

## Upland Invertebrates

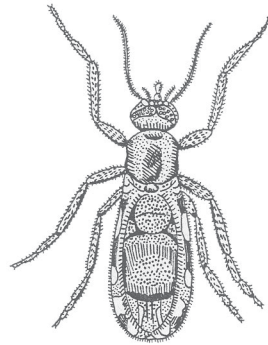
### Insects

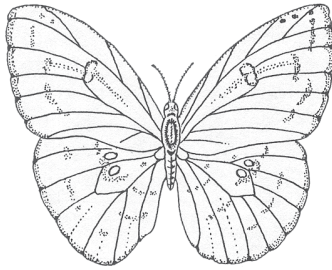
The abundant insects that inhabit the Reserve are not necessarily the favorites of most visitors, but are critical components of natural communities. The following text identifies only a few of the terrestrial invertebrates most frequently encountered by visitors to the Reserve.

#### Biting Midge *Culicoides furens*

Body length: .05"

Like the mosquito, the female biting midge seeks a blood meal from animals and people. The bite is painful considering the insect's size, hence its nickname, the no-see-um. It is also known as the sand fly. Breeding around water, the larvae of the biting midge are semi-aquatic and are found in moist sand, mud, and standing water. The biting midge is common in the summer near sandy soil on Cannon Island, Key Island beach, and around the Shell Island Road field station. It is most active in early morning and early evening, particularly in the absence of wind.

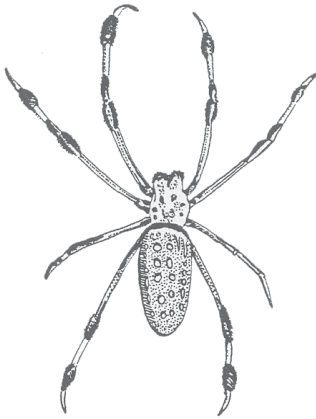




Cloudless Sulphur *Phoebis sennae*

Wing width: 2-3"

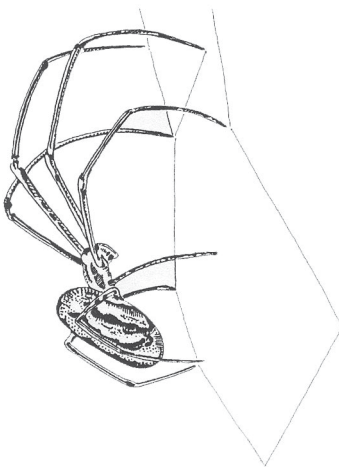
The sun-loving, cloudless sulphur butterfly is fond of moist puddles and flower nectar. It has pale yellow-green wings. The male's wings are unmarked, while the female's forewings have a small red dot encircled by black and a narrow black-colored border.



Golden Silk Spider *Nephila clavipes*

Body length: 1"

The head and thorax of the female golden silk spider are light gray with three black spots on each side. The large body is golden in color. Its legs are dark with brown bands and tufts of black hair. Its abdomen can be a golden color or brownish-green, and spotted with white. The male is smaller and drab. This spider and its huge web are abundant in tropical hardwood hammock areas in the Reserve.



Mabel Orchard Spider *Leucauge mabelae*

Body length: up to .03"

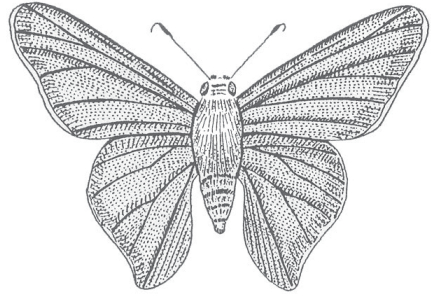
The mabel orchard spider has a yellow-green abdomen with eight silvery stripes and three pinkish to orange spots. Its legs are yellow-brown. The mabel orchard spider hangs below its web or waits nearby with one leg touching a strand until prey is caught. This spider is found in tropical hardwood hammocks along Cannon Island as well as in pine flatwoods and scrub areas of the Reserve.

