

BUTTERFLIES of Vanuatu



Of the 85 different butterflies now known in Vanuatu, two species and 26 subspecies (31%) are endemic to the country. From the rainforest to the white beaches, these butterflies bring striking colour and complement the beautiful flower species found in throughout the country.

The Glasswing or Small Greasy (*Acraea andromacha*) is a tropical and subtropical butterfly with vagrant tendencies. Its wingspan is about 60 mm with forewings transparent like glass. The Glasswing is a poisonous species of butterfly as from the larvae stage it is able to assimilate and retain poisons from its passion vine host plants. The butterfly is readily visible in its slow flight, which enables predatory birds sufficient time for recognition.

The **Swallowtail** (*Papilio godeffroyi*) are found throughout the world and are richest in the tropics. Swallowtail adults

are medium to large and may or may not have tails. All adults have three pairs of walking legs, and feed off flower nectar. In some areas the Swallowtail is threatened to the point of being endangered.

The **Leafwing or Autumnleaf** (*Doleschallia bisaltide*) brown pupa hangs by a silk hook from the food plant becoming a striking black caterpillar with cream, blue and red markings. The adult butterflies have wings shaped so that the resting butterfly (with the wings closed over its back) looks like a leaf hence its common name. The species is found across Southeast Asia and the Pacific, from India to Fiji, including Thailand, Indonesia, Australia, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

The **Common Emigrant or Lemon Emigrant** (*Catopsilia pomona*) is a medium sized (60mm wingspan) butterfly found in Asia, parts of Australia and western Pacific and gets its name from its habit of migration. The butterfly normally requires tropical, humid woodland habitat.

Known as the **Black and White Tiger or Swamp** butterfly (*Danaus affinis*), found in tropical Asia and ranging from Thailand to Australia and into the Pacific it is one of at least 30, possibly many more, sub species. The butterfly lays eggs that are pale yellow and bullet shaped. They are laid singly on a food plant.

The **Eight-Spot Butterfly** (*Hypolimnas octocula*), is endemic to several islands and island chains in Oceania, including New Caledonia, Vanuatu and the Mariana Islands. The butterfly suffers from numerous threats, including habitat destruction, competition from introduced species and increased predation from ants and wasps.

Collectors' Notes

Designer: Sue Wickison, Wellington, New Zealand
 Printer: Wyatt and Wilson, Christchurch, New Zealand
 Process: Offset lithography
 Stamp Size: 44.00 mm x 54.00 mm, horizontal (6 die-cut stamps within die-cut miniature sheet)
 Miniature Sheet Size: 181.90 mm x 166.70 mm, vertical.
 Perforation Gauge: 12 TPI
 Denominations: 6 x 100 vatu. Mini Sheet total 600 vatu.
 Paper: Jac self adhesive stamp paper
 Period of Sale: 14 April 2010 for a period of 2 years
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