

# Species Status Assessment

**Common Name:** Spotted Datana Moth      **Date Updated:** 2025-02-13  
**Scientific Name:** *Datana perspicua*      **Updated By:** Hollie Shaw  
**Class:** Insecta  
**Family:** Notodontidae

## Species Synopsis

(a short paragraph which describes species taxonomy, distribution, recent trends, and habitat in New York):

*Datana perspicua* can be distinguished from other *Datana* spp. by the even pale yellow coloration. There are some regional variations (VanDyk 2025).

This species is widespread in North America, it is found in Canada, throughout the United States, and in northern Mexico. In Canada, it has been reported from Quebec, Ontario, and southeast British Columbia. In the United States, the range extends from southern Maine west to western Montana and California and south to the Gulf Coast and central and western Texas (NatureServe 2025).

Populations have significantly declined in the Northeast despite the abundant and widespread availability of its food plant *Rhus* spp (NatureServe 2025, VanDyk 2025). Wagner (2012) suggested that the declines are most likely due to parasitoid insects (e.g. tachniids). It is stable in other parts of its range (NatureServe 2025).

*D. perspicua* is found in a variety of habitats with its foodplant, *Rhus* spp. Habitats include savannas, shrublands, coastal scrublands, woodlands, old fields, and other early successional plant habitats (NatureServe 2025).

## I. Status

### a. Current legal protected Status

**Candidate:** No

**b. Federal:** not protected

**c. New York:** not protected; SGCN

### b. Natural Heritage Program

**i. Global:** G5

**ii. New York:** SNR      **Tracked by NYNHP?** On Active Tracking List

### Other Ranks:

COSEWIC: Not listed in Canada

IUCN Red List: Not assessed by IUCN Red List

Northeast Regional SGCN: Not listed

### Status Discussion:

New York Natural Heritage Program (2025) has not assessed the rank for this species. Populations declined throughout the northeast in the last 30-50 years. Several northeastern collectors have mentioned that they saw it when they were younger but have not in recent years (H. McGuinness, personal communication, January 7, 2025). Most of the populations are on Long Island (iNaturalist 2025). It is considered rare in eastern Long Island and uncommon in western Long Island (New York Natural Heritage Program 2025).

## II. Abundance and Distribution Trends

Region	Present?	Abundance	Distribution	Time Frame	Listing status or S-Rank	SGCN?
North America	Yes	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown		
Northeastern US	Yes	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown		
New York	Yes	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	SNR	proposed
Connecticut	No	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	SNR	
Massachusetts	No	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	SNR	
New Jersey	No	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	SNR	
Pennsylvania	No	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	S4	
Vermont	No	-	-	-		
Ontario	No	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	S5	
Quebec	No	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	S2	

*Column options*

**Present?:** Yes; No; Unknown; No data; (blank) or Choose an Item

**Abundance and Distribution:** Declining; Increasing; Stable; Unknown; Extirpated; N/A; (blank) or Choose an item

**SGCN?:** Yes; No; Unknown; (blank) or Choose an item

### Monitoring in New York

*(specify any monitoring activities or regular surveys that are conducted in New York):*

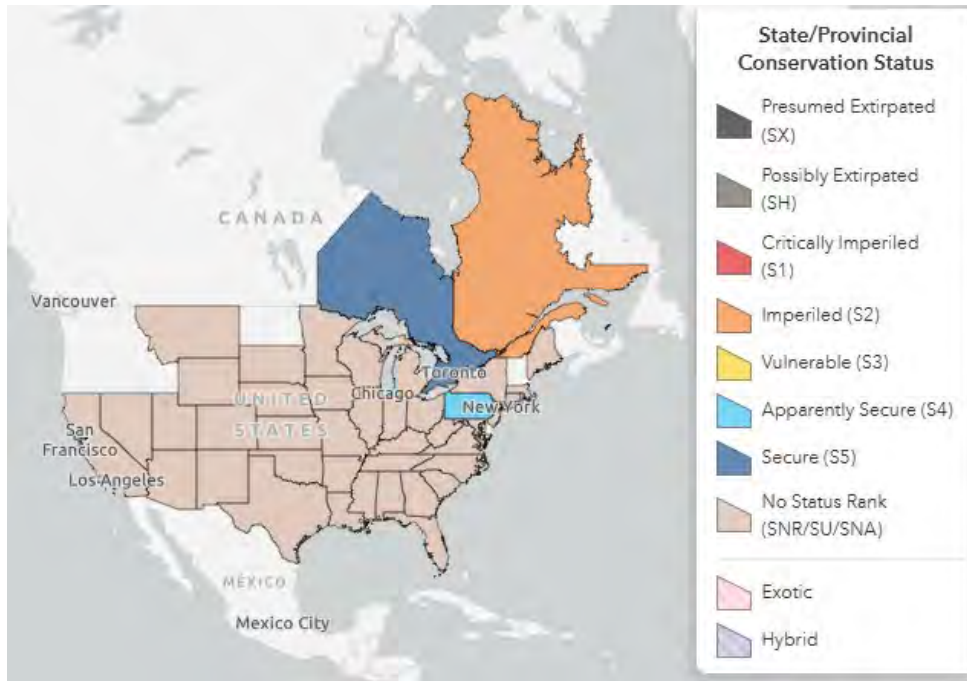
It is assumed that regular monitoring or surveys do not occur other than occasional New York Natural Heritage surveys/projects.

