

Genus *Tsitana* Evans, 1937 Sylphs

A catalogue of the African Hesperiiidae indicating the classification and nomenclature adopted in the British Museum: 4, 75 (212 pp.).

Type-species: *Cyclopides tsita* Trimen, by original designation.

The genus *Tsitana* belongs to the Family Hesperiiidae Latreille, 1809; Subfamily Hesperinae Latreille, 1809; Tribe Astictopterini Swinhoe, 1912; Subtribe Astictopterina Swinhoe, 1912.

Tsitana (**Sylphs**) is an Afrotropical genus of five species, four of them confined to southern Africa.

Tsitana dicksoni Evans, 1956# Hawequas Sylph

Tsitana dicksoni Evans, 1956. *Annals and Magazine of Natural History* (12) **8**: 882 (881-885).

Tsitana dicksoni Evans, 1955. Dickson & Kroon, 1978.

Tsitana dicksoni Evans, 1955. Pringle *et al.*, 1994: 323.



Tsitana dicksoni. Male. Left – upperside; right – underside.

Du Toit's Kop, Franschhoek, Western Cape Province, South Africa. November 1962. C. Dickson. ABRI-2019-2334.
Images M.C. Williams ex ABRI Collection.



Tsitana dicksoni. Female. Left – upperside; right – underside.

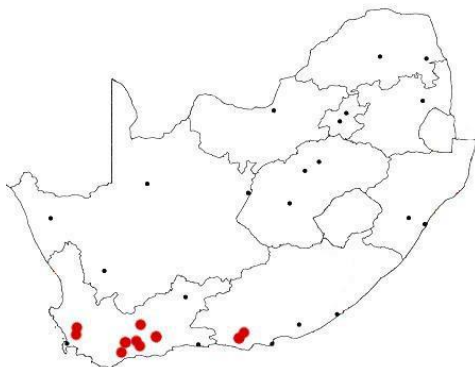
Koringberg, Western Cape Province, South Africa. October 2007. C. Ficq. ABRI-2019-2335.
Images M.C. Williams ex ABRI Collection.

Alternative common name: Ligte Walsertjie (Afrikaans).

Type locality: South Africa: “Fransch Hoek Mts. (north of top of pass), Cape Province”. Holotype

(male) in the Natural History Museum, London.

Diagnosis: Differs from *Tsitana tulbagha* in that on the hindwing underside the ground-colour is more ochreous brown. There are also differences in the genitalia (Pringle *et al.*, 1994).



Distribution: South Africa – Eastern Cape Province, Western Cape Province.

Distribution: South Africa (Eastern Cape Province, Western Cape Province).

Specific localities:

Eastern Cape Province – Baviaanskloof Mountains, near Patensie (Mecenero *et al.*, 2013).

Western Cape Province – Franschhoek Pass (TL; Dickson); Du Toit's Kloof (Dickson); Klein Drakenstein Mountains (Dickson); Garcia's Pass (Pringle *et al.*, 1994); Robinson Pass (Pennington).

Habitat: Grassy spots in montane Fynbos vegetation.

Habits: Dickson's Sylph has a relatively fast, skipping flight pattern (Pringle *et al.*, 1994). Rests regularly on rocks or on the ground but is rarely seen at flowers. Males establish territories near the larval host-plants, often using a shrub as the central point of their territory. They perch on grass stems, or on the ground or a rock.

Flight period: November and December (Pringle *et al.*, 1994).

Early stages: Nothing published.

Larval food:

Pseudopentameris macrantha (Schrad.) Conert (Poaceae) [Murray, 1959; as *Pentameris macrantha*].

Conservation status: Classified as 'Rare (Low Density)' by Mecenero *et al.*, 2013.

