

# Great Purple Hairstreak



*Atlides halesus*



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## Biology

The **Great Purple Hairstreak** is found from Maryland in the United States to Guatemala. Males are iridescent blue on the upper side and dark purple with red and blue markings on the underside; the upper side of females is less shiny. In Florida, adults frequent woody habitats, and can be found feeding on the nectar of plants such as goldenrods. Eggs are white and are laid singly or in groups on the parasitic mistletoe plant. Larvae are green with yellow bands and covered with thin orange hairs. The pupa is the diapausing stage, in which the metabolism is reduced during harsh environmental conditions. In Florida, the **Great Purple Hairstreak** undergoes three reproductive cycles per year.



For more information scan the QR code or visit <http://natl.ifas.ufl.edu/index.php>

## Host Plants

Mistletoe

*Phoradendron leucarpum*



### Fun fact:

Moving tails and bright spots on the underside of the hind wings (→) of this and other species of hairstreaks are called "false head". They deflect attacks by predators by directing attention to this part of the wings, which can be lost akin to lizard's tail without much harm to the butterfly. It has been shown that this pattern is an effective defense against jumping spiders.

