

Vanessa atalanta Linnaeus, 1758.

Papallona reina (ca.) Mariposa reina, numerada (es.), Red Admiral (en.)

Distribution. The Azores, The Canary Islands, North Africa, Europe, including all the large Mediterranean Islands and many of the small ones, North America..

Description. Adult. 55-60 mm wingspan. Black wings with a red band which crosses the forewings on the upper face, and white blotches near the apical area. On the upper face of the hindwings there is also a red strip with black blotches following the edge of the wing. The reverse of the hindwings has dark tones of watery brown, grey and ochre. **Caterpillar.** 35-40 mm. Dark in colour with abundant yellow dots and a yellow lateral line and clear coloured spines. They live separately from each other in a refuge made by joining the edges of the leaf of the foodplants by means of silk girdles. Their complete development lasts for one month. **Chrysalis.** 25 mm. Very clear ochre-grey colour. Fat, compact and angular with spines. They hang down from the back of the foodplant. The adult emerges in two to three weeks.

Caterpillar foodplants. The caterpillar lives on nettles in rolled up leaves (*Urtica* spp.), pellitories (*Parietaria* spp.) and everlasting flowers (*Helichrysum stoechas*).

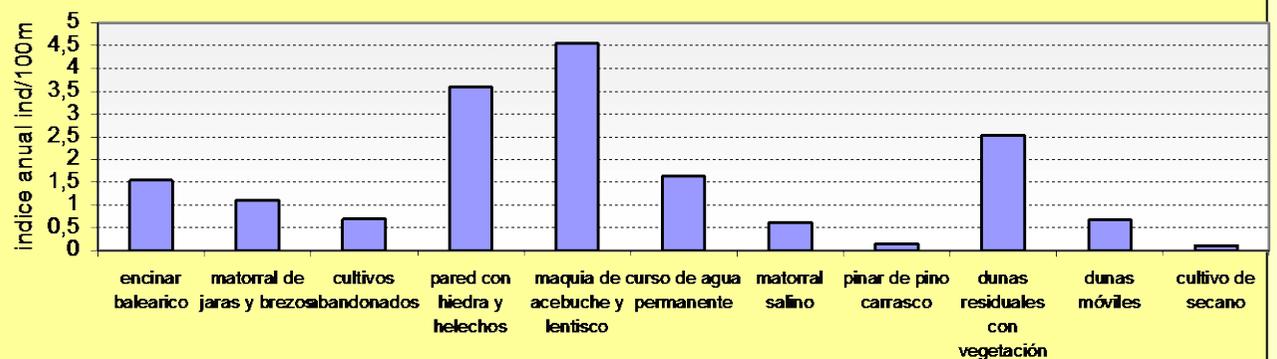
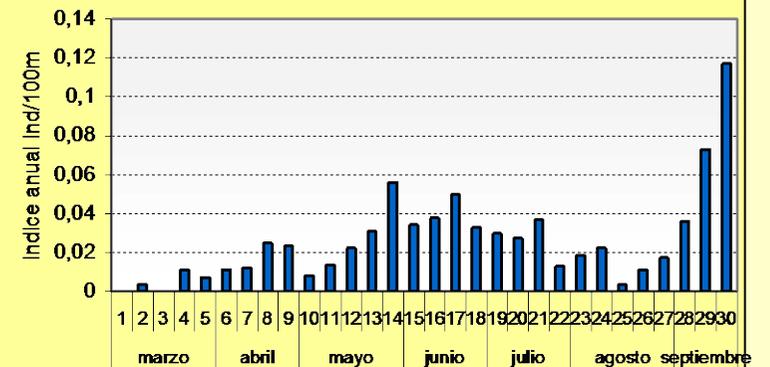
Vanessa atalanta in Menorca

Representation in the BMS (Butterfly Monitoring Scheme). Species with little representation in the BMS, only 0.7% having been observed. It is not a rare species in Menorca but its representation in the BMS is low because it is especially abundant from the middle of September until November which is a time when it is not investigated.

Flight time. Adults can be seen flying on sunny winter days. It has two peaks : one in March-April owing to the descent of autumn migratories who migrate to the north after they are born (few seen in Menorca) ; and a second peak in September-October when it is prolific in the case of Menorca, and consists of central European examples who fly down to hibernate in Mediterranean regions. In May and June there is another increase in the population caused by the crossing of the migratories from Southern latitudes.

Habitat and behaviour. Open spaces. It has great mobility. Customary in areas covered with vegetation. It practices *hilltopping*. It is attracted by ripe and rotting fruit.

Similar species present in Menorca.
None.



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