

AUTUMN EDITION:
MARCH / APRIL
2018 - 2

THE
LEPIDOPTERISTS'
SOCIETY OF AFRICA

AFRICAN BUTTERFLY NEWS



LATEST NEWS

Welcome to the Autumn edition of African Butterfly News!

Despite recent rains over large parts of the country, the drought continues to have a devastating impact on South African butterflies and very few significant records have been reported over the last two months.

Several members of the Society have been busy, however, and there are some interesting articles and field-reports.

Corrections

Thierry Bouyer picked up a couple of errors of mine in the last newsletter.

In the pictures illustrating "Uganda (Rogers Muhwezi)" *Euptera elabontas* is in fact a female *Euryphura* (*chalcis* group). The *Charaxes* are probably *Charaxes varanes* rather than *C. fulvescens*. The *Nepheronia* looks more like *N. thalassina* than *N. argia*.

The photo by Raimund Schutte of a Rainforest *Acraea* (*Acraea boopis boopis*), has the correct English name but the wrong scientific name (it's captioned *Acraea satis*).

Butterfly Evening

The first Butterfly Evening of 2018 was held at Ruimsig Country Club, Roodepoort on 11 January. Hermann Staude continued his "meet the family" program, introducing LSA (LepSoc Africa) members to the amazing diversity within the world of butterflies.

January's session focused on the Noctuidae, one of the largest families of Lepidoptera.



One fine day out with the boys (Hermann Staude)

Steve Collins was staying on my farm in Magaliesburg during the time that we were in Hoekwil. We came back early, so, I am not exactly sure whether I was visiting him or he me, but anyway he got a call from Jeremy Dobson inviting him to join Mark Williams and himself for a trip to Bateleur Nature Reserve and I decided to tag along.

It promised to be a fine day out with the boys, something I had not managed to do for some time and I was really looking forward to it. I had not been to Bateleur NR before but of course had heard so much about the place and had seen the management reports on this locality for the threatened Waterberg Copper (*Eriksonia edgei*). They had not seen any adults for some time and hoped to have a first sight of it for the season.



From left to right: Steve Collins, Jeremy Dobson and Mark Williams

Mark took us straight to the spot where he and Tildie had seen it first, when they rediscovered the species, and within a few minutes he spotted a fresh female (see report in the previous issue of Butterfly News).

Much was the excitement about this find and they were furiously photographing these butterflies when my mind was starting to wander off the subject because I spotted an *Erica* plant nearby and looking closer another one and another one. I soon realized that the place was strewn with *Erica*. I got very excited about this and tried to recall if anybody mentioned *Erica* in the management reports and vegetation studies. How could I have missed this.

Why get excited about the presence of *Erica*? Because ericas are one of the genera of fynbos plants that seem to have become 'life boats' for their insect herbivores when the great ship of fynbos that must have stretched from the Cape to Ethiopia broke up due to climate change sometime in the past. These plants have managed to survive in mountain refugia all along the east side of Africa on suitable mountains, where the climatic conditions required for their survival remained intact. This vicariance due to climate change (see my thoughts on 'climatic vicariance' in *Metamorphosis* Volume 22, Issue 1: 25 – 29) seems to have been the driver for the speciation of a number of Lepidoptera, including some Geometridae species that depend on *Erica* as a food source.



My first thought was that I might find some *Haplolabida* (Geometridae: Larentiinae) caterpillars on these plants because I had previously collected a species of *Haplolabida* in the Waterberg at Kranskop, not too far away. *Haplolabida* species use *Erica* species as host-plants (see *Metamorphosis* Volume 27 Supplement, 2016, Master Lists: 79 – 84). The genus consists of one very common species (*Haplolabida inaequata*) restricted to the extant fynbos biome in the Western Cape and slightly further north and then a sprinkling of described and undescribed species found along the east side of Africa on mountains wherever *Erica* survives. DNA barcoding indicates that the populations on the Blouberg, Waterberg and Magaliesberg have possibly speciated already.

With this in mind, I eagerly went about looking for *Haplolabida* caterpillars but did not find any. Instead I found plenty of long slender caterpillars that reminded me of those of *Argyrophora variabilis*, a geometrid species common around my house feeding on *Athrixia elata* (Asteraceae). But these were different, with a distinctive, broad, dark brown dorsal shading and in any case *Erica* is not in the Asteraceae.



