

Newsletter of the Lepidopterists' Society of Southern Africa

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Tidbits

M.C. Williams

A number of members have enquired about an updated membership list. I have at last managed to get all this information filed in a word processor and everyone should have received a copy of the new membership list during March. The ease with which this list can be updated in the future is probably worth the long delay in getting it out.

The following people have become members since September 1985 and we extend to them a warm welcome and hope that their association with the Society will be a long and fruitful one:

Derek Beetge - Springs, Transvaal.
Gerald Beetge - Springs, Transvaal.
Pierre Beetge - Alberton, Transvaal.
Herman Bonnet - Vanderbijl Park, Transvaal.
J.A. Coetzee - Pretoria North, Transvaal.
Jan Knockaert - Randburg, Transvaal.
R.J. Naidoo - Merebank, Natal.
Don Quinn - Empangeni, Natal.
Peter Rae - Bethlehem, Free State.
Neil Saffer - Germiston, Transvaal.
Peter Sharland - Johannesburg, Transvaal.
William Steele - Edenvale, Transvaal.
Francois Swanepoel - Ladybrand, Free State.
Louis van Zyl - Pretoria, Transvaal.
Dirk Verploegh - Pretoria, Transvaal.
Ryan Warren - Pretoria, Transvaal.
Patrick Whittle - Roma, Lesotho.
John Wilkinson - Gaborone, Botswana.
J. Yano - Johannesburg, Transvaal.
Richard Warren - Pretoria, Transvaal.

Details and particulars regarding the above new members are included in the new membership list except for Patrick Whittle whose address is: Dept. of Science Education, National University of Lesotho, P. O. Roma 180, Lesotho.

In my first Editorial in *Metamorphosis* 1 (1) in August 1983 I wrote that: "Its (i.e. *Metamorphosis*) success or otherwise will of course depend on how involved each of us becomes - without an active exchange of knowledge and views within its pages atrophy and eventual demise is inevitable." This edition has been delayed largely because only recently have I received a few more contributions from members - come on all of you who have been contemplating writing something for *Metamorphosis* - get those pens onto paper TODAY!

Reprints of *Metamorphosis* – Members who would like back numbers of any issues can write to the Secretary, enclosing R1.00 for each copy requested.

Fading in specimens – Most of us know that the colours of certain butterflies gradually fade in the cabinet even if they are kept in the dark e.g. *Acraea* spp. and *Nepheronia thalassina*. Do any members know of methods to prevent this happening without embedding the insect in e.g. plastic resin?

Corrections to page 4 of *Metamorphosis* 1 (5) – Dr L. Vári of the Transvaal Museum has kindly pointed out that there are numerous errors in the entries under the heading “New southern African Butterflies”. This page has thus been retyped and can be pasted over the old page. My thanks to Dr Vári for his careful corrections to these notes.

Pempel's Solution – There are a number of liquid preservatives of varying formulation in which biological material can be stored indefinitely. Pempel's solution is very suitable for the early stages of Lepidoptera (eggs, larvae, pupae as well as parasites) and is made up as follows:

30 parts distilled water
4 parts glacial acetic acid
6 parts 40% formalin
15 parts 95% alcohol

Note that this solution does not prevent the fading of colours, especially green.

Annotated check-list of butterflies for the Bedford District, Eastern Cape Province

Ernest Pringle, Huntly Glen, Bedford 5780

For those who do not know, it may be worth mentioning that the Bedford District is a magisterial District encompassing the town of Bedford as well as the railway sidings of Witmos, Cookhouse, Middleton and Sheldon. To the north are the mountains of the Winterberg range, some of which overlook the town itself. The south-facing aspects of those mountains which overlook the town have a high moisture content and so contain a great deal of indigenous montane forest. Further to the north the mountains become drier and the forest gives way to soft mountain grassland which comprises mainly *Themeda* grasses. The valleys of this mountainous area are, however, much drier than the higher peaks and the *Themeda* grasses quickly give way to 'mixed' savanna country containing *Acacia karroo* and *Merxmuellera* grasses. Ultimately, in the very lowest areas, the vegetation becomes karroid. 'Huntly Glen' is situated in these mountains.

