

Atala Hairstreak

Eumaeus atala



Inside



Outside



Chrysalid

Atala Hairstreak

Eumaeus atala

Order: Lepidoptera
Family: Nymphalidae

Etymology: In Greek mythology Eumaeus was Odysseus's friend and swine herder. The origin of the species *atala* is currently unknown.

Wing span: - 3.25 – 3.5 inches (82 – 87 mm)

Habitat: Atala Hairstreaks prefer mature subtropical hardwood forest. They are also known to visit neighboring open areas and gardens.

Host Plant: Larvae feed on a native cycad of Florida called Coontie (*Zamia pumila*) as well as other introduced plants in the family Cycadaceae.

Adult Food Source: Adults will visit a variety of small-flowered nectar plants such as lantana, sheperd's needle and periwinkle.

Life History: Males search for receptive females in areas associated with the host plants. After mating the female lays her eggs in clusters on the tips of new host plant leaves. The larvae feed on the host plants until they are ready to pupate.

Flights: There are multiple generations each year, making it possible to find adults year round.

Fun Facts: As both larva and adult the Atala Hairstreak is distasteful to predators. To advertise their distasteful properties the larvae coloration is orange with bright yellow spots. To enhance this color protection, the larvae are known to aggregate while feeding.

Range:

