

Lycaenidae family

Satin Azure

*Ogyris amaryllis meridionalis***Also known as:** Amaryllis Azure**Abundance in Adelaide area:** Common**Flight:** Aug – early Apr**Wingspan:** m 34 mm; f 34 mm**Mature larva length:** 21–27 mm

If you ever encounter this butterfly flying in the sun you will see brilliant blue flashes as the sunlight reflects off its highly metallic wings. As with all the Azure butterflies, they do not open their wings when at rest. As a result, the Satin Azure virtually disappears as the wings are folded to display camouflage colours.

For its caterpillar food plant, the Satin Azure prefers Wire-leaf Mistletoe (*Amyema preissii*), which grows on some Acacia species, but it will use other mistletoes. This butterfly is associated with various species of small black ants. It is most likely to be seen near its food plants, but males move to and fly over nearby hilltops. The species is uncommon in the Adelaide Hills, but is present over most of the state of South Australia.

Caterpillar food plants: Mistletoes (*Amyema* spp.) The caterpillars eat the flowers and leaves.

Adelaide native species: Wire-leaf Mistletoe (*Amyema preissii*) on Blackwood (*Acacia melanoxylon*) and other acacia species. Box Mistletoe (*Amyema miquelii*) on Eucalyptus species, Melaleuca Mistletoe (*Amyema melaleucae*) on *Melaleuca lanceolata* and sometimes *Melaleuca halmaturorum*, Drooping Mistletoe (*Amyema pendula* ssp. *pendula*) on Stringybark (*Eucalyptus*) and Blackwood (*Acacia melanoxylon*).

Other South Australian species: Buloke Mistletoe (*Amyema linophylla* ssp. *orientale*) on Bull-oak (*Allocasuarina luehmannii*), Fleshy



Mistletoe (*Amyema miraculosa* ssp. *boormanii*) on *Myoporum*, *Santalum* and others, Grey Mistletoe (*Amyema quandang* var. *quandang*) on Western Myall (*Acacia papyrocarpa*).

A stunning butterfly, this is another mistletoe feeding member of the Azure group. The colour of the butterfly is a very bright, shining blue with narrow black margins on the upper surface, and a mottled black and brown cryptic pattern underneath. The females have a slightly wider black margin on the upper side, and orange-red bars in an area of the underside of the forewing, close to the body.

It is still a relatively common, though rarely seen, butterfly on the south coast area of the Fleurieu Peninsula; however, it is quite uncommon in the Adelaide Hills and foothills. Recently, a colony were found on a stand of mistletoe-bearing trees in inner suburban Adelaide.