Then I remembered that Neville Duke had many years ago reared *Argyrophora trofonia* on *Erica* from the Drakensberg. Could this be an *Argyrophora* species in the *A. trofonia* group? Species in the *A. trofonia* group had never been recorded from the Waterberg before, but it seemed like a strong possibility, so I set out looking for adults amongst the plants and it was not long before I saw the first one. I did not have a net with me and the others were by now out of sight, so I had to make do with catching them with the plastic bags at my disposal. It took a while and I was glad



that no one observed my not so elegant antics, but in the end I managed six specimens. These were indeed in the *A. trofonia* group but certainly not *A. trofonia*. Martin Krüger named the previously undescribed species in the *A. trofonia* group from the eastern Highlands of Zimbabwe, the Nyika in Malawi and Mfundu, Tanzania, but not those occurring in the old Transvaal. DNA barcodes from specimens I collected at Finsbury while visiting Bill Steele are in a unique BIN, indicating a distinct species. Could these new ones from Bateleur NR be yet another undescribed species? The investigation continues. [what is the illustrated species, left?]

The caterpillars that I took home reared through to adults without any problems and I now have a further seven specimens, one of which will be barcoded soon. I was lucky also that at least one of the caterpillars was parasitized and there is now one parasitoid pupa waiting for the adult to eclose. It is very possible that in one day we became aware of the existence of an unknown geometrid species, have learnt what the caterpillars look like, what the host-plant is, and something about the parasitoids that prey on them – three trophic levels in one day. Indeed, one fine day out with the boys.

Hermann Staude

Updated LepSoc Africa Website

The Website of the Lepidopterists' Society of Africa (<http://lepsocafrika.org/>) has been updated to include an online shopping-cart.

From the Home page, select the **Publications** tab at the top of the page.

Select **Shop** near the top-right of this page.

Select what you wish to purchase from the numerous books and back-issues of *Metamorphosis* contained on this page.

Select the **Cart and Checkout** tab at the top of the page.

Once you are happy press **Go to Checkout**, select the delivery method that you require and **Place Order!**

Thanks to Dave and Hanna for helping to set this up; it looks easy to use and a really useful and long overdue addition to the benefits available to LepSoc Africa members.

In Praise of Butterfly Nets (Etienne Terblanche)

Etienne forwarded me a really well written and considered article by Robert Michael Pyle "*In Praise of Butterfly Nets*", published by Oxford University Press.

The piece discusses the benefits (and ethical considerations) of collecting butterflies – including within countries where butterflies have been historically well researched. It concludes that there are overwhelming scientific benefits in collecting and touches on the dangers of Nature Deficit Disorder which is resulting from over-regulation of our hobby.

The article is subject to copyright, so I won't reproduce it here, but if you want more information, please contact Etienne at Etienne.Terblanche@nwu.ac.za

Dobson's Uncertainty Principle (Jeremy Dobson)

I noted in the 2nd edition of ABN that Microsoft Word documents, laden with photographs, were as unstable and unpredictable as subatomic particles in the world of quantum mechanics.

Eight newsletters later, I have to admit that I was wrong: the behaviour of Word documents is far less intuitive or comprehensible than that contained in the science governing photons, gravitons and quarks.

It has led me to develop a new scientific thesis, which I hope may be of benefit to readers and MS Word users. My hypothesis has parallels with *Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle*, which broadly states that the more accurately the position of a subatomic particle can be measured in space, the less accurately its momentum can be determined.

Dobson's Uncertainty Principle (DUP) relates exclusively to MS Word documents, or more accurately, photographs and text-boxes contained therein. It includes some of the principles contained in Heisenberg's theory, but much less of the certainty.

In common with Isaac Newton's great *Principia*, I have derived three laws which broadly define the theory:

1. Similar sets of key-strokes, performed on identical MS Word documents, will produce the same result, except when they don't.
2. The reverse process (going backwards in time, using the fabulous "Undo" button), will restore an MS Word document to its former state, except when it doesn't.
3. The likelihood of a predictable outcome in either of the previous situations is not random, but is influenced by a property known as SPITE.

