

Crossline Skipper

Crossline Skippers occur throughout Alabama. They are probably more common than sighting records indicate, perhaps under-reported because of identification issues. Flight begins in spring and continues through fall. These skippers are found in open, usually dry, grassy areas including fields, roadsides, and gardens. Males perch. Both sexes are avid nectarers.



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- Sexually dimorphic: Males have a prominent dark stigma that crosses the dorsal forewing. There is an extensive orange “shoulder” above it. Females have greatly reduced orange along dorsal forewing edge; it may be absent. They usually have two prominent, squared spots in the middle of the forewing. Male wings are more pointed; they appear to hold them in a very upright position.
- Markings and coloration are variable.
- Antennal clubs are bi-colored: black above; light or bright below.
- May be confused with Tawny-edged Skippers. Crosslines are larger, often noticeably. Ventral hindwing typically has a crescent of spots, which is often absent on Tawny-edgeds. The tawny-orange dorsal forewing edge is typically not as bright on Crosslines, but this may be difficult to assess in the field. A dorsal view is important: even so, distinguishing between these two species can be difficult, especially with females—with some individuals, it is impossible.



Crossline Skipper

Dorsal Male



Extensive tawny-orange “shoulder” along upper wing; ends at stigma

Dark brown ground color

Two or three spots at end of stigma

Long, straight stigma that crosses wing

Crossline Skipper *Polites origenes*

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* Reliable diagnostic markers

Wingspan: 1 - 1¼ inches (2.5 - 3.2 cm)

Alabama Butterfly Atlas | alabama.butterflyatlas.org

Crossline Skipper

Dorsal Female



Crossline Skipper *Polites origenes*

Wingspan: 1 - 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches (2.5 - 3.2 cm)

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* Reliable diagnostic markers

Crossline Skipper

Ventral View



Noticeable contrast in color between forewing edge and hindwing

Small spot band

Ground color ranges from olive-brown to orange-brown

Crescent band of faint light spots (sometime at sharp angle; sometimes almost absent)

Crossline Skipper *Polites origenes*

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Wingspan: 1 - 1¼ inches (2.5 - 3.2 cm)

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Similar Species

Crossline Skipper dorsal male



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Crossline Skipper dorsal female



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Crossline Skipper ventral



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Tawny-edged Skipper male



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Tawny-edged Skipper female

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Tawny-edged Skipper ventral



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