

Endangered Species on Fort Liberty

SAINT FRANCIS' SATYR (*Neonympha mitchellii francisci*)



DESCRIPTION:

- A member of the satyr and wood nymph butterfly family.
- Considered one of the rarest butterflies in Eastern North America.
- A dark brown butterfly with many small 'eye' spots under the wings. Eyespots are dark reddish brown with a silver shine and outlined in yellow.
- Four orange bands across the wing.
- Wing spread 1-2 inches wide.

HABITAT AND RANGE:

- Found in large, grassy, wet meadows, many of which are abandoned beaver ponds.
- Does not survive well in areas densely shaded by tall woody plants.
- The only known population is found on Fort Liberty. The population is made up of small colonies that occupy an area no larger than a few square miles.



THREATS AND PROTECTION:

- Highly prized by butterfly collectors, it was once thought to be collected to extinction.
- Loss of wetland habitat is primary threat. Particularly damaging is the removal of beavers that create the needed wetland habitat.
- Another threat is lack of fire. Fire naturally removes woody plants. If intense and uncontrolled, fires could destroy small, isolated colonies.
- Fort Liberty limits human activity in wetlands to protect the satyr.