

Red Spotted Purple

Basilarchia astyanax

-The Red Spotted Purple Butterfly is a wonderful creature. It is a beauty with blue coloring that is not afraid of human activity. You can almost train them to be pets. Sally Roth, author of Attracting Butterflies and Hummingbirds to Your Backyard states in her book that, “My Red Spotted Purples not only know where to find the fruit and mud puddles in my yard, they also have learned that at 10 A.M. on summer mornings, I hose down a small area of old brick to make them a drinking station. They often flutter around the corner to their “butterfly bath”. I love to see the contrast when the butterfly suddenly opens its wings to reveal the velvety black and glistening blue topside.”



Wingspan:

3 to 3 ½ inches

Caterpillar hosts:

The Red Spotted Purple caterpillar will feed on a lot of different species of trees and shrubs, including Black Cherry, Aspen, Oaks, Birch, Willows, and Basswood.

Adult food:

The adult form of the Red Spotted Purple Butterfly feeds on a lot of different stuff. It will feed on everything from sap that is flowing out of a tree, to rotten fruit, to dung. Occasionally it will feed on the nectar from small white flowers such as Steeplebush and Meadowsweet.