



YYC Young Citizen Scientists

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Common Name: Canadian Tiger Swallowtail Butterfly

Scientific Name: *Papilio eurymedon*

The swallowtail butterfly is part of the tiger swallowtail group. This species prefers to inhabit hilly and mountainous country, but can be found in shrubby forest areas, open woodlands and along streamside's. In Canada, they are found in Southern British Columbia and southwestern Alberta territories. Within these habitats they find mud puddles which they use to suck up nutrients they need to survive and thrive! Beyond the mud puddles they find nectar from wildflowers such as wallflower, California buckeye, and yerba santa. As we can see from their diet, these species play a large role in pollination with their habitats. When they land on one flower to collect nectar, the pollen attaches to their wings or body, which is transferred from flower to flower. Although the pale swallowtail butterfly has defences against predators, it still falls victim to some other insects and animals in its habitat. Some of it's predators include: red-winged black birds, striped skunks, green darner dragonflies and the five-lined skink lizard.



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Unique qualities:

- These butterflies find mud puddles together and the nutrients obtained from the wet soil is useful to their mating practices
- Females and males of this species look the same
- These butterflies have osmeteria, which is a fleshy body part that extends outwards when they are frightened or disturbed releasing a bad smell. This adaptation is a defence mechanism to warn off predators.
- The caterpillars are plump and green with strange eye markings and a mark behind the eyes to mimic a snakehead. This adaptation has allowed the species to scare predators during its development period.
- The chrysalis is usually a pale green or light brown allowing it to camouflage into the branches of the plant it hangs from

Human actions that enhance or threaten their existence:

These species are not currently endangered. Despite not being at risk, there are human impacts that influence their livelihood. The top threats identified for these species are agriculture and aquaculture, pollution, and climate change induced temperature extremes and severe weather.



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