Lesser Wanderer (*Danaus petilia*)

*Wingspan ~60mm*  
*Photo: Tony Morton*

**Note 1:** The upper side of the butterfly wings are shown on the left and the underside side of the butterfly wings are shown on the right. Males and females are similar.

**Note 2:** The plant name on the bottom right refers to the plants upon which the butterfly larvae (caterpillars) feed.

**Other Common Names:** None

**Family of Butterflies:** Nymphalidae (Browns and Nymphs)

**Tony Morton’s documented records of Lesser Wanderer from the local area (between 2000 to 2013):**
Three

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10-Dec-2010</td>
<td>laying on Asclaepias, larvae die at third instar. Foodplant or a day of 40 degree heat?</td>
<td>Vaughan garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-Jan-2011</td>
<td>female laying again</td>
<td>Vaughan garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-Jan-2011</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bot Gardens, off Froomes Road, C'maine</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Other documented local observations: None

Distribution Across Victoria (from Field 2013): Found across most of Victoria, although rarely in southwest or south east.

Larval Host Plants (Field 2013): The introduced Swan Plant (Gomphocarpus fruticosus) and Broad-leafed Cotton-bush (G. cancellatus). Native Asclepiadaceae. These plants don’t occur naturally in shire, but may be found in some parks and gardens.

Larval association with ants (Field 2013): None.

Adult Flight Times in Victoria (from Field 2013): Adults have been recorded throughout the year in Victoria, but never common (compared to northern Australia). Seen in north of state in most years. Probably not a permanent breeding population in Victoria, but some successful breeding does occur on cultivated plants. Most commonly observed between November to April.

Conservation Status:

Australian Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999: Not listed
Victorian Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988: Not listed
Advisory List of Threatened Victorian Invertebrates (DSE 2009): Not listed

Other Notes: Large, bright larvae feed openly on cotton bush plants.

References and further reading:


