

Species Status Assessment

Common Name: Orange-faced Wood Fly **Date Updated:** 2024-10-08
Scientific Name: *Blera armillata* **Updated By:** Erin L. White
Class: Insecta
Family: Syrphidae

Species Synopsis

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

Orange-faced Wood Fly is known from Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Quebec, Saskatchewan and the Yukon Territory, Canada (NatureServe 2024, Skevington et al. 2019). It's range in the U.S. includes Alaska, California, Colorado, Idaho, Maine, Michigan, Montana, New Hampshire, New York, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming (NatureServe 2024).

The species was ranked an S1 as part of the ESNPS (White et al. 2022) based on rarity, trend, and threat information. The species is historically (1999 and earlier) known from Hamilton and Schuyer Counties in NY and has always been a rare fly in the state. It has been confirmed in St. Lawrence County since 2000. Despite survey effort as part of a statewide pollinator survey, just one specimen has been confirmed in recent years.

This species lives in late-successional forests, including hardwood and fir-poplar (Skevington et al. 2019). *Blera* larvae are saproxylic, feeding on dead wood.

I. Status

a. Current legal protected Status

i. **Federal:** Not Listed **Candidate:** No
ii. **New York:** Not listed

b. Natural Heritage Program

i. **Global:** G5
ii. **New York:** S1 **Tracked by NYNHP?** On Active Tracking List

Other Ranks:

- New York 2025 SGCN status: High Priority Species of Greatest Conservation Need
- COSEWIC: Not listed in Canada
- IUCN Red List: Not assessed by IUCN Red List
- Northeast Regional SGCN: Not listed

Status Discussion:

The species was ranked an S1 as part of the ESNPS (White et al. 2022) based on rarity, trend, and threat information. The species is historically (1999 and earlier) known from Hamilton and Schuyer Counties in NY and has always been a rare fly in the state. It has been confirmed in St. Lawrence County since 2000. Despite survey effort as part of a statewide pollinator survey, just one specimen has been confirmed in recent years.

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		No
New York	Yes	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	S1	No
Connecticut	No	-	-	-		
Massachusetts	No	-	-	-		
New Jersey	No	-	-	-		
Pennsylvania	No	-	-	-		
Vermont	No	-	-	-		
Ontario	No	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	S4	
Quebec	No	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	SNR	

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):

The Empire State Native Pollinator Survey (ESNPS) was conducted from 2017-2021, but there are no organized, regular monitoring or survey activities directed toward this species or to sites where they have been documented. Some regular monitoring may occur at protected sites that Heritage staff revisit if they occur on state properties, as part of OPRHP or State Lands inventory work.

Trends Discussion

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

The species is historically (1999 and earlier) known from Hamilton and Schuyer Counties in NY and has always been a rare fly in the state. It has been confirmed in St. Lawrence County since 2000. Despite survey effort as part of a statewide pollinator survey, just one specimen has been confirmed in recent years.

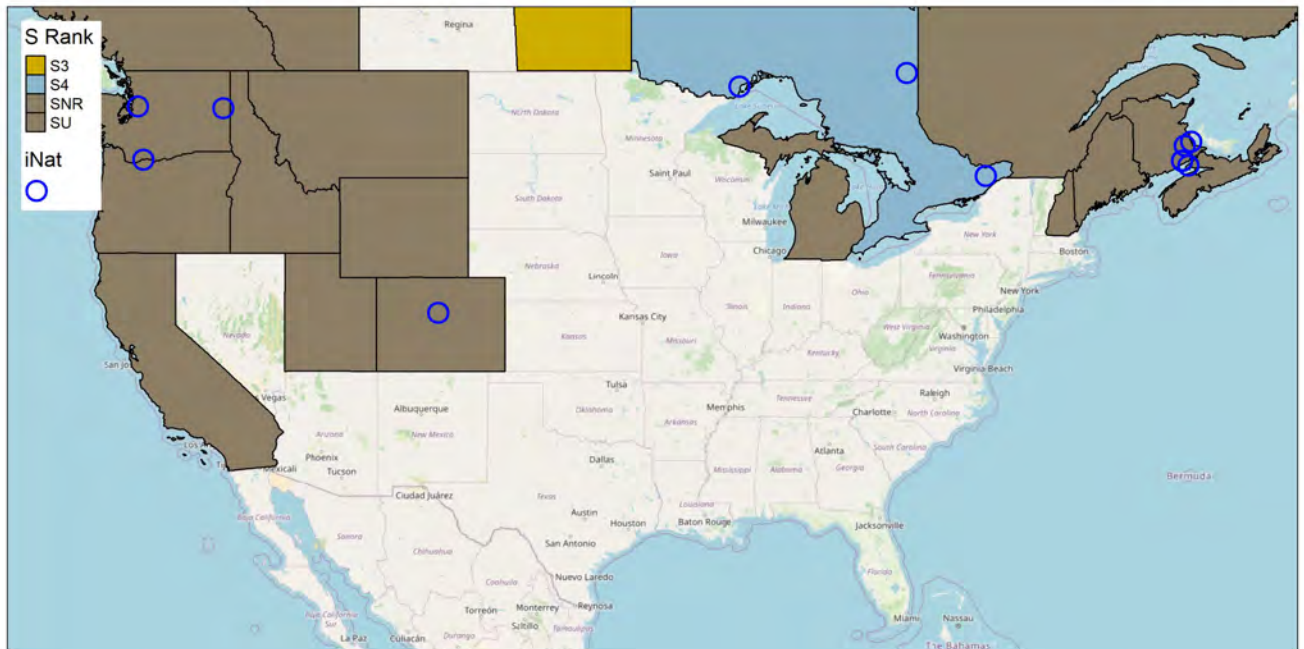


Figure 11: *Blera armillata* North American distribution. Points show research-grade iNaturalist observations.