To the south and east of the town are flat savanna grasslands consisting of *Themeda* grasses and *A. karroo*. To the west of Bedford the flat country becomes much drier, being particularly arid in the vicinity of the Fish River where the vegetation is fairly typical of the Karroo.

* - Indicates species which are permanently resident on our farm 'Huntly Glen'.

NYMPHALIDAE

Charaxes jahlusa jahlusa – widespread and common; found breeding locally on *Pappea capensis*.

Charaxes varanes varanes – plentiful in the forests near the town of Bedford. Occasional stray specimens seen on 'Huntly Glen'.

Charaxes xiphares thyestes – plentiful in the forests near the town. Occasional strays on 'Huntly Glen'. Breeds locally on *Scutia* sp.

Precis archesia – uncommon. Occasional stray specimens recorded on 'Huntly Glen'.

*Precis octavia** - found on high ridges in mountain grassland. Form *sesamus* has never been recorded from our area.

*Junonia hierta cebrene** - widespread and common in low-lying areas.

Junonia oenone – very rare in the area. One stray specimen recorded on 'Huntly Glen'.

*Catacroptera cloanthe** - rare. Only single specimens have been encountered, on the higher ground in the area.

Phalanta phalantha aethiopica – a solitary specimen recorded on 'Huntly Glen' in 1966. Possibly a migrant?

Hypolimnas misippus – normally not found in the area. However, they migrated across 'Huntly Glen' in vast numbers in March 1971.

Antanartia hippomene – uncommon but can be found in the forested areas near Bedford.

Byblia ilithyia – found uncommonly in the forested areas. A stray specimen was seen on 'Huntly Glen'.

Cynthia cardui – widespread and common. Breeds locally on two different species of thistle (*Carduus* sp.).

PIERIDAE

Belenois zochalia – normally found in forested areas – occasional strays are seen on 'Huntly Glen'.

*Belenois gidica** - common. Found breeding locally on *Capparis citrifolia*.

*Belenois aurota** - very common. Found breeding on *Boscia albitrunca* (Witgatboom).

*Belenois creona**

*Catopsilia florella**

*Pinacopteryx eriphia** - also widespread and common. Breeds on *Boscia albitrunca*.

*Pontia helice** - another common species, found breeding on *Heliophila linearis* and *Lepidium capensis*.

*Dixeia charina charina** - widespread in the area and usually common in wooded areas. Found breeding locally on *Capparis citrifolia*.

*Nepheronia buquetii** - widespread in the area.

Mylothris trimenia - found only in the forests near the town.

*Mylothris chloris agathina** - widespread. Found breeding on *Loranthus kraussiana* and *L. elegans*.

*Eurema brigitta** - rare on 'Huntly Glen' but commoner near the town of Bedford.

*Colotis eucharis auxo** - very rare in the area. Specimens seen in the past may have been migrants.

Colotis antevippe gavisa - recorded only from near the town.

*Colotis euipe omphale** - reasonably common in the area.

*Colotis eris johnstoni** - very common. Found breeding locally on *B. albitrunca*.

Colotis agoye bowkeri - only 2 specimens ever encountered (in 1966 and 1969). Possibly part of a larger migration from the N.W. Cape.

*Colias electo electo** - very common. Found breeding on lucerne.

PAPILIONIDAE

*Papilio demodocus** - widespread and common. Found breeding locally on *Calodendrum capense*, *Ptaeroxylon obliquum* and *Citrus* sp.

*Papilo nireus lyaeus** - widespread and common. Breeding on *C. capense* and *Citrus* sp.

Papilio dardanus cenea - generally found only in the forested areas. Occasional strays seen crossing 'Huntly Glen'.

Papilio ophidicephalus phalusco - found only in the forests near Bedford.

HESPERIIDAE

*Tsitana uitenhaga** - common on 'Huntly Glen' and surrounding farms. Associated with *Stipa dregeana*.

