

Summary of:

2009 Surveys for Mardon Skipper (*Polites mardon*)
at Hunter Creek ACEC

Holly F. Witt, Wildlife Biologist
Bureau of Land Management
Coos Bay District
North Bend, Oregon

13 October 2009

During May and June of 2009, surveys for Mardon skipper (*Polites mardon*) were conducted at Hunter Creek ACEC in Curry County, Oregon on lands administered by the Coos Bay District of the Bureau of Land Management. The surveys were conducted by Dana Ross of Corvallis, Oregon, under a contract funded through the Oregon/Washington BLM & Region 6 Forest Service Interagency Special Status/Sensitive Species Program (ISSSSP). This document incorporates the report of survey methods and results Dana submitted to Coos Bay BLM.

The Mardon skipper is listed as a Federal Candidate Species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and sensitive under the BLM special status species program. BLM 6840 - Special Status Species Management policy objectives are: To ensure that actions requiring authorization or approval by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM or Bureau) are consistent with the conservation needs of special status species and do not contribute to the need to list any special status species, either under provisions of the ESA or other provisions of this policy. These surveys help insure BLM is meeting those objectives.

In 2009 Mardon skippers were located for the second year during surveys in what is delineated as Hunter Creek ACEC meadows #3. Meadow #5 was also surveyed, but no mardons were detected. Surveys indicated an unusually late season for butterflies, and only two male mardons were detected during surveys. Weather hindered surveys this year, and an increased survey effort may be needed to account for coastal conditions. Future surveys are recommended by Dana Ross to monitor the size of this population, to track it over time, and to establish its geographical boundary. In 2009 Dana located mardons at a new site on Forest Service lands in the area. Because of the lack of detections, no mardons were collected this year; however, future specimens are recommended to clarify taxonomy of this population.

It should be noted that an additional Bureau sensitive and rare species was located on this year's surveys. A single Johnson's hairstreak (*Callophrys johnsoni*) was located in meadow #3. This was the first documented sighting of this species on Coos Bay District BLM.

Meadow restoration has occurred in these meadows over the past three years, and while no cause-and-effect can be established, the restoration will potentially benefit butterflies through expansion of the open meadow.

All data from surveys is electronically housed in GeoBOB, the geographical information system for biological observations for the OR/WA BLM.

We would like to acknowledge the ISSSSP for funding these surveys and its coordinators, Kelli Van Norman and Robb Huff, for their invaluable support. This project would not have occurred otherwise.



Male mardon skipper – June 1, 2009, Hunter Creek ACEC. Photo by H. F. Witt.