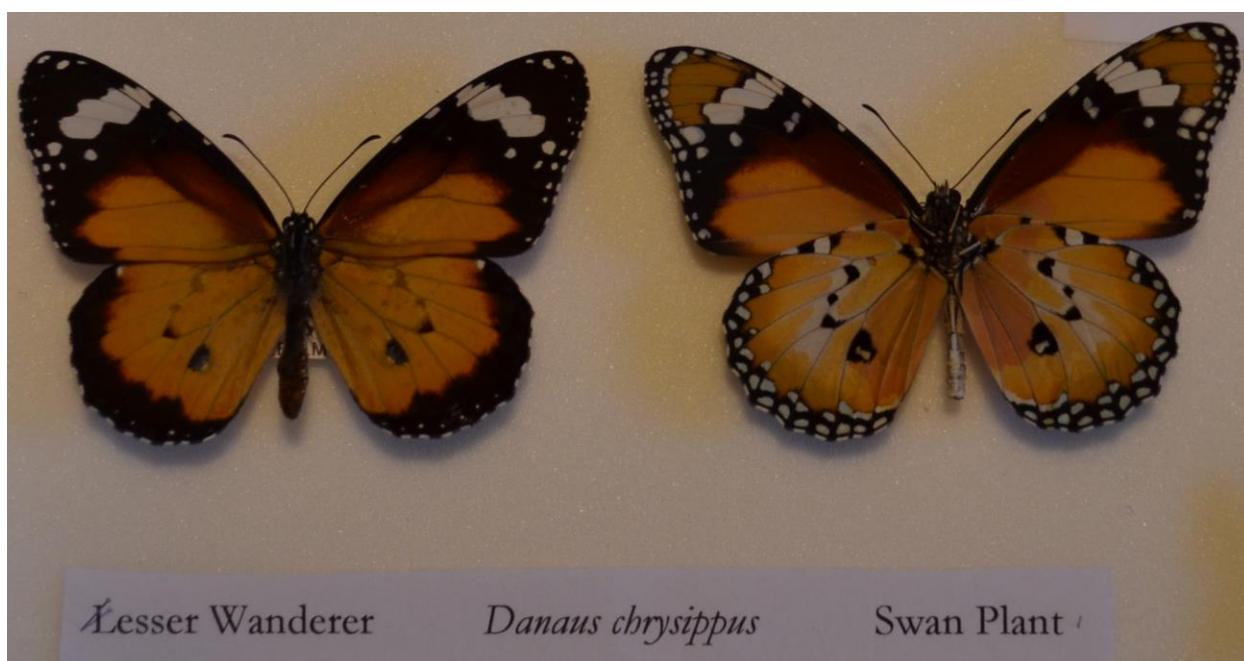


Lesser Wanderer (*Danaus petilia*)



Lesser Wanderer, upper (left), lower (right). Photo: Euan Moore



Museum specimens. 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.

Note 3 *Danaus chrysippus* is an alternative/prior name for this species which is used in some literature.

Other Common Names: None

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

Size: Wingspan 60mm

Local observations: There is a Museum of Victoria record from Castlemaine and a recent record from Harcourt North on iNaturalist.

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

Three

Date	Location	Notes
15-Jan-2011		Bot Gardens, off Froomes Road, C'maine
6-Jan-2011	female laying again	Vaughan garden
10-Dec-2010	Laying on Asclepias, larvae die at third instar. Foodplant or a day of 40 degree heat?	Vaughan garden

Distribution outside our region: There are a number of records from Melbourne and Geelong and a scattering of records across the north and north-west of Victoria on Atlas of Living Australia. There is a similar pattern of records on iNaturalist. This species has been recorded from all Australian states.

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

Larval association with ants: None.

Adult Flight Times in Victoria: 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:

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

References and further reading:

Atlas of Living Australia – [Danaus petilla](#), Lesser Wanderer

iNaturalist – [Danaus petilia](#), Lesser Wanderer