

# Pest Profile

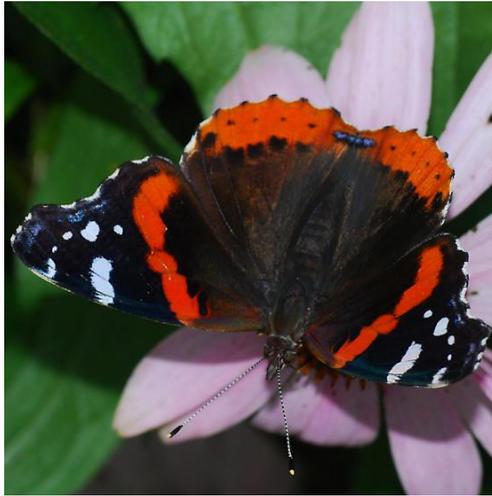


Photo credit: Shelly Cox, bugguide.net

**Common Name:** Red Admiral

**Scientific Name:** *Vanessa atalanta*

**Order and Family:** Lepidoptera: Nymphalidae

**Size and Appearance:**

	Adult	Egg	Larva/Nymph	Pupae (if applicable)
<b>Length (mm)</b>	Wing span ranges from 50 to 78 mm ( males 64 to 72 mm, females 70 to 78mm)		About 31 mm	
<b>Appearance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Adults have dark colored wings with orange stripes and white spots (hindwing with red marginal band).</li><li>- The winter form is smaller and duller, summer form larger and brighter</li><li>- Females are larger than males.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Greenish in color</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Caterpillar is black with some lighter flecking and numerous fleshy dark spines.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Fully grown caterpillars shed their skins and spin a cocoon (chrysalis) with gold-colored markings.</li></ul>

**Type of feeder (Chewing, sucking, etc.):** Chewing for caterpillars. Adults have sucking mouthparts specialized for feeding on flower nectar.

**Host plant/s:** Host plants include plants of the nettle family (Urticaceae), including stinging nettle (*Urtica dioica*), tall wild nettle (*U. gracilis*), and wood nettle (*Laportea canadensis*), among other nettles. Also Canada thistle, sunflower, and Jerusalem artichoke can be host plants for this insect.

**Description of Damage (larvae and adults):** Young caterpillars eat and live within a shelter of folded leaves; they chew on leaves. Adults mainly feed on flower nectar. Females lay eggs on a wide range of food plants (plants that can serve as food for the developing caterpillar), generally choosing nettle. When the eggs hatch, the caterpillars pull the leaves around them to form a protective enclosure and then spin silken threads around themselves as protection from predators as they feed.

**References:**

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