## Mangrove Skipper

*Phocides pigmalion okeechobee*

Wing width: 2"

The mangrove skipper has a stocky body, large head, and short wings characteristic of all skippers. It has wide set antennae which end in a hook. The forewing of the male skipper is purple, while that of the female is more brown. Both sexes have a small amount of blue scaling at the wing base. It feeds on nectar or organic nutrients from decaying matter and wet mud. It is most noticeable in summer around necklace pod flowers throughout the Reserve.

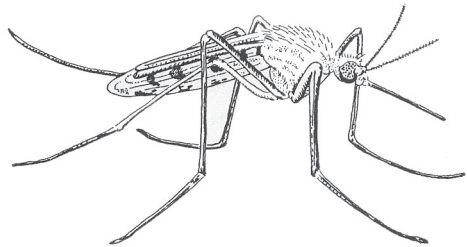


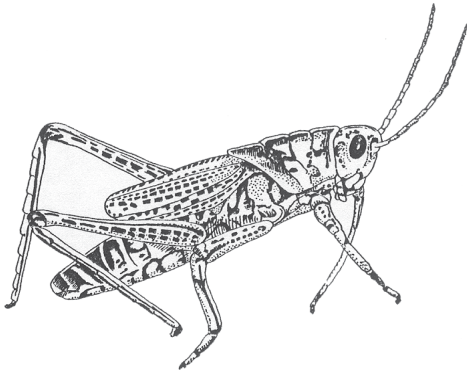
## Salt Marsh Mosquito *Ochlerotatus*

*taeniorhynchus*

Body length: .25 - .33"

Easily recognizable by its six long, slender legs and sharp proboscis, the salt marsh mosquito is best known for the biting habits of the female. Although a nuisance in coastal areas, the salt marsh mosquito does not transmit diseases to people. Both sexes feed on plant juices, but the female needs a blood meal in order to produce eggs, which she lays in the water. The eggs develop into larvae and then into pupae, from which adult mosquitoes emerge. The larval mosquito is an important food source for many juvenile fishes.

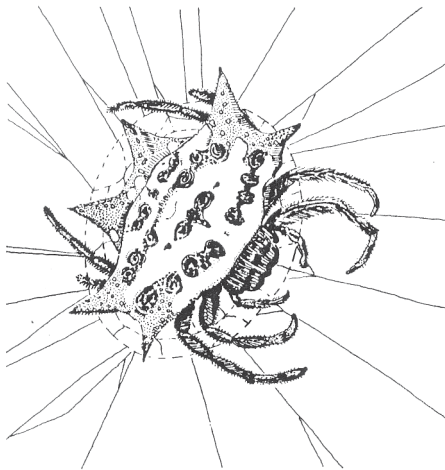




Southeastern Lubber *Romalea microptera*

Body length: 2-3"

The wings of the southeastern lubber grasshopper are pinkish to red in color. The adult is generally orange, and juvenile is black with yellow stripes. The lubber is slow moving and cannot fly. When held, it may emit a foul-smelling liquid as a defense. Spines on its back legs can cut human skin. Found in a variety of habitats, the adult grasshopper is easily noticed feeding on herbaceous plants June through November.

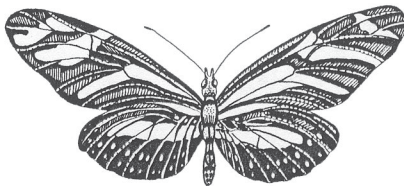


Spiny Orb Weaver

*Gasteracantha cancriformis*

Body length: up to .04"

The crablike spiny orb weaver has a yellowish-white, rounded, hard abdomen with dark oval spots, two sharp red spines on each side, and two at the back. Its head and thorax are reddish-black, and underparts are black with tiny yellow spots. The male is smaller than the female and rarely observed. This spider is the most common in tropical hardwood hammocks of the Reserve.



Zebra Longwing *Heliconius charitonius*

Wing width: 3-3.4"

The zebra longwing butterfly has black, narrow wings boldly striped with yellow bands and small yellow spots. It is known to roost in large congregations at night or during rain events. The caterpillar is gray to white with dark spots, and eats the foliage of the passion vine. The zebra longwing is found in abundance in tropical hardwood hammocks throughout the Reserve.