

# Zabulon Skipper

Zabulon Skippers are widespread in Alabama; they are common in the upper two-thirds of the state. Zabulons are on the wing spring through fall. Preferred habitat is grassy areas near woodlands and forests. Males perch to look for females and aggressively defend these perches. Females tend to prefer somewhat shady areas. Both sexes avidly nectar at a variety of flowers.



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- A medium-sized skipper
- Sexes are strongly dimorphic. Males are bright yellow orange. There is no stigma. Females are dark purple-brown with a distinct white edge on the costal edge of the hindwing.
- May be confused with Hobomok Skipper. Female may be confused with Clouded Skipper. Zabulons are much more common and widespread than Hobomoks. Zabulon males have rusty dots within the large golden patch on ventral hindwings; Hobomok males lack these dots. Zabulon males have a ventral “golden shoulder” that Hobomoks lack. Dorsally, Zabulon males have a dark mark and line near forewing apex that tend to be unconnected; Hobomok males tend to have an S-shaped dark mark. The golden dorsal hindwing patch in male Zabs is not divided by veins as it is in Hobomoks. Zabulon females have a white coastal hindwing edge that Hobomok females lack. Ventral hindwing has an indistinct dark, smudgy line that Hobomoks lack. Dorsally, Zabulon females lack an isolated mid-forewing dot that “Pocohontas” form Hobomok females have. Female Zabulons have two submarginal spots on ventral forewing that Clouded Skippers lack.



# Zabulon Skipper

## Dorsal Male



Bright gold to golden-orange; no stigma

Variable dark patch and dark line: often unconnected

Dark borders not extremely wide

Orange patch is solid—not divided by dark veins

**Zabulon Skipper** *Poanes zabulon*

© Karen Chiasson

\* Reliable diagnostic markers

Wingspan: 1 - 1½ inches (2.5 - 3.5 cm)

Alabama Butterfly Atlas | alabama.butterflyatlas.org

# Zabulon Skipper

## Dorsal Female



Pale yellow-white spots

Block of angular spots

Purplish-to-blackish brown ground color

Unmarked hindwing

White hindwing edge

Zabulon Skipper *Poanes zabulon*

© Vitaly Charny

\* Reliable diagnostic markers

Wingspan: 1 - 1½ inches (2.5 - 3.5 cm)

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# Zabulon Skipper

## Ventral Male



Variable dark patch and dark line:  
often unconnected

Yellow spot encircled by brown;  
creates a yellow 'shoulder'\*

Large yellow patch with rusty dots

Brown wing base and outer border

**Zabulon Skipper** *Poanes zabulon*

© Sara Bright

\* Reliable diagnostic markers

Wingspan: 1 - 1½ inches (2.5 - 3.5 cm)

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# Zabulon Skipper

## Ventral Female



Blotchy mahogany brown

White-edged costal margin\*

Dark, smudgy line

Two white spots\*

Purplish-gray frosting along the outer wing margins

**Zabulon Skipper** *Poanes zabulon*

Wingspan: 1 - 1½ inches (2.5 - 3.5 cm)

© Sara Bright

\* Reliable diagnostic markers

# Zabulon Skipper

## Male/Female Ventral Comparison



MALE: Shades of tawny orange and yellow  
Smaller

FEMALE: Shades of bronzy brown with purplish frosting  
White-edged costal margin  
Larger

**Zabulon Skipper** *Poanes zabulon*

© Vitaly Charny

\* Reliable diagnostic markers

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# Dorsal Similar Species

Hobomok Skipper male



© Ted Wilcox

Zabulon Skipper male



© Sara Bright

Hobomok Skipper female



© Vitaly Charny

Zabulon Skipper female



© Sara Bright

# Ventral Similar Species

Hobomok Skipper male



Ted Wilcox

Zabulon Skipper male



© Sara Bright

Hobomok Skipper female



© Ted Wilcox

Zabulon Skipper female



© Sara Bright

# Species Similar to female Zabulon

Zabulon Skipper female



© Sara Bright

Clouded Skipper



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Hobomok 'Pochohontas' form female



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