

## Leonard's Skipper *Hesperia I. leonardus*

**Habitat Preference:** Native prairie

**Threats:**

- Loss of prairie habitat
  - Conversion of prairie to cultivated ground
  - Tree invasion: shade is detrimental to the success of this species
- Invasion of non-native plants
- Haying at certain times of the year could limit available flowering plants used for food
- Over-grazing will limit available flowering plants used for food
- Fragmentation could cause butterflies to travel long distance to find the particular plant species it feeds on



**Habitat Improvement Guidelines:**

- Preserve areas with Leonard's populations.
- Restore grassland habitat. Caterpillars feed on grasses such as little bluestem. Adults feed on nectar of rough blazing star. When creating a new seeding consider including forbs that late summer through early fall to create a constant food source. Creating grassland areas will not only create more suitable habitat for Leonard's skippers but will also defragment existing habitat.
- Burning is important to keep native grasslands from becoming encroached with woody vegetation and to keep introduced invaders from degrading the natural plant communities. The area should not be burned more than every 3-5 years. Areas should be broken up into complexes that are burned on a rotational basis to provide refuge for Leonard's skippers.
- Leonard's skippers are dependent upon native prairie plants. Areas that become encroached with woody vegetation will not be utilized by Leonard's Skippers.