kwapatagoniensis.htm>.

**MAJOR KNOWLEDGEABLE INDIVIDUALS:****ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

**Revised:** 2004-03-26 (AMS)

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