

# Imperial Hairstreak (*Jalmenus evagoras*)



Imperial Hairstreak, *Jalmenus evagoras*, showing upper (left) and underside (right). Castlemaine Botanic Gardens. Photos: Euan Moore.



Museum specimens. Photo: Tony Morton

Note 1: The male occurs on the top row and the female on the bottom row. 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.

Note 2: The plant names refer to the plants upon which the butterfly larvae (caterpillars) feed.

**Other Common Names:** Common Imperial Blue, Pale Imperial Blue.

**Family of Butterflies:** *Lycaenidae* (Blues and Coppers)

**Size:** 32mm males, 37mm females.

**Local records:** There are records on iNaturalist and Atlas of Living Australia from Castlemaine Botanic Gardens, suburban Castlemaine, Fryers Ridge and Sebastopol Creek.

**Tony Morton's records of Imperial Hairstreak from the local area (between 2000 to 2013):** Eighteen

Date	Location	Notes
22-Nov-2000	Vaughan Springs	L,P. On young <i>A. dealbata</i> . Pupae black
27-Nov-2000	100m. below Tarilta Road bridge, Vaughan	L, P. on young <i>A. melanoxylon</i> , pupae brownish
29-Nov-2000	Central Springs, Vaughan	L,P,I, several colonies on small <i>A. melanoxylon</i>
3-Dec-2000	Bluff, Central Springs, Vaughn	
16-Jan-2001	Green Gully Rd. walk (creek)	larvae, imagines
8-Jan-2002	Chewton area	1 v. small on walk to Welsh Town. THE ONLY ONE SEEN THIS SUMMER
5-Dec-2005	Castlemaine	along creek in Bot Gdn on small wattles. LPI
6-Feb-2006	Glen Luce springs	fresh female
19-Feb-2006	Chewton area	on Wirilda!! Forest Creek. Also on <i>dealbata</i> and <i>mearnsii</i> , but to lesser extent. Small colony.
3-Mar-2006	Castlemaine	on <i>Buddleia</i> in Bot Gdn
18 - 25 Dec	Vaughan, Central Springs	fresh colonies
2001 - 2002	Central Vic., Vaughn	only one small male seen near Chewton during the year
Dec. 2002	Brown's house, Old Drummond Road, Taradale	on regrowth <i>A. mearnsii</i>
27-Oct-2006	Forest creek	larvae on Wirilda
15-Nov-2009	Botanic Gardens Castlemaine	3 p.m. 33°C larvae (top of tallish <i>A. mearnsii</i> on creek)
5-Dec-2009	Vaughan walk	11.30 - 1.30 p.m. Adult, a few pupae
24-Feb-2011	Garden, Fryerstown	Feeding
3-Dec-2011	Vaughan Springs on recent planting on Left of road down to Springs	pupating on 4 spp of young Wattle ( <i>mearnsii</i> , <i>melanoxylon</i> , <i>acinacea</i> , <i>retinodes</i> )

**Distribution outside our region:** Castlemaine is at the north-western limit of distribution for this species. Most documented Victorian observations of this species are in eastern half of state, although also records from the Daylesford – Lerderderg area. Outside Victoria this species is found along the east coast of Australia to as far north as Rockhampton, Qld.

**Larval Host Plants:** A variety of acacias, particularly Late Black Wattle (*Acacia mearnsii*), Early Black Wattle (*Acacia decurrens*), Silver Wattle (*Acacia dealbata*) and Blackwood (*A. melanoxylon*)

**Adult Flight Times in Victoria:** In Victoria, there is a peak of observations from December to March, but some observations from November to April.



Eggs are laid in clusters against the trunk on the underside of a branch.



Larva on a blackwood, *Acacia melanoxylon*, stem. It is being attended by *Iridomyrmex sp.* Ants.



Pupae on blackwood. They are generally found in clusters amongst the leaves on small branches. They continue to receive attention from the ants.

*Photos: Euan Moore*

**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](#): Not Listed

**Other Notes:** Mount Alexander Shire is at the edge of the species known distribution (Field 2013). Regularly documented by Tony Morton. It may be becoming more common in our area. Colonies of butterflies appear to be faithful to their food plant and ants over multiple years.

It is often documented in disturbed areas where wattle host plants are regenerating (Field 2013).

**References and further reading:**

Atlas of Living Australia – [Jalmenus evagoras](#), Imperial Hairstreak.

iNaturalist – [Jalmenus evagoras](#), Imperial Hairstreak