



Caterpillar



Adult

**Common Name:** Banana Skipper  
**Scientific Name:** *Erionota thrax* L. (Lepidoptera: Hesperiiidae)

The eggs are laid in groups on the lower side of banana leaves. They hatch in two to three days, and the larvae move to the edges of the leaves which they cut and roll around themselves. The larvae feed inside the rolled-up leaves and pupation also takes place in there. The adults are strong, quick fliers which spend the day resting on vegetation and become active at dusk.

The larvae consume the banana leaves. If they are present in sufficient numbers they can almost defoliate a pseudostem. The size of the banana bunch will be considerably decreased as a result.

The only crop affected by the banana skipper is banana. The insect is present in Southeast Asia, Hawai'i and the Mariana Islands.

**Control:** An egg parasite and a larval parasite are present in Guam and the latter has been introduced to Saipan. The parasites keep the butterfly numbers under control most of the time, but after periods of strong winds and rainy weather parasite number may be very much reduced and outbreaks may occur. Spraying with *Bacillus thuringiensis* will kill the caterpillars without harming any parasites which may be present in the area. If other insecticides are to be used, consult an Agricultural Extension Agent about recommended materials by calling 734-2575, 734-2579, 734-2518 or 734-4753.

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