

Swallowtails in Southern Ontario

Black Swallowtails can be found all throughout Southern Ontario and Southern Quebec. This butterfly is commonly spotted in open areas like gardens, damp meadows. As a caterpillar it's diet consists of herbs (dill, parsley, fennel) and vegetables weeds (carrot tops, celery, parsnips, and Queen Anne's lace). Adult butterflies mimic the Pipevine Swallowtail, which is poisonous to several predators. This leads the predators to mistake the Black Swallowtail for the poisonous butterfly, which allows the Black Swallowtail to avoid being eaten.

Black Swallowtails



Tiger Swallowtails



This butterfly can be found throughout the whole country, however they appear to be larger in size in Southern Ontario. Tiger Swallowtails are commonly spotted in open forests, riversides, and green suburban areas. When in caterpillar form, it is bright green and develops two large eye spots on the side of its head mimicking a snake. These butterflies are one of the more common species that are found mud puddling (drinking in minerals from damp ground).

The largest butterfly in Canada.

Giant Swallowtails are mostly spotted in open forests and fields. Since they are such a large caterpillar they are unable to blend in with leaves or flowers, instead they camouflage by pretending to be bird poop. This species is considered to be rare and irregular to spot in Canada, except in Southwestern Ontario, where it is extremely common to find. Due to its large size, the Giant Swallowtail has to continually vibrate/move its wings while feeding from a flower to stop itself from tilting the flower.

Giant Swallowtails

