

# Barrens Itame

**Family - Geometridae**

## **General Description:**

Pine barrens itame is a plain colored moth with brownish-gray colored forewings with faint patterning and cream-colored hindwings with small dark spots. This species has a wingspan of 20-22 mm.



## **State Status:**

Special Concern

## **Federal Status:**

## **State Rank:**

S1

## **New England Rank:**

## **Global Rank:**

G3G4

## **Reason for Rarity:**

Depends of rare habitat type found only in rapidly developing southern Maine

## **Threats:**

Loss of pine barren habitats to commercial and residential development in Maine is the greatest threat. Once pine barrens are developed, it is extremely difficult to manage and perpetuate remaining pitch pine stands by fire. Aerial spraying of

pesticides for other Lepidoptera like the gypsy moth can eliminate populations. Conversion of forests to pine plantations destroys habitat. Off-road vehicles may destroy fragile plant communities. Gravel mining permanently destroys habitat.

**Conservation Considerations:**

[WCU8|Pitch pine-scrub oak barrens] are rare habitats in Maine and are found at only seven sites in the state. Pine barrens are host to a suite of rare species, especially plants and invertebrates that depend on this unique habitat, such as the [IILEU1S030|twilight moth] (threatened), [IILEPD4060|Edwards' hairstreak] (endangered), and Karner blue butterfly (extirpated). Maine has over half of the remaining pine barrens in New England. Much of Maine's barrens are in conservation ownership. Even so, these sites need active management to maintain their diverse plant and invertebrate fauna. Large blocks of appropriate habitat are necessary for the long-term viability of moth populations. Pine barrens are rejuvenated by fire, and the pine barrens itame may depend on this natural disturbance to create young, lush plants for the larvae to eat. If fire is suppressed, pine barrens will slowly mature to red oak and white pine forests that likely would not be able to support the moth.

**Habitat**

The pine barrens itame inhabits pitch pine-scrub oak barrens.

**Range:**

Pine barrens itame are found from Maine south to New Jersey and west to New York and Pennsylvania.

**Global Distribution:**

G3G4