



# Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program

Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

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## Gerhard's Underwing *Catocala herodias gerhardi*

State Status: **Special Concern**

Federal Status: None

**Description:** Gerhard's Underwing is a noctuid moth with a wingspan of 55-65 mm. The forewings are grayish-brown with dark longitudinal streaks along the veins, alternating with white streaks distally, and prominent white shading along the costal margin. The hind wings are banded with black and bright crimson, fringed with white.

**Habitat:** Xeric, oak-dominated woodland, barrens, and scrub habitats on sandy soil or rocky summits and ridges. In Massachusetts, Gerhard's Underwing inhabits open-canopy pitch pine-scrub oak barrens, especially scrub oak thickets; also open oak woodland on Martha's Vineyard.

**Life History:** Adult moths fly in July and August. Eggs are laid on the stems of scrub oak (*Quercus ilicifolia*), where they overwinter, hatching in early spring. Larvae feed on the catkins and new leaves of scrub oak, and pupate in June.

**Range:** Gerhard's Underwing occurs in sandplain habitats on Cape Cod and the offshore islands of Massachusetts, on eastern Long Island, New York, and in southern New Jersey; as well as on summits and ridges in western Massachusetts and Connecticut, the lower Hudson Valley of New York, and south through the Appalachian mountains to North Carolina.



Photo by M.W. Nelson

### Adult Flight Period in Massachusetts

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec

### Threats

- Habitat loss
- Fire suppression
- Invasion by exotic plants
- Introduced generalist parasitoids
- Insecticide spraying
- Off-road vehicles
- Light pollution

