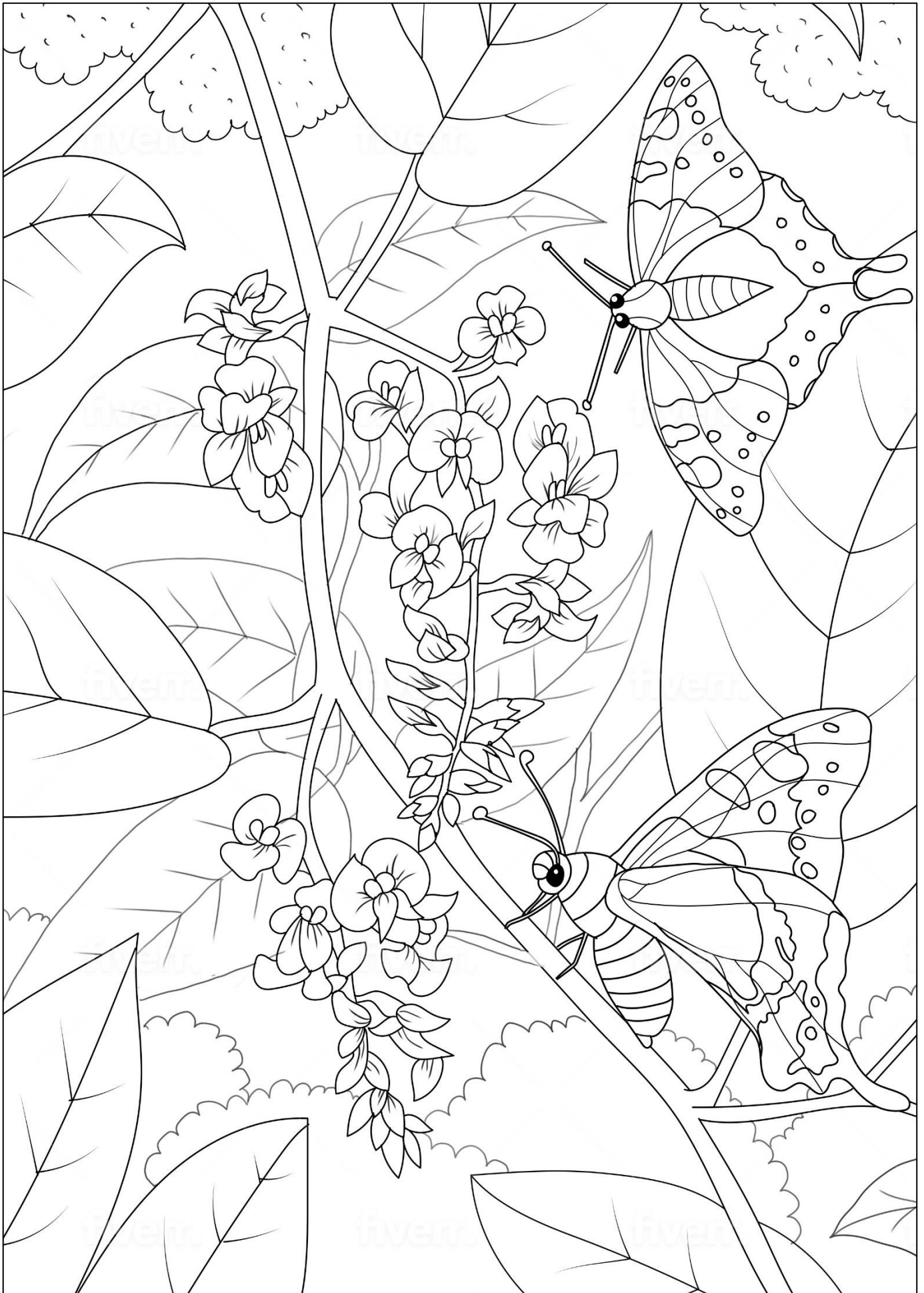


Macleay's swallowtail

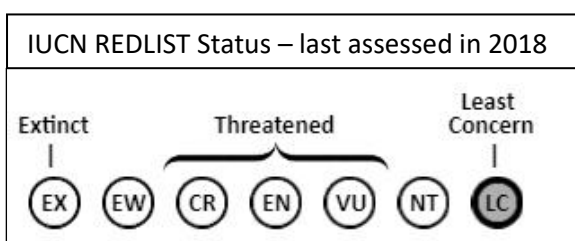


Macleay's swallowtail

Graphium macleayanum

NATIVE TO AUSTRALIA

- Macleay's Swallowtail is a beautiful butterfly species identified by the tails on its hind wings and the green colour on the undersides of its wings. It also has green legs that match its wings, an unusual feature of this butterfly.
- Most of the butterflies in this family are large in size, ranging in size from 5.3cm to 6cm, with wingspan up to 8cm, and with brilliant colours. They are called swallowtails because some of the species have tailed hindwings.
- These stunning butterflies often feed on flowers with their wings rapidly vibrating.
- The Macleay's swallowtail is native to the wetter coastal and mountain parts of eastern Australia, from northern Queensland south to Victoria and Tasmania. They also occur on Lord How Island and in the highlands of Papua New Guinea.
- They live in **urban** areas, forests and woodlands, and heath.
- They are commonly seen in urban Sydney between August and April.
- The caterpillars of Macleay's swallowtail have adapted to feed on a variety of plants including Sassafras leaves and the introduced Camphor Laurel (*Cinnamomum camphora*).
- The caterpillars go through several moults during their development; initially they have a black hump and black forked tail. Then they become plain green with small white dots over the body and two narrow yellow lines along the back. At these stages they are called **instars**.
- The caterpillars grow to around about 4cm in length.
- The eggs are round and pale green. They are laid singly on young shoots of a food plant.
- The caterpillar is green with a humped **thorax**. Initially it has a black hump and a black forked tail. Later it becomes plain green with small white dots over the body, and two narrow yellow lines along the back.
- Males **congregate** around hilltops where they can be seen defending their territory from rival males and courting passing females.
- They can usually be seen flying above the eucalypts at the highest point of a hill, rarely coming down to a catchable height.
- They are related to other members of the butterfly family Papilionidae such as the Orchard Butterfly, Canberra's biggest, and the magnificent blue Ulysses Swallowtail of north Queensland.



❖ **Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act – not currently listed.**

❖ **NCA – not currently listed.**

GLOSSARY - Those unfamiliar words defined!

congregate: gather into a crowd or mass

instar: a developmental stage of arthropods, such as insects, which occurs between each moult (ecdysis) until sexual maturity is reached.

thorax: the portion of the body between the head and the abdomen

urban: relating to a particular place, town, village, in this instance development due to humans needing to have more homes.