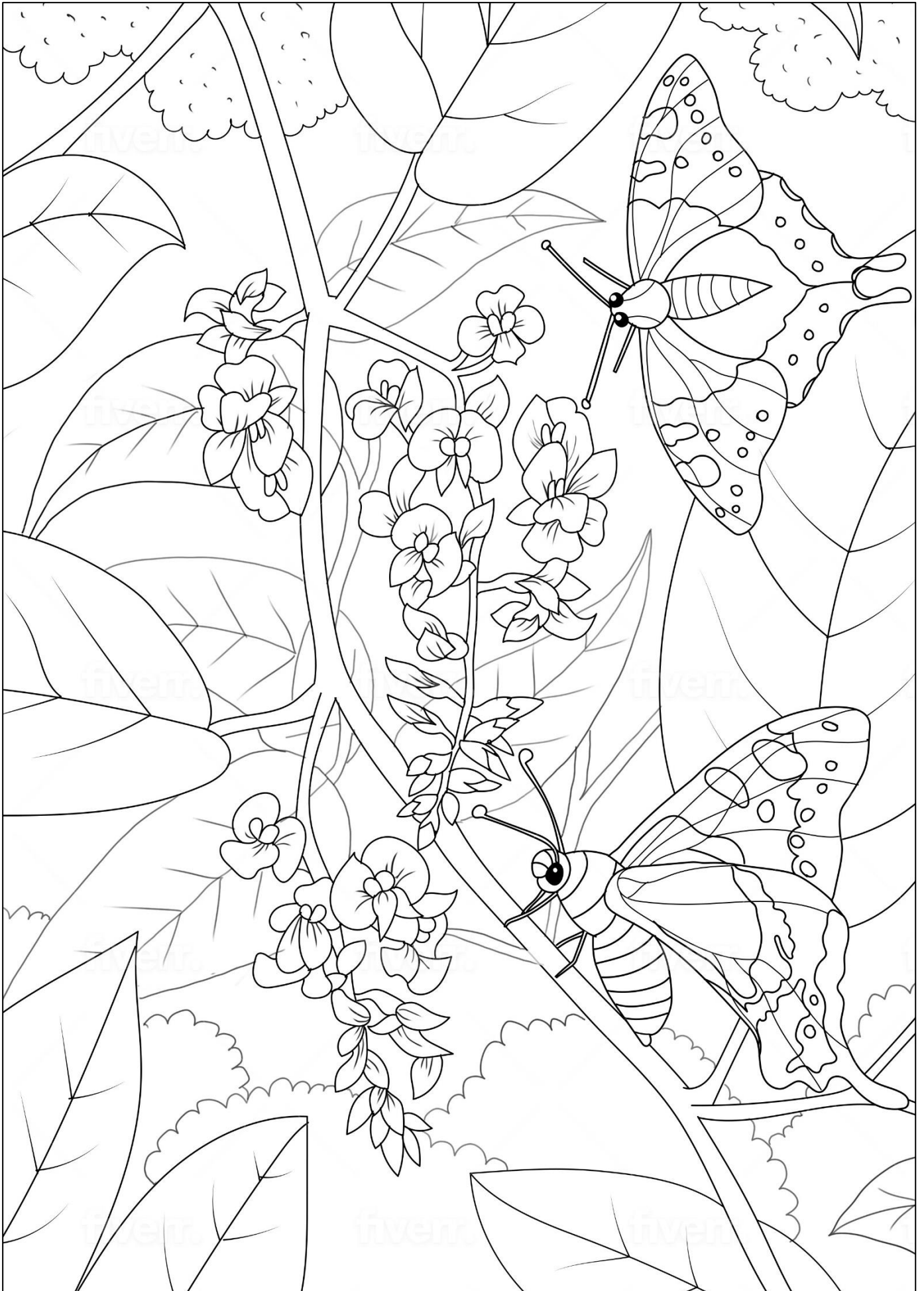


Metallic green carpenter bee



Metallic green carpenter bee

Xylocopa (Lestis) aeratus

NATIVE TO AUSTRALIA

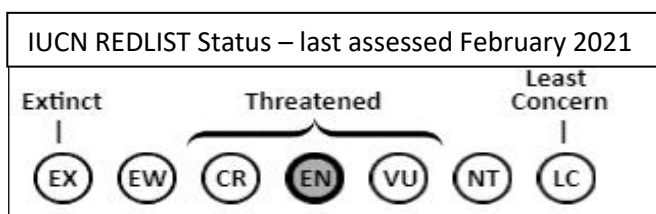
- These bees are a large, iconic native bee species. The females are a beautiful jewel, metallic green in colour and male Lestis carpenter bees have quite different colouring from the females, with a coat of fur over the **thorax**.
- They measure up to 17mm long, are eye catching and make a loud buzz as they fly. They love to visit native pea flowers such as *Gompholobium*.
- They are friendly and harmless. The species is extinct on mainland South Australia and in Victoria but still exists on Kangaroo Island, around Sydney and the Great Dividing Range in NSW. Last recorded sighting for Queensland was in 2019 south of Brisbane
- The bees went extinct on mainland South Australia in 1906, likely due to land clearing, and were last seen in Victoria in early December 1938 in the Grampians, which burnt completely during the Black Friday fires of January 1939.
- At the time of the 2020 fires, there were more than 150 nests in the stalks provided on Kangaroo Island, which contained mature brood. These all burnt. In NSW, the species has also been severely impacted, with much of its natural range burnt.
- Green carpenter bees make their nests in dead wood, which burns easily making the bees vulnerable to fire. If their nests burn, adult female green carpenter bees might fly away but are unlikely to live long enough to reproduce again.
- Green carpenter bees mainly dig their nests in two types of soft wood: dry flowering stalks of grass trees and large, dead Banksia trunks. Grass trees flower prolifically after fire, but the dry stalks are only abundant between two and five years after fire. Banksia species don't survive fire and need to grow for at least 30 years to become large enough for green carpenter bees to use. With increasingly frequent and intense fires, there isn't enough time for Banksia trunks to grow big enough before they're wiped out by the next fire.
- In Queensland, and in the Wallum, the Peacock carpenter bee (*Xylocopa bombylans*) is more likely to be seen. Again, the markings of males and females are quite distinctly different.

The **Green Carpenter Bee Conservation Project** has, since 2013, been giving the bees alternative (artificial) nesting stalks to bridge the long periods of extreme low nest material. This nesting substrate is made of balsa wood and resembles dead flower stalks of grass trees or dead Banksia trunks. They are placed in the fire-affected areas where the bee still occurs. Female carpenter bees then excavate their own nest. Since the start, nearly 300 females have successfully raised offspring in these nests.

If you have seen a Green Carpenter Bee or a nest entrance in a dry grass tree stalk on Kangaroo Island, researchers would like to hear from you.

Please complete the details of your sighting on their form at

<https://www.wheenbeefoundation.org.au/our-work/projects/green-carpenter-bee/sightings/>



- ❖ **Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act – not currently listed – likely data deficient.**
- ❖ **NCA – not currently listed – likely data deficient.**