Definitions

- SPITE (Spatial Picture Influencing Text Entropy) is a malevolent Word property. In practice, this means that the chances of an unpredictable event are far more likely in instances when the user is irritable or facing an impending deadline. Due to the inviolability of Dobson's 3rd Law, it is not possible to intentionally demonstrate instances of SPITE when another observer is present.
- W4-D (Word Fourth-Dimension). In common with particles in quantum physics, MS Word objects (photographs or text boxes) can be in two places at once. One location where they often exist is W4-D, a parallel universe, where the object can hide for an indeterminable period.
- ENTANGLEMENT. In a further parallel with Quantum Mechanics, Word objects can react with one another, but not in a predictable way. Repositioning a text-box for example, can result in a seemingly unrelated picture moving, or even disappearing into W4-D.

Much of the science outlined above may be difficult to grasp, so I've prepared a worked example, as follows:

STEP 1



Orange Butterfly

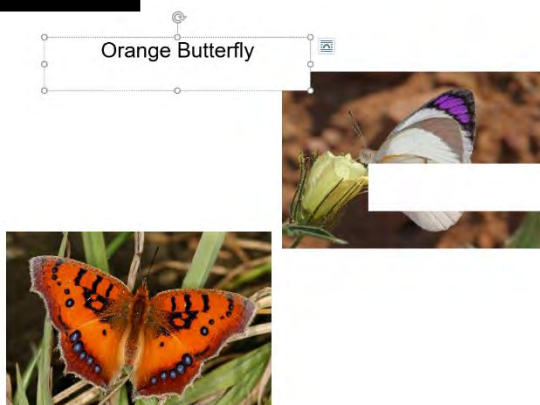
White Butterfly

Let's start with two photos, with captions "Orange Butterfly" and "White Butterfly".

Not bad, but the photo "Orange Butterfly" needs to move down a bit. Let's select the photo and shift it slightly...



STEP 2



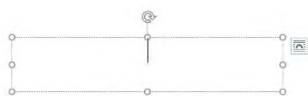
WTF!?! It looks like there's been an explosion – this is a moderately severe instance of ENTANGLEMENT. Thank goodness for the "Undo" button...



STEP 4



White Butterfly



Found it!

Fiddling with the object will often restore the text, although obviously not in a predictable way. Very slowly and carefully, let's move the text box up a bit...



STEP 3



White Butterfly

Phew, that's better, although the text-box for "Orange Butterfly" seems to have disappeared. (In reality, the box has not disappeared, but is flickering between W4-D and normal space-time. It can sometimes be located by clicking the mouse over the page; this is a bit like the old school game of battleships, but played in the dark and without the benefit of a grid).



STEP 5



Orange Butterfly

White Butterfly

OK - Perfect!

I am busy with refinements to my theory, which will be called the Full Expanded Dobson's Uncertainty Principle, or FEDUP.

This is the first of a series of scientific articles. The next feature will be titled "The Big G – the omnipotent Google lady".

To be fair to Microsoft (and in case Bill Gates is reading this), having a hard-drive bulging with butterfly photographs is probably part of my problem. The MS Office suite of programs are magnificent tools and a vital part of modern life.

Of course if Bill Gates isn't reading, I have to say that I'm beginning to regard MS Word with the kind of irrational fear and loathing normally reserved for snakes and spiders...

Western Cape Roundup (Andrew Morton)

Andrew has forwarded a report covering recent activities in the Western Cape:

Kedestes Conservation Committee

In September some KCC members set about counting *Kedestes barbarae bunta* eggs. It started slowly as we followed females around and only a handful of eggs were counted in a day. It was decided that we would also count other eggs we could see that were of the same description. We counted over 70 eggs. After the eggs hatched, larvae were monitored to make sure they were the correct species and to see how they were developing. The drought dealt a very unfortunate blow to the species. The larval foodplant started to die...