Tsitana tsita (Trimen, 1870)#

Dismal Sylph

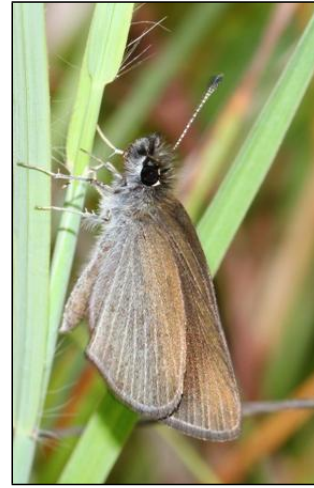
Cyclopides tsita Trimen, 1870. *Transactions of the Entomological Society of London* **1870**: 386 (341-390).

Cyclopides tsita Trimen, 1870. Trimen & Bowker, 1889.

Tsitana tsita Trimen. Swanepoel, 1953a.

Tsitana tsita (Trimen, 1870). Dickson & Kroon, 1978.

Tsitana tsita (Trimen, 1870). Pringle *et al.*, 1994: 322.



Dismal Sylph (*Cyclopides tsita*) male. Images courtesy Raimund Schutte.



Tsitana tsita. Male (Wingspan 34 mm). Left – upperside; right – underside.
Malelane, Kruger National Park, 11 November, 1998. M. Williams.
Images M.C. Williams ex Williams Collection.



Tsitana tsita. Female. Left – upperside; right – underside.
Pretoria, South Africa. January 1980. R.J. Mijburgh. ABRI 2019-2336.
Images M.C. Williams ex ABRI Collection.

Type locality: [Lesotho]: “Koro-Koro”; [South Africa]: “Natal, on the Tongaati and Jutzutze Rivers”. Holotype (male) in the Natural History Museum, London.

Diagnosis: The underside of the hindwing is variable; from pale veining on a brown background to a variable amount of grey scaling, from only a few streaks between the veins, to almost diffuse (Evans, 1937). Specimens from colonies at high altitudes (Golden Gates Highland National Park, in the Free State Province) have more rounded wings (Pringle *et al.*, 1994).

Distribution: Mozambique, Zimbabwe, South Africa (Limpopo Province, Mpumalanga, North West Province, Gauteng, Free State Province, KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape Province), Swaziland (Duke *et al.*, 1999), Lesotho.

Specific localities:

Mozambique – Maputo Special Reserve (Miles & Mulvaney, 2022).

Limpopo Province – Warmbaths (Swanepoel, 1953); Potgietersrus (Swanepoel, 1953); Makapan’s

Cave (Swanepoel, 1953); Ysterberg (Swanepoel, 1953); Polokwane – Witkoppie (Swanepoel, 1953); Chuniespoort (Swanepoel, 1953); Wolkberg – Welcome Mine (Swanepoel, 1953); Wolkberk – Paardevlei (Swanepoel, 1953); The Downs – Lekgalameetse Nature Reserve (Swanepoel, 1953); Doorndraai Dam Nature Reserve (Warren, 1990); Percy Fyfe Nature Reserve (Warren, 1990); Highlands Wilderness (Bode & Bode, unpublished checklist); Soetdoring Farm [-24.561 28.233] (A. Mayer, pers comm. 2015); Bateleur Nature Reserve (Williams & Dobson, unpub., 2015).

Mpumalanga – Malelane, Kruger National Park (Williams; male illustrated above).

North West Province – Rustenburg (Swanepoel, 1953); Kgaswane Mountain Reserve (Williams); Utopia Resort (C. Dobson, 2006).

Gauteng – Pretoria (Swanepoel, 1953); Krugersdorp (Swanepoel, 1953).

Free State Province – Golden Gates Highland National Park (Pringle *et al.*, 1994); Sasolburg (Kroon).

KwaZulu-Natal – Tongaat River (Trimen, 1870); Jutzutze River (Trimen, 1870); Durban (Swanepoel, 1953); Verulam (Swanepoel, 1953); Eshowe (Swanepoel, 1953); Sodwana Bay (S. Henning); Kosi Bay Nature Reserve (Pringle & Kyle, 2002); Tembe Nature Reserve (Pringle & Kyle, 2002).

