

Common Brown (*Heteronympha merope* subsp. *merope*)



Common Brown, *Heteronympha merope*, male, showing upper and under wing. Photo: Euan Moore



Common Brown, *Heteronympha merope*, female, showing upper and under wing.
Photo: Euan Moore

Other Common Names: None

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

Size: Wingspan 56mm males, 64mm females.

Local observations: This is one of the most common species in our area with numerous local records on both iNaturalist and Atlas of Living Australia.

Distribution outside our region: This is a widespread species found across most of Victoria however it is largely absent from the north-west of the state. Outside Victoria it is found in south-west WA, south-east SA, eastern NSW and south-east Queensland. It is also common across most of Tasmania.



Museum specimens. *Photo: Tony Morton.*

Note 1: The upper side of the male wings are shown on top and upper side of the female wings are shown on the bottom.

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

Tony Morton's documented records of Common Brown from the local area (between 2000 to 2013):

Sixteen

Date	Location	Notes
1-Jan-2013	Kalimna Park	common, beginning to cluster on bark of eucalypts
30-Dec-2012	around Castlemaine	very numerous this year
9-Nov-2012	Vaughan garden	males begin to emerge (in Melbourne too)
27-Mar-2012	Kalimna Point	many, as above, wings stuck to sap, bodies missing. <i>Vespa germanica</i> around. Also native bees
24-Dec-2011	Kalimna Point	many
18-Nov-2011	Kalimna Point	very plentiful
7-Nov-2011	Axe Creek, Dragonfire Castle	plentiful, mainly male
15-Jan-2011	Bot Gardens, off Froomes Road, C'maine	
5-Dec-2009	Vaughan walk	several males 11.30 - 1.30p.m.
20-Nov-2005	Vaughan Garden	just emerged
15-Dec-2002	Green Gully Road, Glen Luce	
15-Dec-2002	The Monk, Chewton	
16-Jan-2001	Green Gully Rd. walk	
10-Jan-2001	Rotunda & Ridge, Kalimna Park	
14-Nov-2000	Everywhere in forests	males begin to appear in numbers
29-Feb-2000	Vaughan walk	

Larval Host Plants: Native grasses such as Weeping Grass (*Microlaena stipoides*), Kangaroo Grass (*Themeda triandra*) and some tussock grasses (*Poa* spp.). Introduced grasses such as Panic Veldt Grass (*Erhardta erecta*) and Couch (*Cynodon dactylon*).

Larval association with ants: None.

Adult Flight Times in Victoria: Adults have been recorded from October to May, and most commonly from November to March.

Conservation Status:

[The Action plan for Australian Butterflies](#): Vulnerable in Australia

[Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999](#): Not listed

[Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 – Threatened List 2021](#): Not Listed

Other Notes: Males known to hilltop. Females generally inactive unless disturbed.

References and further reading:

Atlas of Living Australia – [Heteronympha merope](#), Common Brown

iNaturalist – [Heteronympha merope](#), Common Brown