*Metisella metis** - common in savanna areas.

*Metisella malgacha** - less common than the above species but found frequenting the same habitats.

Kedestes macomo - very rare. Associated with wooded areas nearer the town.

*Kedestes barberae barberae** - found uncommonly in the high mountain grasslands.

*Spialia asterodia** - also associated with high mountain grasslands. Usually encountered singly.

*Spialia agylla** - found uncommonly in arid areas.

*Spialia diomus** - widespread but uncommon.

*Spialia nanus** - found in low-lying karroid country. Common in certain localities.

*Gegenes niso** - widespread and common in high mountain grass country.

*Gomalia elma** - uncommon in arid, low-lying areas.

*Eretis djaelaelae** - also uncommon and found in the wetter montane grass country.

ACRAEIDAE

*Acraea horta** - very common. Breeds on *Kiggelaria africana*.

*Acraea terpsichore neobule** - only occasional specimens are found. It is uncertain whether the species is a permanent resident of the area or not.

SATYRIDAE

*Pseudonympha trimeni ruthae** - very common in September. Breeds on *Merxmuellera* sp.

*Pseudonympha magoides** - reasonably common in montane *Themeda* veld.

*Pseudonympha paludis** - found only on the highest slopes in the area, where it is localised.

*Stygionympha vigilans** - rare in the area. So far found only on the north-facing slopes of highest peaks.

*Stygionympha irrorata** - very localised but reasonably common at times in savanna sweetveld.

*Stygionympha wichgrafi** - also very localised but found commonly in a limited area on 'Huntly Glen' in a valley comprised of savanna sweetveld vegetation.

*Melanitis leda africana** - this remains an enigma. A single specimen was taken twenty years ago at dusk in the vicinity of the main homestead at 'Huntly Glen'. Ten years later a second specimen was flushed during daylight hours in thick riverine bush overlooking the homestead. No other specimens have been recorded.

*Aeropetes tulbaghia** - common on high ground in the area where it seems to favour the more sour south-facing slopes. Occasional pupae are found by accident under stones, when these are overturned.

*Dira clytus eurina** - common in low-lying areas in February and early March.

*Tornesis magna** - common in February and March. Breeds on *Merxmuellera* sp. (Graminae).

*Dingana bowkeri clarki** - found on the higher slopes in December and January. It definitely favours the more sour south-facing aspects.

*Cassionympha cassius** - common in wooded country in the wetter areas of the district.

*Neita durbani** - a localised species so far recorded from 3 localities in the district. *Themeda* grass is common to all these localities.

Paralethe dendrophilus dendrophilus - found only in the forests near the town.

LYCAENIDAE

*Poecilmitis chrysaor** - widespread in low-lying areas.

Poecilmitis beulah - very localised and rare. So far found in only 2 localities in arid terrain overlooking the Fish River.

*Poecilmitis braueri** - found in reasonable numbers in three localities at high altitudes in the Baviaans River mountains.

*Lycaena clarki** - widespread in low-lying karroid areas.

*Aloeides aranda** - widespread but uncommon. Usually encountered singly in high mountain grassland.

*Aloeides pierus** - widespread in low-lying arid areas.

*Aloeides trimeni** - very localised but common in 2 restricted colonies on 'Huntly Glen'.

Aloeides damarensis damarensis - reasonably common on flat, arid ground not far from the town.

*Aloeides depicta** - common in karroid country.

*Aloeides macmasteri** - localised but common in both mountain grassveld and arid karroo country.

*Aloeides pringlei** - thus far known only from one area on the highest peak on 'Huntly Glen'.

Aloeides gowani - localised and rare. Known only from one area near Sheldon.

Tylopaedia sardonix - so far recorded only on arid ground overlooking the Fish River.

*Trimenia argyroplaga** - very common in low-lying areas.

*Phasis braueri** - frequents wooded areas where its foodplant (*Rhus* sp.) grows.

