

# Little Yellow

Little Yellows are common and widespread in Alabama, probably occurring in every county. Since they cannot withstand hard freezes, they are typically encountered in summer and fall, sometimes persisting into December in southern counties. Habitat consists of almost any open, sunny area. Flight is low and quick. Little Yellows visit many small flowers and are avid nectarers. Males are frequent puddlers and often gather in numbers at damp spots.

- Small--typically much smaller than the Cloudless Sulphur.
- Little Yellows are seasonally and sexually dimorphic.
- Males are bright yellow. Their dorsal wing borders are solid black. The ventral rusty patch may be diminished or missing. Females are paler than males. A white 'alba' female form occurs, typically in the fall. Females tend to be larger.
- Winter (dry season) butterflies often have rusty wing fringes. They tend to be more heavily marked.
- Ventral markings are variable, but the two small dots at the base of the ventral hindwing are diagnostic.
- Antennal clubs are black.
- May be confused with Barred Yellows



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# Little Yellow

## Dorsal Male



Black forewing tips

Small dark spot

Black outer border

Bright yellow wings

Little Yellow *Pyrisitia lisa*

Wingspan 1 - 1½ inches (2.5-3.8 cm)

© Sara Bright

\* Reliable diagnostic markers

# Little Yellow

## Dorsal Female



Diffuse black forewing tips

Incomplete outer border

Lighter wing color than male

Small dark spot

Little Yellow *Pyrisitia lisa*

© Sara Bright

\* Reliable diagnostic markers

Wingspan 1 - 1½ inches (2.5-3.8 cm)

Alabama Butterfly Atlas | alabama.butterflyatlas.org

# Little Yellow

Dorsal Female  
White ('alba') Form



Small dark spot

Diffuse black forewing tips

White ('alba') wing color

Incomplete outer border

Little Yellow *Pyrisitia lisa*

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Wingspan 1 - 1½ inches (2.5-3.8 cm)

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# Little Yellow

## Ventral Male



Bright yellow wing color

Rusty patch (sometimes diminished)

Scattered dark markings

\*Two tiny dots on hindwing base  
near body

Little Yellow *Pyrisitia lisa*

Wingspan 1 - 1½ inches (2.5-3.8 cm)

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# Little Yellow

## Ventral Female



Scattered dark markings

Large rusty patch

\*Two tiny dots on hindwing base  
near body

Yellow wing color

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© Sara Bright

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Wingspan 1 - 1½ inches (2.5-3.8 cm)

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# Little Yellow

Ventral Female  
White ('alba') Form



Scattered dark markings

Large rusty patch

White ('alba') wing color

\*Two tiny dots on hindwing base  
near body

Little Yellow *Pyrisitia lisa*

Wingspan 1 - 1½ inches (2.5-3.8 cm)

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# Little Yellow

## Ventral View Winter (Dry Season) Form



Rusty-colored wing fringe and border

Heavy scattering of dark markings

Large rusty patch

\*Two tiny dots on hindwing base near body

Little Yellow *Pyrisitia lisa*

© Karen Chiasson

\* Reliable diagnostic markers

Wingspan 1 - 1½ inches (2.5-3.8 cm)

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# Little Yellow

*Pyrisitia lisa*

## Male/Female Comparison



MALE: Slightly smaller than female

Rusty patch not as large as female's

FEMALE: Slightly larger than male

Rusty patch more extensive than male's

Little Yellow *Pyrisitia lisa*

© Vitaly Charny

\* Reliable diagnostic markers

Wingspan 1 - 1½ inches (2.5-3.8 cm)

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# Little Yellow

*Pyrisitia lisa*

## Male/Female Comparison



MALE: Slightly smaller than female

FEMALE: Slightly larger than male  
White ('alba') wing color

Little Yellow *Pyrisitia lisa*

© Sara Bright

\* Reliable diagnostic markers

Wingspan 1 - 1½ inches (2.5-3.8 cm)

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# Similar Species

Little Yellow



© Sara Bright

Barred Yellow



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# Color Variations in Little Yellow



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# Size Comparison of Little Yellow and Orange Sulphur



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