An example of dead river grass

Here are some notes from Louise Baldwin, who is managing the project:

"Beginning of Oct - Larvae present - 48 (not identified as *bunta* or *thrax* at this stage) - Eggs not yet hatched - 25

End Oct - Larvae present - 62 (again not identified) - Eggs not yet hatched - 13

Nov - Larvae present - 34 - 29 of these were identified as *bunta* - Eggs not hatched (not likely to hatch now) - 8

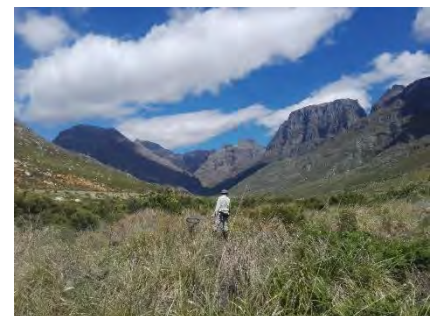
December - Larvae present – 7, 6 of which are *bunta*

Unfortunately as of the end of December only 6 larvae could be found. I carried out a thorough search of an area 0.5m around each marker to take into account their movement. Large sections of the grass has died, so much so, that there are no viable patches close enough for the larvae to move to. I'm assuming this has an impact on the amount of deaths. I found lots of large empty shelters and moulted head capsules so they had been there and were growing."

Louise has been getting a lot of advice from the Minnesota Zoo. They have a conservation project on The Dakota Skipper. Read more here; <http://mnzoo.org/blog/animals/dakota-skipper/>. They may be able to come over to Cape Town to assist and may be able to help with finding [what?]. The good news is that Louise is being funded by The Brenton Blue Trust and The Mohamed bin Sayed species conservation fund (<https://www.speciesconservation.org/>).

Searching for *Kedestes niveostriga schloszi*

In November 2016 I found a single specimen of *K. n. schloszi* along the Molenaars river. It was in an area that was quite transformed by human activities and there was not a lot of foodplant. Further downstream I identified really good habitat with plenty of foodplant and set about tracking down the owner. He was a conservationist and was keen for us to survey on his property. Harald Selb and I managed to visit at the beginning of December and we walked the area flat and, despite it looking perfect, we came up short.



Harald Selb at Molenaars River

We returned later in December and once again found nothing. I visited Bastiaanskloof three times during Nov/Dec and only found it flying on one of these days in an area which was previously under a thicket of Black Wattle. On the very same day it was not found at any of the other localities around Bastiaanskloof. One could conclude that the species can recover well in areas that have been cleared of aliens, but I am not sure why it was not found anywhere else. I will endeavor to have a good look again next season.

Slanghoek Valley

There was a large fire that went through Slanghoek Valley last January. The veld is looking good. A few *Aloeides carolynae* and *Trimenia argyrolaga* were seen.



Slanghoek Valley

Du Toits Kloof

Some *Thestor homesi*, *Aloeides palida grandis* and *Aeropetes tulbaghia*, *Chrysoritis irene*, *Chrysoritis chrysaor* samples were obtained for BED at Du Toits Kloof.

Die Galg

Chrysoritis endymion were obtained for the BED project. Veld in good condition 3 years after a big fire.



Collecting for the BED Project in Dido Valley

KZN LepSoc Africa Feb 2018 (Steve Woodhall)

The first event was a visit by Haydon and Caroline Warren Gash in January. I had fond memories of crashing around Cote D'Ivoire in the early noughties with Haydon, and when he told me they were coming down here for a family wedding, and were thinking of spending some time in KZN, I immediately asked them to come and stay with us.

Jayne to begin with was horrified... 'how can you invite an ex-Ambassador to stay... our house looks like The Durrells'... what will they think!' But she enjoyed their visit and got on very well with Caroline. Haydon fell in love with our Labrador Rosie, who is an unfaithful bitch (I can say that without being rude) and deserted me forthwith.