Figure 22: Conservation status of *Blera armillata* in North America (NatureServe 2024).

III. New York Rarity

(provide map, numbers, and percent of state occupied)

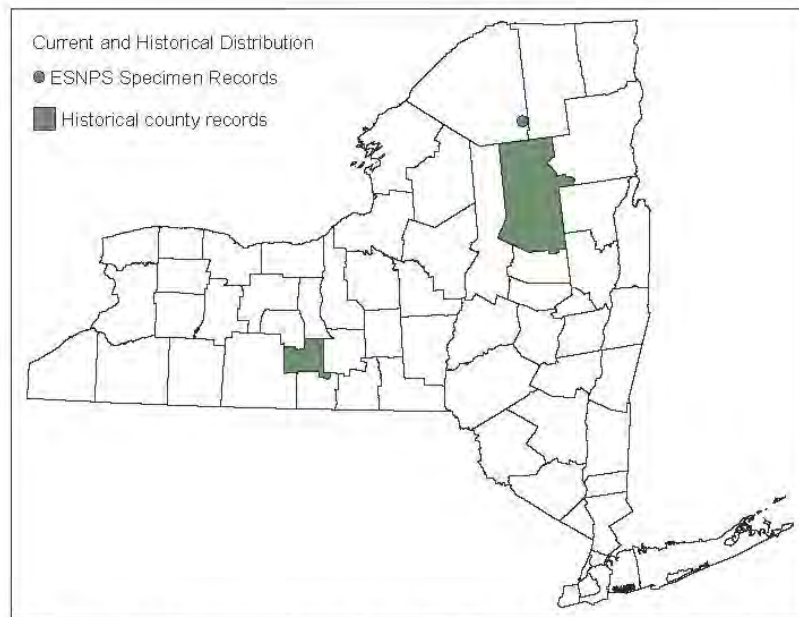


Figure 1: Observations from 2000 to present depicted as dots; those from 1999 and earlier as shaded counties.

Figure 33: NYS distribution for *Blera armillata* based on element occurrence data.

Years	Observations	# of Counties	% of counties in State
Pre-2000	4	2	3.2
2000-2023	1	1	1.6

Table 1. Number of observations of *Blera armillata* 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.

Details of historic and current occurrence:

The species was documented in one site in St. Lawrence County in 2020 as part of a statewide pollinator survey (White et al. 2022).

Historically, 1999 and earlier, the species is known from two counties including Hamilton and Schuyler Counties.

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):

[Late-Successional] Mixed Northern Hardwoods

Northern White Cedar Swamp

Habitat or Community Type Trend in New York

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

Column options

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

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

Habitat Discussion:

Blera larvae are saproxylic, feeding on dead wood. This species lives in late-successional forests, including hardwood and fir-poplar (Skevington et al. 2019).

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):

Flight times are mid-May to August (Skevington et al. 2019) and the New York observation was from June 4 (White et al. 2022).

VI. Threats

Threats facing our focal saproxylic hover flies and beetles include habitat loss and degradation, invasive plants and pathogens, pesticides, and climate change (White et al. 2022). Habitat shifting and alteration, droughts, and more frequent severe weather events due to climate change is expected to impact saproxylic flies and beetles.

Threat Level 1	Threat Level 2	Threat Level 3	Spatial Extent	Severity	Immediacy	Trend	Certainty
1. Residential and Commercial	1.3 Tourism & Recreation Areas	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
4. Transportation & Service Corridors	4.2 Utility & Service Lines	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
4. Transportation & Service Corridors	4.1 Roads & Railroads	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
5. Biological Resource Use	5.3 Logging & Wood Harvesting	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
8. Invasive & Other Problematic Species	8.1 Invasive Non-Native Plants & Animals	8.1.1 Terrestrial animals (wood-boring insects)	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
8. Invasive & Other Problematic Species	8.1 Invasive Non-Native Plants & Animals	8.1.2 Terrestrial plants	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
8. Invasive & Other Problematic Species	8.4 Pathogens	Choose an item.	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.
11. Climate Change	11.3 Changes in Temperature Regimes	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
11. Climate Change	11.4 Changes in Precipitation & Hydrological Regimes	11.4.2 Droughts	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
11. Climate Change	11.5 Storms & Severe Weather	11.5.1 Storms & severe weather	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

Table 2. Threats to *Blera armillata*.

Action Category	Action	Description
C.9 Education and Training	C.9.2.0.0 Training and individual skill development	Training

Table 2. Recommended conservation actions for *Blera armillata*.

VII. References

This SSA drew heavily from these resources:

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IUCN 2024. IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Version 2023.1. <www.iucnredlist.org>. Accessed 8 October 2024.

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Northeast Fish and Wildlife Diversity. 2024. Regional Species of Greatest Conservation Need (2024). <https://northeastwildlifediversity.org/rsgcn>. Accessed October 8, 2024.

Schweitzer, D.F., N.A. Capuano, B.E. Young and S.R. Colla. 2012. Conservation and management of North American bumble bees. NatureServe, Arlington, Virginia, and USDA Forest Service, Washington, D.C. 17 pp.

Skevington, J.H., M.M. Locke, A.D. Young, K. Moran, W.J. Crins, and S.A. Marshally. 2019. Field guide to the flower flies of northeastern North America. Princeton University Press.

White, E.L., M. D. Schlesinger, and T.G. Howard. 2022. The Empire State Native Pollinator Survey (2017-2021). New York Natural Heritage Program, Albany, NY.

Originally prepared by	Erin L. White
Date first prepared	October 8, 2024
First revision	
Last revision	