

Pest Profile



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Common Name: Western Tiger Swallowtail

Scientific Name: *Papilio rutulus*

Order and Family: Lepidoptera, Papilionidae

Size and Appearance:

	Length (mm)	Appearance
Egg		-Shiny, round and deep green, are laid singly on the undersides of leaves
Larva	up to 50 mm	-Early stages, when the larvae are small, they look like a bird dropping -Mature caterpillars are all green except for two “eye” spots on the back of the swollen thorax and a transverse black-margined yellow band a short distance behind the eye spots -There are small lavender spots on each segment. -They can raise a brightly colored (and foul smelling) forked organ called the osmeterium (‘stink horn’) from behind the head.
Adult Adult	Wingspan 70-100 mm	-Wings are black and pale yellow with black tiger-stripes. -The hindwings have tails at their lower tips that resemble the long tail feathers of a swallow. - On the hindwing, there are narrow yellow spots along the wing's margin with blue spots found around the outer margin of the hindwing. - On the forewing, yellow spots form a continuous band along the outer margin of the wing. These yellow spots are bordered in black. -Antennae are knobbed
Pupa		

Type of feeder (Chewing, sucking, etc.): Chewing

Host plant/s: Caterpillars feed upon the leaves of cottonwood, willow, quaking aspen, alder, maple, sycamore, hoptree, plum and ash. Adults feed on flower nectar from a wide variety of flowers. Although more prevalent in riparian situations of rural and wild areas, they are not uncommon in urban and suburban residential districts. They can also be found in woodlands near streams and rivers, wooded residential areas, canyons, parks, and sage lands and mesas with creeks.

Description of Damage (larvae and adults): Western Swallowtail caterpillars feed on the leaves of the native California Sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*), Cottonwood (*Populus* spp.) and willow (*Salix* spp.). In large numbers, they have the potential to decimate the leaves of the aforementioned California native trees.

References:

Hogue, C. L. (2015). *Insects of the Los Angeles basin*. J. N. Hogue (Ed.). Los Angeles, LA: Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County.