## Trends Discussion

(insert map of North American/regional distribution and status):



**Figure 1.** *Datana perspicua* regional distribution as reported at <https://northeastwildlifediversity.org/rsgcn> .



**Figure 2.** Conservation status of *Datana perspicua* in North America (NatureServe 2025).

### III. New York Rarity

Table 1. Number of observations of *Datana perspicua* grouped by the dates known to be extant (repeat observations (element occurrences) include the years spanning first observation to last observation) and the number and percent of total of counties these observations fall within for New York State.

Years	# of Records	# of Counties	% of counties in State
Pre-2000	unknown	unknown	0
2000-2024	15-20	4	<1%

#### Details of historic and current occurrence:

Historical occurrences are not fully known, but this species was once considered more common in the Northeast, but populations have declined in the last 30-50 years. Several northeastern collectors have mentioned that they saw it when they were younger but have not in recent years (H. McGuinness, personal communication, January 7, 2025). Most of the populations are on Long Island (iNaturalist 2025). It is considered rare in eastern Long Island and uncommon in western Long Island (New York Natural Heritage Program 2025).

Percent of North American Range in NY	Classification of NY Range	Distance to core population, if not in NY
1-25%		

Column options

**Percent of North American Range in NY:** 100% (endemic); 76-99%; 51-75%; 26-50% 1-25%; 0%; Choose an item

**Classification of NY Range:** Core; Peripheral; Disjunct; (blank) or Choose an item

## IV. Primary Habitat or Community Type

(from NY crosswalk of NE Aquatic, Marine, or Terrestrial Habitat Classification Systems):

NatureServe broad habitat types: Old field, Shrubland/chaparral, Savanna, Grassland/herbaceous, Woodland - Hardwood, Woodland - Mixed, Desert

### Habitat or Community Type Trend in New York

Habitat Specialist?	Indicator Species?	Habitat/ Community Trend	Time frame of Decline/ Increase
Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown

Column options

**Habitat Specialist and Indicator Species:** Yes; No; Unknown; (blank) or Choose an item.

**Habitat/Community Trend:** Declining; Stable; Increasing; Unknown; (blank) or Choose an item.

### Habitat Discussion:

*D. perspicua* is found in a variety of habitats with its foodplant, *Rhus* spp. (sumac). Habitats include savannas, shrublands, coastal scrublands, woodlands, old fields, and other early successional plant habitats (NatureServe 2025).

## V. Species Demographics and Life History

Breeder in NY?	Non-breeder in NY?	Migratory Only?	Summer Resident?	Winter Resident?	Anadromous/ Catadromous?
Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No

Column options

**First 5 fields:** Yes; No; Unknown; (blank) or Choose an item.

**Anadromous/Catadromous:** Anadromous; Catadromous; (blank) or Choose an item.

### Species Demographics and Life History Discussion

(include information about species life span, reproductive longevity, reproductive capacity, age to maturity, and ability to disperse and colonize):

Adults are reported to be present May through September range wide (VanDyk 2025). However, in iNaturalist, adults were reported from June through September in New York. Larvae were reported August through October.

## VI. Threats

Threat Level 1	Threat Level 2	Threat Level 3	Spatial Extent	Severity	Immediacy	Trend	Certainty
8. Invasive & Other Problematic Species	8.1 Invasive Non-Native Plants & Animals	8.1.1 Terrestrial animals (parasitoid flies)	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
9. Pollution	9.3 Agricultural & Forestry Effluents	9.3.3 Herbicides & pesticides	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

**Table 2.** Threats to *Datana perspicua*



Action Category	Action	Description
C.7 Legislative and Regulatory Framework or Tools	C.7.0.0.0 Legislative and Regulatory Framework or Tools	Policies and Regulations
C.9 Education and Training	C.9.0.0.0 Education and training	Training

## VII. References

### This SSA drew heavily from these resources:

iNaturalist.org. 2025. *Datana perspicua* records in North America. California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco, CA. <http://www.inaturalist.org>. Accessed February 13, 2025.

NatureServe. 2025. NatureServe Explorer: An online encyclopedia of life [web application]. Version 7.1. NatureServe, Arlington, Virginia. <http://www.natureserve.org/explorer>. [Accessed 2/14/2025].

NatureServe. 2025. NatureServe Explorer. Page last published 1/31/25. [https://explorer.natureserve.org/Taxon/ELEMENT\\_GLOBAL.2.1235263/Datana\\_perspicua](https://explorer.natureserve.org/Taxon/ELEMENT_GLOBAL.2.1235263/Datana_perspicua). Accessed February 19, 2025.

New York Natural Heritage Program, State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry. 2025. Element Occurrence and Element Dataset. Albany, New York.

VanDyk, John, ed. 2025. *BugGuide.Net: Identification, Images, & Information for Insects, Spiders & Their Kin For the United States & Canada*. Iowa State University. Accessed February 13, 2025. <https://bugguide.net/>.

Wagner, D.L. 2012. Moth decline in the northeastern United States. *News of the Lepidopterists' Society* 54(2):52-56.

Originally prepared by	Hollie Shaw
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