

Imperial Jezebel (*Delias harpalyce*)



Imperial Jezebel, Male (above) and Female (below). Museum specimens. *Photo: Tony Morton.*

Other Common Names: Imperial White

Family of Butterflies: Pieridae (Whites and Yellows)

Wingspan: 67 – 72 mm.

This butterfly is somewhat similar to the Red-spotted Jezebel but is much darker with almost no white on the underside of the wings. The upper wings of the female are black and grey compared to black and white in the male. Images can be seen on [iNaturalist](#).

During the 2022/2023 summer breeding was recorded at Barkers Ck. The caterpillars feed on Box Mistletoe. The cocoons are attached to a mistletoe leaf.

Local Records: Prior to 2022 there were only a few records close to the Mt Alexander region on Atlas of Living Australia. Apart from a single record near Bendigo the closest official records are from places that are at higher altitude on the Great Dividing Range such as near



Caterpillar and cocoons on Box Mistletoe, Barkers Ck, Castlemaine, *Photo: Mez Woodward*

Kyneton and at Wombat Forest where there is a cooler wetter climate. Although there are few earlier reports, there have been frequent sightings from across our region logged on iNaturalist over the 2021/2022 and 2022/2023 summers.

Distribution: This is a mainly coastal species found from south-east [Queensland to the Otway Ranges](#) with most records on the crest of or east of the Great Dividing Range.

Larval Host Plants: Mistletoes of the genus *Amyema*.

Larval association with ants: None

Adult Flight Times in Victoria: Peak activity is in spring (September-October) with a second peak in late summer (January-February) although small numbers may be seen during the rest of the year. Across Australia, overall flight times are similar with the main peak in activity being late summer into autumn. Ref [iNaturalist](#)

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: Adults often soar in the tree tops, particularly during sunny mornings when temperatures are lower. Activity ceases if the temperature becomes too high.

References and further reading:

Atlas of Living Australia – [Delias harpalyce](#), Imperial Jezebel.

iNaturalist - [Delias harpalyce](#), Imperial Jezebel.



Imperial jezebel, *Delias harpalyce*, Barkers Creek, Castlemaine. *Photo; Mez Woodward*