*Iolaus mimosae** - widespread and common. Found breeding on *Loranthus elegans*.

*Iolaus silas** - widespread but generally uncommon. Breeds on *L. elegans* and *L. dregei*.

Iolaus aphnaeoides - localised and rare. Known from only one spot in the Bedford district. It breeds on *Loranthus kraussianus*.

Iolaus sidus - localised but more common than the above species. Also breeds on *L. kraussianus*.

*Lepidochrysops asteris** - widespread but uncommon on low peaks in the area.

*Lepidochrysops ortygia** - localised but common in low-lying karroid areas. Appears to breed on *Walafrida geniculata*.

Lepidochrysops patricia - common in arid areas.

*Lepidochrysops southeyae** - localised but found commonly in three spots in the district prior to 1976. Since this date it has mysteriously vanished. It was also associated with *W. geniculata*.

*Lepidochrysops ketsi** - known from 3 separate spots in valley floors on 'Huntly Glen'.

*Lepidochrysops variabilis** - widespread on peaks in the area.

*Lepidochrysops victori** - described in 1984. Found only on slopes of montane grasslands. Thus far it is known only from four colonies on 'Huntly Glen' and two neighbouring farms. Appears to breed on *Selago* sp.

*Lepidochrysops grahami** - known only from two areas on high grassy slopes. An uncommon species which breeds on *Becium* sp.

Thestor protumnus aridus - known only from one arid spot overlooking the Fish River.

*Azanus ubaldus**, *Azanus jesous** and *Azanus moriqua** - widespread wherever *Acacia karroo* grows in the area.

*Eicochrysops mesappus** - widespread and common.

*Lampides boeticus** - widespread and common.

*Leptomyrina lara** - common in drier areas where its foodplant (*Cotyledon* sp.) grows.

*Cacyreus palemon** and *Cacyreus marshalli** - common in high mountain grassland where their foodplant (*Salvia* sp.) grows.

*Cacyreus lingeus** - much rarer than the above two species.

*Durbania amakosa penningtoni** - this is not true *penningtoni* being in appearance transitional between *penningtoni* and *amakosa*. It is widespread but rare and has been found breeding on rock lichen.

*Crudaria capensis** - a rare and local species so far known only from one locality in an arid area adjacent to the Fish River.

*Crudaria leroma** - widespread and common wherever its foodplant (*Acacia karroo*) grows. Also found flying together with *C. capensis*.

*Myrina ficedula** - specimens found on 'Huntly Glen' are presumed to be strays from the wetter wooded areas around the town of Bedford.

*Zizeeria knysna** - widespread and common.

*Cupidopsis cissus** - widespread in high mountain grassland.

Cupidopsis jobates - a rare species in the area. Only one male has so far been recorded.

*Tarucus thespis** - also a rare species in the area; only single specimens have been sighted.

*Deudorix antalus** - uncommon in the district. Single specimens have been collected whilst flying around *Acacia karroo* trees.

*Stugeta bowkeri bowkeri** - originally this species was recorded only from the vicinity of Bedford town. In recent years, however, its foodplant (*Viscum rotundifolia*) has spread dramatically with the result that the species now seems to be established in most low-lying areas of the district.

*Oraidium barberae** and *Brephidium metophis** - very localised but widespread and reasonably common.

*Anthene amaral** and *Anthene definita** - common wherever their foodplant (*Acacia karroo*) occurs.

*Anthene talboti** - a rare species, only twice known to be reasonably common.

*Syntarucus pirithous** - widespread and common.

Axiocerses bambana - common at times in wooded terrain near the town.

*Harpencyreus tsomo** - common but restricted to wet, high mountain grassland.

*Actizera lucida** - widespread in the district.

*Actizera stellata** - a mystery species, recorded in vast numbers on 'Huntly Glen' in 1976 and 1977 flying about patches of its foodplant (*Trifolium africanum*). Soon after the species mysteriously vanished from the area.

DANAIDAE

*Danaus chrysippus** - a common species found breeding locally on *Asclepias physocarpa*