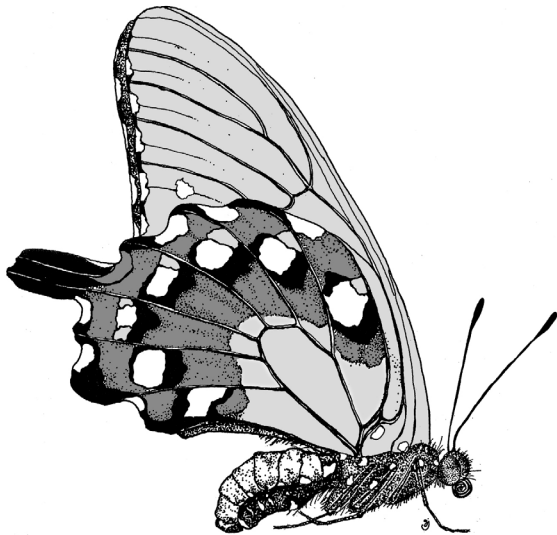




Pipeline Swallowtail Butterfly



The Pipeline Swallowtail Butterfly (*Battus philenor*) is a large ($2\frac{3}{4}$ - $3\frac{1}{4}$ " = 70-85 mm) distinctive butterfly that is fairly common in California. The upper surface of the wings is coal-black to dark gray overlaid with a brilliant, metallic blue color especially on the hind wing. Males are generally brighter than females. The upper surface of the hind wing also has a row of cream to yellow spots around the outer edge. The lower surface of the wings is dull gray with a distinctive row of big, bright orange spots on the hind wing. The butterflies are in flight primarily in late spring and throughout the summer. Adults feed on nectar from a variety of flowers including

honeysuckle, buddleia, azalea, lilac, thistle, lantana, petunias, and lupines. They inhabit open areas such as open woodlands, gardens, and parks.

Female Pipeline Swallowtail Butterflies lay their eggs in a cluster on the bottom surface of leaves of plants in the Pipeline family (Aristolochiaceae). The caterpillars feed only on these plants including *Aristolochia californica* and *A. serpentaria*. Feeding on these plants imparts the caterpillars and butterflies with an unpleasant flavor, causing birds and other potential predators to avoid it. Mature caterpillars get as large as 2 inches (5 cm). They are rust-black colored with black or red projections, the longest ones on the head. The insect spends the winter in the chrysalis stage and emerges as an adult with the return of warmer weather in the late spring.

Several butterflies, such as the female Eastern Black Swallowtail, the female Spicebush Swallowtail, the female Diana Fritillary, and the Red Spotted Purple, have color patterns on their wings that greatly resemble the Pipeline Swallowtail. This kind of similarity, known as Batesian mimicry, may protect the mimics from predators.