Eastern Cape Province – King William’s Town (Swanepoel, 1953); Tsomo River (Swanepoel, 1953); Bashee River (Swanepoel, 1953); Grahamstown (Pringle *et al.*, 1994).

Swaziland – Malolotja N. R. (www.sntc.org.sz).

Lesotho – Koro Koro (TL; Trimen, 1870).

Habitat: Grassland, from sea-level to 2 600 metres (Pringle *et al.*, 1994).

Habits: Although widespread it occurs in local colonies of undetermined size. Flies with a slow, skipping flight, just above the level of the grass. Flowers are often visited. Specimens rest on grass blades and stems, and occasionally on the ground. Males do not show definite hilltopping nor do they appear to defend defined territories (Pringle *et al.*, 1994).

Flight period: December to March. Most abundant in January (Pringle *et al.*, 1994).

Early stages: Nothing published.

Larval food:

Stipa dregeana Steud. (Poaceae) [Murray, 1959; Dickson & Kroon, 1978: 191].

monochromus Mabille, 1891 (as sp. of *Steropes*). *Bulletin de la Société Entomologique de Belgique* **35**: 64 (59-88, 106-121, 168-187). [South Africa]: “Transvaal”.

Tsitana uitenhaga Evans, 1937# Uitenhage Sylph

Tsitana tsita uitenhaga Evans, 1937. *A catalogue of the African Hesperiiidae indicating the classification and nomenclature adopted in the British Museum*: 75 (212 pp.).

Tsitana uitenhaga Evans. Swanepoel, 1953a.

Tsitana uitenhaga Evans, 1937. Dickson & Kroon, 1978.

Tsitana uitenhaga Evans, 1937. Pringle *et al.*, 1994.

Tsitana uitenhaga Evans, 1937. Pringle *et al.*, 1994: 322.



Tsitana uitenhaga. Male (Wingspan 33 mm). Left – upperside. Right – underside.
Still Bay, Western Cape Province, South Africa. 15 December 2005. J. Dobson.
Images M.C. Williams ex Dobson Collection.

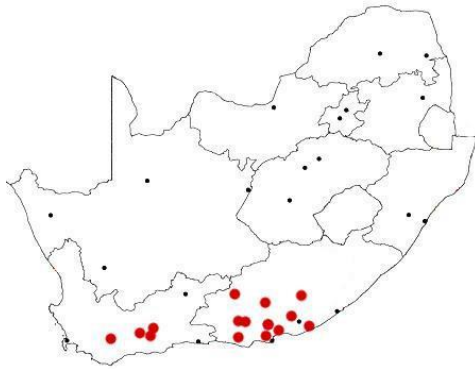


Tsitana uitenhaga. Female (Wingspan 34 mm). Left – upperside. Right – underside.
Still Bay, Western Cape Province, South Africa. 1 January 1986. M. Williams.
Images M.C. Williams ex Dobson Collection.

Alternative common name: Uitenhage Walsertjie (Afrikaans).

Type locality: South Africa: “Uitenhagen, Cape”. Holotype (male) in the Natural History Museum.

Diagnosis: Differs from *Tsitana tsita* in the following respects: wing shape less rounded; ground-colour browner; on hindwing underside a sharply defined white streak along vein 5 and traces of another along vein 1B, and veins paler (Pringle *et al.*, 1994).



Distribution: South Africa –
Eastern Cape Province,
Western Cape Province.

Distribution: South Africa (Eastern Cape Province, Western Cape Province).

Specific localities:

Eastern Cape Province – Uitenhage (TL); Coega (Swanepoel, 1953); Coerney (Swanepoel, 1953); Addo (Swanepoel, 1953); Momasa near Grahamstown (Swanepoel, 1953); Port Alfred (Swanepoel, 1953); Port Elizabeth (Swanepoel, 1953); Bedford (Pringle *et al.*, 1994).

