

# Western Sulphur

*Colias occidentalis*

Prepared by Chris Gill, MSc, RPBio  
Kestrel Consulting  
Phone: (250) 835-8256  
Email: cegill@gmail.com  
Date: October 23, 2007

## Conservation Status

Included in Section 7 Notice: No

Designated as Identified Wildlife: No

Federally Designated (COSEWIC): No

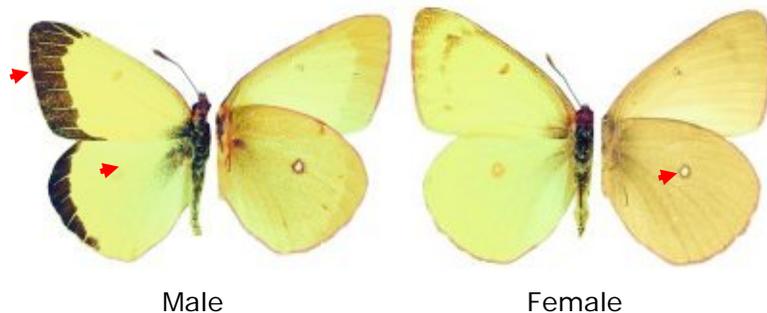
Species identified in Kamloops, Lillooet or Merritt SFMP: **Yes (Lillooet)**

## Description

- Small yellow butterfly (Wingspan: 43-50mm).
- The upperside of the wing is bright yellow in males with a solid black border on the wing.
- Females are paler yellow with a pale black border.
- A white spot with a prominent pink rim is present on the underside of the hindwing.
- Adults are on the wing from late May until early July.



Female Western Sulphur.  
Photo: Anya Jingle



Male

Female

## Forest Districts

### Cascades

Okanagan Shuswap

## BEC Zones

- BG
- IDF
- PP

## Elevation

Not available.

## Important Habitat Features

- Inhabits meadows and sagebrush flats, as well as open coniferous forests, particularly in and near Douglas-fir forests. It is rarely found in cultivated areas.
- Larvae are reported to feed on a variety of legumes including vetch (*Vicia spp.*), vetchling (*Lathyrus spp.*), and lupines (*Lupinus spp.*).

## Additional Information

- Occurs in arid areas on both sides of the Cascades Mountains in the Fraser and Similkameen River Valleys.
- Very localized and spotty in distribution, but can be common where it occurs.

## Management Recommendations

Consult with a Registered Professional Biologist prior to implementing the following management recommendations because certain situations may require custom solutions based on specific site characteristics.

- Identify locations where this species is known to occur: if available, obtain occurrence data from the Conservation Data Centre (<http://srmwww.gov.bc.ca/cdc/>) and if necessary conduct surveys to confirm presence or absence of this species.

Where this species is found:

- Establish a no harvest zone buffer equal to one tree length around the perimeter of the meadow or open field if it is located adjacent to a forested area.
- Do not construct roads within the no harvest zone unless no other viable option exists. In those cases, road construction should occur from September to March. Minimize soil disturbance during road construction and deactivate after use.
- Use non-herbicide weed control methods to retain larval food plants [legumes including vetch (*Vicia spp.*), vetchling (*Lathyrus spp.*), and lupines (*Lupinus spp.*)] and nectar sources. Where herbicide-based control is necessary, measures such as hand wick application or spot treatments should be taken to protect these plants.

**References**

Cannings, S.G., and R. Cannings. 1995. Rare Invertebrates of the South Okanagan. B.C. Minist. Environ., Lands and Parks, Wildl. Branch. 6pp.

Gill, C. 2007. Monarch Species Guide. Developed for Kamloops BC Timber Sales. 4pp.

Guppy, C.S., and J.H. Shepard. 2001. Butterflies of British Columbia. UBC Press in collaboration with Royal B.C. Mus. 414pp.

Layberry, R.S., Peter W. Hall, and J. Donald Lafontaine. 1998. The Butterflies of Canada. University of Toronto Press