

Fall/Spring Brood

Summer Brood



Question Mark (*Polygonia interrogationis*)

Dark **rectangle** toward apex of forewing
Forewing more strongly hooked than other anglewings; hindwing more "tailed"
Wings margins relatively smooth and silver-edged
Fall/Spring brood uniformly orange. Summer brood shows darkened hindwings and dark margins on forewings



Eastern Comma (*Polygonia comma*)

On mid forewing spot row, the **inner spot (nearest body) stands alone**, not paired with another spot (or paired with faint spot)
Wing margins tend to be less ragged than other commas
Three dark spots on hindwing; hard to see inner trailing spot in summer form
Fall/Spring brood more uniformly orange. Summer brood shows darkened hindwings



Gray Comma (*Polygonia progne*)

Tends to be "**cleanest**" and **least-spotted** of our commas
Mid forewing spot row clean and distinct, with outer spot sometimes smaller than other two
Fall/Spring brood (may be more common than summer brood) uniformly orange, with **two dark spots on fairly clean hindwing**.
Summer brood's darker hindwing encloses row of distinct submarginal yellow spots (like other commas except for Satyr Comma)

SEEKING IMAGE

Green Comma (*Polygonia faunus*)

Distinct jagged wing margins (but not always). Generally appears deeper orange with darker black markings compared to other commas (particularly Eastern Comma); Green Comma sometimes shows **yellowish submarginal lunules on hindwing** and forewing apex contrasting with orange ground color

On mid forewing spot row, **the inner spot (nearest body) is often paired with another distinct spot**

Often shows **three dark spots on hindwing**. Thick darkened hindwing border encloses row of distinct orange or yellow spots (like other commas except for Satyr Comma)

SEEKING IMAGE

Hoary Comma (*Polygonia gracilis*)

You're on your own, pal; so try to get a ventral view. Dorsally, probably appears more like a dirty Gray Comma than anything else

On mid forewing spot row, **the inner spot most often not paired with another spot** (or paired with faint spot)

Often shows two dark spots on hindwing, **lacking the third central spot of Green and Satyr commas**. Thick darkened hindwing border encloses row of distinct orange spots (like other commas except for Satyr Comma)



Satyr Comma (*Polygonia satyrus*) - extremely rare in East

Resembles a jagged-edged fall/spring Eastern Comma with a distinctly paired inner forewing spot. Tends to have **more golden ground color**

Shows third hindwing spot and generally paler hindwing borders (like a fall/spring Eastern Comma) and therefore **lacking distinct enclosed row of orange spots**



References:

- *Butterflies of the East Coast* by Rick Cech and Guy Tudor
- *The Butterflies of North America* by James A. Scott
- *Butterflies of North America* by Jim P. Brock and Kenn Kaufman
- *A Swift Guide to Butterflies of North America* by Jeffrey Glassberg
- *Butterflies through Binoculars (The East)* by Jeffrey Glassberg
- Review and advice: Sue Cloutier, Danel Bogar

Notes and Caveats:

Few of these marks, particularly the dark wing spots, are diagnostic. Use a combination of marks. In the Northeast, Question Mark and Eastern Comma are the most common anglewings; Gray Comma and Green Comma are next, probably varying from year to year in relative abundance. Hoary Comma and Satyr Comma are rare in the Northeast.

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