Western Cape Province – Heidelberg (Swanepoel, 1953); Seweweekspoort (Pringle *et al.*, 1994).

Habitat: Grassy places and riverbeds in hot, dry, scrubby areas in the southern Karoo (Pringle *et al.*, 1994). Colonies are localised, occurring in restricted areas.

Habits: Prefers to keep to shady areas under trees, where the host-plants grow. Has a slow to rapid, skipping flight, close to the ground (Pringle *et al.*, 1994). Both sexes feed from flowers. Males establish territories near the larval host-plants, perching on grass stems or on the ground.

Flight period: From the end of September to the middle of December. There are occasional records from January to March. The biggest emergence is in October and November (Pringle *et al.*, 1994).

Early stages:

Clark, in Dickson & Kroon, 1978: 248; plate 22 [as *Tsitana uitenhaga*; Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape].

“*Egg:* Laid singly on a blade of grass; and white at first, changing to very pale salmon; 1.1 mm diameter by 0.8 mm high, with some 48 longitudinal ribs cross-braced by 20 faint staggered ribs, which break up into a netting pattern towards the micropyle. The incubation period is about 20 days. *Larva:* 1st instar 1.25 growing to 2.5 mm in ? days; 2nd instar 2.5 growing to 4 mm in 18 days; 3rd instar 4 growing to 7 mm in 18 to 20 days; 4th instar 7 growing to 11.5 mm in 20 to 23 days; 5th instar 11.5 growing to 13.5 mm in 20 to 23 days; 6th instar 13.5 growing to 19 mm in 19 days; 7th instar 19 growing to 28 mm in 32 days. There are sometimes 6 instars, with shorter periods per instar. The larva draws the edges of a blade of grass together to form a tube, in which it lives, crawling out at intervals to feed on the end of the blade. Moulting and pupation take place within a tube. *Pupa:*

15 mm. Emergence takes place after some 15 to 20 days. There are possibly two broods, depending on the seasonal conditions. Recorded from eggs and larvae from near Port Elizabeth.”

Larval food:

Stipa dregeana Steud. (Poaceae) [Murray, 1959; Dickson & Kroon, 1978: 191].

***Tsitana tulbagha* Evans, 1937#**
Tulbagh Sylph

Tsitana tulbagha Evans, 1937. *A catalogue of the African HesperIIDae indicating the classification and nomenclature adopted in the British Museum*: 76 (212 pp.).

Tsitana tulbagha Evans. Swanepoel, 1953a.

Tsitana tulbagha Evans, 1937. Dickson & Kroon, 1978.

Tsitana tulbagha Evans, 1937. Pringle *et al.*, 1994: 323.



Tsitana tulbagha tulbagha male (Wingspan 35 mm). Left – upperside. Right – underside.
Matsikamma Mountain, Western Cape Province, South Africa. 10 October 2008. M. Williams.
Images M.C. Williams ex Williams Collection.

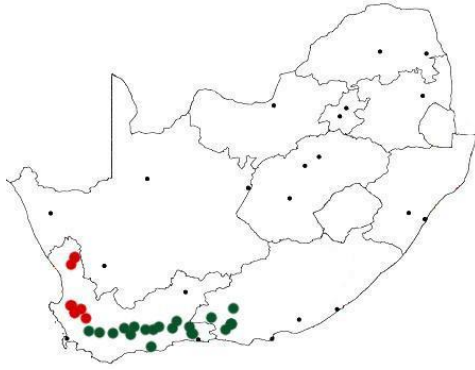


Tsitana tulbagha tulbagha female (Wingspan 40 mm). Left – upperside. Right – underside.
Matsikamma Mountain, Western Cape Province, South Africa. 10 October 2008. M. Williams.
Images M.C. Williams ex Williams Collection.

Alternative common names: Tulbagh Walsertjie (Afrikaans).

