

Figs 1-4. *Rhytiphora* species nr *solida*. All figures not to scale [lengths, in mm, in square brackets]. (1, 2) ♂, Mt. Cotton, Qld, 18.i.2016 [20 mm], (1) habitus, dorsal, (2) habitus, ventral; (3, 4) ♀, Mt Cotton, Qld, 18.i.2016 [22 mm], (3) habitus, dorsal, (4) habitus, ventral.

Figs 5-7. (5) *Rhytiphora* species nr *solida* (ink drawing, A.A. Davies); (6, 7) *Acacia implexa*, (6) juvenile foliage, (7) mature plant.

Figs 8, 9. *Rhytiphora* species nr *solida*, Mt. Cotton, Qld: (8) stripping epidermis from stems of *Acacia implexa*, (9) wrapping legs around and clamping stems with mandibles of *A. implexa*.

Figs 10, 11. *Rhytiphora vermicularia*: (10) habitus dorsal, Dunmore S.F., Qld, 20.xi.1987 [26 mm], (11) habitus dorsal, Kingaroy, Qld, 23.i.1987 [24 mm].

Illustrations by Alexander Davis

Life history notes on the Evening Brown, *Melanitis leda bankia* (Fabricius, 1775) Lepidoptera: Nymphalidae) – Wesley Jenkinson



The Evening Brown is encountered from coastal areas across to regions west of the Great Dividing Range from north-eastern Queensland to north-eastern New South Wales and occasionally further south. The species is also present in northern areas of Western Australia and the Northern Territory.

The species is encountered in a wide variety of habitats and favours moist gullies where tall grasses are established, as well as in suburban gardens. Adults are often found resting amongst dead leaves and grass beneath large mango trees when

decaying fruit is present on the ground. During favourable seasons the adults can be very common during the late wet season.

At dawn and particularly dusk the adults become active with a rather strong erratic flight. During these periods the males can be observed perching on low vegetation or grass blades defending territories by frequently chasing off rival males. Typically during daylight hours, adults settle with wings closed amongst tall grass and leaf litter in shady areas. When disturbed during sunny periods of the day they fly rapidly for several metres and resettle in a sheltered shady position.





One of the adults presumably imbibing chemicals from a dried *Lantana camara* flower.

Unlike the majority of butterflies, the adults feed from fallen rotting fruit and tree sap rather than flowers. During May 2012 near the Perry River west of Bundaberg in south-east Queensland, J. Moss and myself observed several adults apparently feeding on dried *Lantana camara* flowers. This was around midday in warm conditions with a light cloud cover. The adults feeding on the dried flowers were thought to be imbibing a chemical residue produced by the plant.

As illustrated in Braby 2000, there are two seasonal forms being a 'wet' season and a 'dry' season form. The underside of the dry season form is remarkably variable while the underside of the wet season shows little variation. The sexes are quite similar in appearance. To separate the sexes of wet season adults, in comparison to the males, the females have a much larger indent (virtually absent in the male) along the forewing termen and the two white spots within the black patch on the upperside of the forewing are larger. These markings are also surrounded with a more conspicuous patch of yellowish orange.

The dry season adults are more difficult to sex. In comparison to the males of this form, the females have a slightly broader indent along the forewing termen, the two white spots within the black patch on the upperside of the forewing are marginally larger, and the abdomen is slightly wider. The orange on the upperside forewings of the male is also generally a slightly darker, richer colour.



***Melanitis leda bankia* (Evening Brown) Wet Season Form**

Images left to right: male, female,





Melanitis leda bankia (Evening Brown) Wet Season Form

Images left to right: male underside, female underside

Dry season forms are larger than those of the wet season; wingspans for the pictured wet season form males and females are 55mm and 60mm respectively and similarly the dry season form males and females are 65mm and 75mm.



Melanitis leda bankia (Evening Brown) Dry Season Form

Images top left to right: male, female, Images lower left to right: male underside, female underside





Dry season form underside colour variations

In January 2008 a female was collected at Beaudesert in south-eastern Queensland and kept in captivity. She laid a cluster of fifteen eggs and was then released. These eggs were laid on the underside of a leaf of the exotic host grass Green Panic (*Megathyrus maximus*, formerly *Panicum maximum*), a known host plant. The larvae were subsequently raised on this host.

This species utilises a large range of native and exotic broad-leaved grasses in the *Poaceae* family.

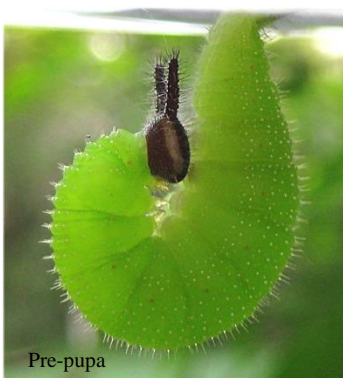


The eggs were pale yellow, smooth, off spherical, approximately 1.4 mm wide x 1.2 mm high





First instar larvae consumed the eggshells soon after emergence and rested in clusters below a leaf midrib near where they were feeding. They fed from the edge of the leaf to the midrib. The later instar larvae chewed across the leaf midrib and were observed feeding during daylight hours. A fine pad of silk was spun on the underside of the leaves on which they rested when not feeding. Some larvae attained a length of 50mm which is quite large considering the size of the adult body. In the wild, the later instar larvae are usually found resting and feeding solitarily.



The bright green pupae measuring up to a length of 21mm were located below stems of the host plant. They were attached with silk by the cremaster with the head hanging downwards.

The total time from egg to adult varied between 39 days to 56 days. The first adult to emerge had egg duration of 5 days, larval duration 22 days and pupal duration of 12 days.



Within the new boundary of the Scenic Rim Regional Shire south of Brisbane, I have adult records for all months of the year. In south-eastern Queensland, the wet season form is more abundant from December to March and the dry season form is sometimes very common during April and May just after the wet season. Individuals of either form can appear throughout the year.

Acknowledgement: I would like to thank John Moss for commenting on the manuscript.

Reference:

Braby, M.F., 2000. *Butterflies of Australia – Their Identification, Biology and Distribution*. vol 2. CSIRO Publishing, Melbourne.

Photos Wesley Jenkinson

A new aphid arrival - the Asian Woolly Hackberry Aphid (*Shivaphis celti*) – Peter Macqueen 12/2/17

Australia has over 160 species of aphid both native and many introduced species. New introductions are often known crop pests so receive significant attention to their management. A relatively new aphid introduction to Australia is the Asian Woolly Hackberry Aphid (*Shivaphis celti*) that has arrived and spread relatively unnoticed,



Fig.1 Typical sooty mould and yellowing as a result of *Shivaphis celti* infestation

although many readers have probably encountered its honey dew on, or under, the prolifically weedy Celtis tree, *Celtis sinensis*. It has rapidly become a feature of Celtis trees, leaving them having copious amounts of sooty mould over the foliage and large numbers of the white fluffy aphids under the leaves (Fig.1).



Fig.2 *Shivaphis celti* on Celtis leaf

The Asian Woolly Hackberry Aphid is a small aphid 2-3mm long and covered with a copious white waxy covering. As many aphids will do, it produces a large quantity of honeydew that is excreted on and below the host plant. As the Celtis is deciduous the aphid overwinters as eggs on the stem and then reproduces parthenogenically through the summer months to build populations (Fig. 2).

