

Evagoras



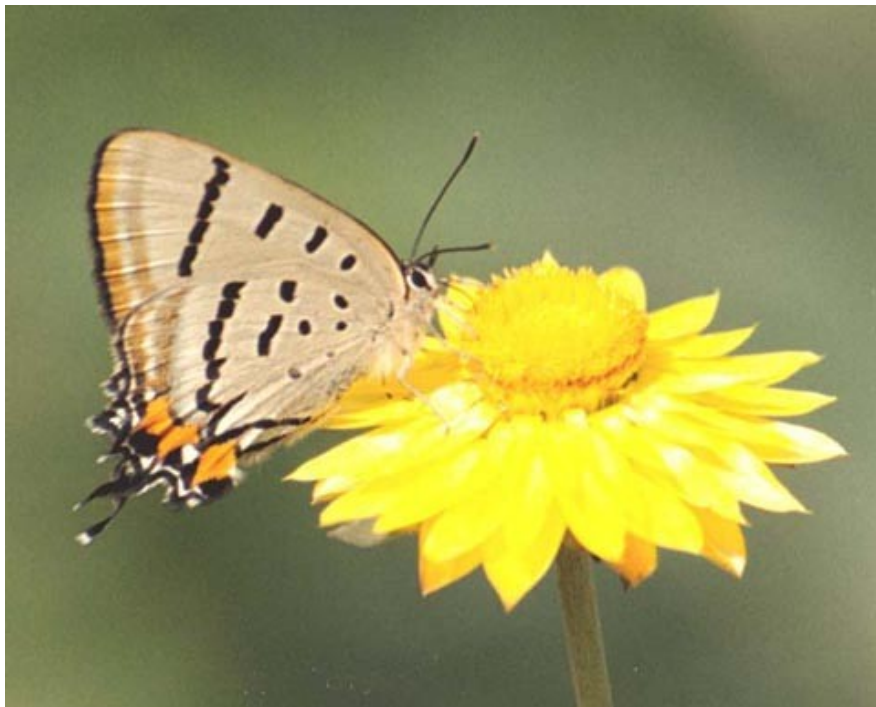
20 mm

Imperial Hairstreak, Imperial Blue

Jalmenus evagoras

This beautiful butterfly almost always flies in a colony, commonly of 10 to 20 members, but possibly up to 100. They cluster around small acacias, where there may also be several pupae, but single individuals are also found around larger trees. Small black ants crawl all over the pupae (and before that the caterpillars), harvesting a sugary exudation from the caterpillar, and by their presence repelling would-be parasitic flies and wasps.

Each year a different acacia, or group of acacias, is selected to be the host plant, and it is almost always a juvenile tree. The butterflies emerge in late Spring and continue throughout the Summer.



Small black ants on Imperial Hairstreak pupae.

The ants are about 3 mm long



A female Imperial Hairstreak on *Acacia rubida*