Type locality: South Africa: “Piquetberg”. Holotype (male) in the Natural History Museum, London.

Diagnosis: Much larger than either *Tsitana tsita* or *Tsitana uitehaga* (Pringle *et al.*, 1994).



Distribution: South Africa –

Western Cape Province. [ssp. *tulbagha* – red dots]

Eastern Cape Province, Western Cape Province. [ssp. *kaplani* – green dots]

Distribution: South Africa.

Habitat: Grassy, rocky areas in Fynbos (nominate subspecies) and Karoo (subspecies *kaplani*).

Habits: The flight is relatively fast, direct, often sustained and about a metre above the ground (Pringle *et al.*, 1994). They are rarely seen feeding from flowers. Males establish territories near patches of the coarse tussock grass that is the larval host-plant. Usually they perch on the ground or on rocks (Pringle *et al.*, 1994).

Flight period: September to December for both subspecies (Pringle *et al.*, 1994).

Early stages:

Dickson & Kroon, 1978: 192 [as *Tsitana tulbagha kaplani*; locality not noted].

Pringle *et al.*, 1994: 323 [as *Tsitana tulbagha kaplani*; locality not noted].

Larval food:

Danthonia species (*sensu lato*) (Poaceae) [Dickson & Kroon, 1978: 191; for *Tsitana tulbagha tulbagha*].

Merxmuellera species (Poaceae) [Pringle *et al.*, 1994: 323; for *Tsitana tulbagha kaplani*].

Pseudopentameris macrantha (Schrad.) Conert (Poaceae) [Murray, 1959; as sp. of *Pentameris*].

Tsitana tulbagha tulbagha Evans, 1937#

Tulbagh Sylph

Tsitana tulbagha Evans, 1937. *A catalogue of the African HesperIIDae indicating the classification and nomenclature adopted in the British Museum*: 76 (212 pp.).

Tsitana tulbagha Evans. Swanepoel, 1953a.

Tsitana tulbagha tulbagha Evans, 1937. Dickson & Kroon, 1978.

Tsitana tulbagha tulbagha Evans, 1937. Pringle *et al.*, 1994: 323.



Tsitana tulbagha tulbagha male (Wingspan 35 mm). Left – upperside. Right – underside. Matsikamma Mountain, Western Cape Province, South Africa. 10 October 2008. M. Williams. Images M.C. Williams ex Williams Collection.



Tsitana tulbagha tulbagha female (Wingspan 40 mm). Left – upperside. Right – underside.
Matsikamma Mountain, Western Cape Province, South Africa. 10 October 2008. M. Williams.
Images M.C. Williams ex Williams Collection.

Alternative common names: Westerlike Tulbagh Walsertjie (Afrikaans).

Type locality: South Africa: “Piquetberg”. Holotype (male) in the Natural History Museum, London.

Distribution: South Africa (Western Cape Province).

Specific localities:

Western Cape Province – Piketberg – Berg River bridge (TL); Voëlvlei in the Tulbagh district (Trimen); south-east of the town of Piketberg (Pringle *et al.*, 1994); Vanrhynsdorp district (Pringle *et al.*, 1994); Matsikamma Mountain (Williams, 2008; unpub.); Malmesbury (Mecenero *et al.*, 2013).

Tsitana tulbagha kaplani Dickson, 1976#
Eastern Tulbagh Sylph

Tsitana tulbagha kaplani Dickson, 1976. *Entomologist's Record and Journal of Variation* **88**: 312 (273-280, 307-314).

Tsitana tulbagha kaplani Dickson, 1976. Dickson & Kroon, 1978.

Tsitana tulbagha kaplani Dickson, 1976. Pringle *et al.*, 1994: 323.



Tsitana tulbagha kaplani. Male (Wingspan 36 mm). Left – upperside. Right – underside.
Baviaanskloof Mountains, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. 15 December 2009. J. Dobson.
Images M.C. Williams ex Dobson Collection.



Tsitana tulbagha kaplani. Female (Wingspan 41 mm). Left – upperside. Right – underside.
Paardeberg, Western Cape Province, South Africa. 13 December 2007. J. Dobson.
Images M.C. Williams ex Dobson Collection.

Alternative common names: Oostelike Tulbagh Walsertjie (Afrikaans).

Type locality: South Africa: “Western Cape Province, Seven Weeks Poort”. Holotype (male) in the Natural History Museum, London.

Diagnosis: Distinguished from the nominate subspecies by the following characteristics: of greater average size; upperside darker; hindwing underside ground-colour dark brown (fawn in the nominate subspecies) (Pringle *et al.*, 1994).

Distribution: South Africa (Eastern Cape Province, Western Cape Province).

Specific localities:

Eastern Cape Province – Cockscomb Mountains (Pringle *et al.*, 1994); Jansenville (Mecenero *et al.*, 2013).

Western Cape Province – Seweweekspoort (TL; Kaplan); Ceres Karoo (Pringle *et al.*, 1994); Worcester district (Pringle *et al.*, 1994); Swartberg (Pringle *et al.*, 1994); Outeniqua Mountains (Pringle *et al.*, 1994); Tsitsikamma Mountains (Pringle *et al.*, 1994); Karoopoort (Pringle *et al.*, 1994); Keeromsberg above the Hex River Valley (Pringle *et al.*, 1994); Karbonaatjes Kraal in the western Karoo (Pringle *et al.*, 1994); the hills near Brandvlei (Pringle *et al.*, 1994); Roodeberg in the Robertson Karoo (Pringle *et al.*, 1994); Montagu (Pringle *et al.*, 1994); Swellendam (Pringle *et al.*, 1994).

Tsitana wallacei (Neave, 1910)

Wallace's Sylph

Cycloptides wallacei Neave, 1910. *Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London* **1910**: 76 (2-86).

Tsitana wallacei (Neave, 1910). Evans, 1937.



Tsitana wallacei. Male. Left – upperside; right – underside.

Nansai Farm, Choma, Zambia. 31 January 1994.

Images M.C. Williams ex Gardiner Collection.



Tsitana wallacei. Female. Left – upperside; right – underside.

Kyankwale, Katanga, Democratic Republic of Congo. January 2004. T. Bouyer. ABRI-2019-2337.

Images M.C. Williams ex ABRI Collection.

Type locality: [Zambia]: “Kansanshi, N.W. Rhodesia”.

Distribution: Democratic Republic of Congo (Shaba), Tanzania (south-west), Zambia (north).

Specific localities:

Tanzania – Sibweza in Mpanda (Kielland, 1990d); Mihumu in Kigoma (Kielland, 1990d); Busi Forest, Ufipa (Kielland, 1990d); Karungu River (Kielland, 1990d); Katavi National Park (Fitzherbert *et al.*, 2006).

Zambia – Kanshanshi (TL); Mwinilunga (Heath *et al.*, 2002); Mbala (Heath *et al.*, 2002); Mswebe (Heath *et al.*, 2002); Kitwe (Heath *et al.*, 2002); Ndola (Heath *et al.*, 2002); Miengwe (Heath *et al.*, 2002); Kafue Gorge (Luanshya) (Heath *et al.*, 2002); Nkala Loop (Kafue N.P.) (Heath *et al.*, 2002); Chisamba (Heath *et al.*, 2002); Lusaka (Heath *et al.*, 2002); Choma (Heath *et al.*, 2002); Abercorn (Badham, unpublished); Nansai Farm, Choma (Gardiner).

Habitat: Woodland savanna (Kielland, 1990d). In Tanzania at altitudes from 1 000 to 2 000 m (Kielland, 1990d).

Habits: Males are known to mud-puddle (Kielland, 1990d).

Flight period: January to March (Heath *et al.*, 2002).

Early stages: Nothing published.

Larval food: Nothing published.