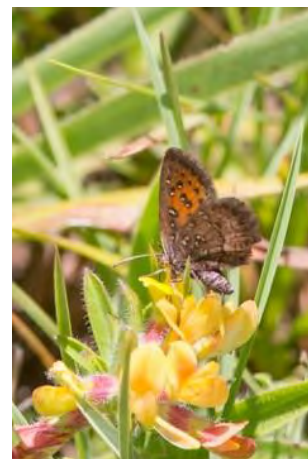
Haydon had said he was keen to get some SA endemics and relatives of species found further north. We only had three days to play with, so the first day (Friday 5 Jan) was spent locally. We started off with the old standby, Kirk Falls near Delville Wood station at Shongweni. The place was very green and some kind person had graded the dirt road to the falls. I had hoped for lots of Coast Purple Tip *Colotis erone*, and Mocker Swallowtails *Papilio dardanus cenea*. As it turned out there were lots of butterflies... most of them African Veined White, *Belenois gidica abyssinica* with the odd African Common White, *Belenois creona severina*. Not exactly exciting SA specials... and the only Mocker Swallowtails were turbocharged males, which even Haydon's nifty net technique couldn't catch.



Aloeides aranda
Fisherman's Bend
(Steve Woodhall)



Aloeides penningtoni
(Mngangeni Hill, KZN)
Steve Woodhall



Aloeides susanae
(Karkloof, KZN)
Steve Woodhall

Eventually one 'white' flew past me with a more direct path than the *Belenois*, and I shouted 'erone'! Haydon didn't hesitate - a lovely male it was. But that was it - no more, and no females either.



Thestor basuta basuta
(Mngangeni Hill, KZN)
Steve Woodhall

Sensing that not much more was on offer I took them up Inanda Ridge, a big tabletop hill north of Inanda Dam. This involved a drive through the Valley of 1000 hills and because I took a route I'm not familiar with, some serious bundu bashing in the Forester. We found a *Cadaba* bush swarming with Sulphur Orange Tips *Colotis auxo*, which was nice. Eventually we got to the top in the glorious KwaZulu-Natal Sandveld Sourveld grassland. We walked along the edge and pretty soon Haydon had his first Basuto Skolly, *Thestor basuta basuta*. Not his first *Thestor* (he'd got *protumnus* years ago in Cape Town) but a southern African endemic. And soon we started finding Coppers - Pennington's *Aloeides penningtoni* and Aranda, *A. aranda*.

There wasn't much else about, but I think Haydon enjoyed finding some SA-only species. And yes, their body parts are with Jeremy...

We set off the next morning (Saturday 6 Jan) to meet up with Simon Joubert at Karkloof, to see what we could find. Caroline had decided to stay at home and have a rest with Jayne, so our ears were burning all day... and we found Karkloof Forest to be almost butterfly-free. No Kite Swallowtails *Papilio euphranor*, no Forest Whites *Belenois zochalia*... or *Charaxes karkloof*... zilch. We could see clouds building up over Mount Gilboa, so off we went quickly to the nature reserve on its slopes. We found the road to the summit had a locked gate so we contented ourselves with rock hopping on the lower slopes, heading summit-wards. We soon found more *Aloeides*, this time *oreas* as well as *penningtoni*. And Haydon found an Amakosa Rocksitter, *Durbania amakosa natalensis*. I knew he wanted these so it was really good to find one.



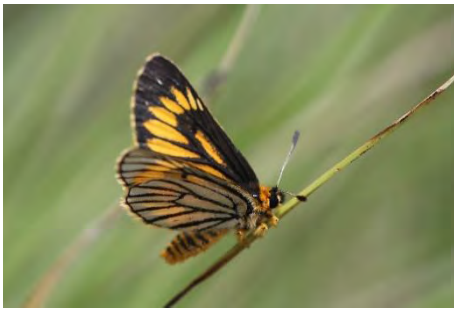
Durbania amakosa natalensis
Mount Gilboa
(Steve Woodhall)

One butterfly we wanted to find was 'typical' Susan's Copper, *Aloeides susanae*. The population on Gilboa is not the same as the larger, paler butterfly found all over the Midlands, that we've always identified as *susanae* and Graham Henning is adamant, is *A. henningi*. I am not sure I agree with him there, but Jeremy's project should sort that out... Anyway after a lot of rock hopping we found a couple, and got photos as well as specimens (again the legs and genitalia are with Jeremy). It looks like a small version of *Aloeides swanepoeli*, and looks nothing like any of the other *Aloeides* in the area.

The clouds came in and stopped us reaching the summit, so off we went back into the forests, which by this time were soaking wet. Traps were empty...



Aloeides susanae
Mount Gilboa
(Steve Woodhall)



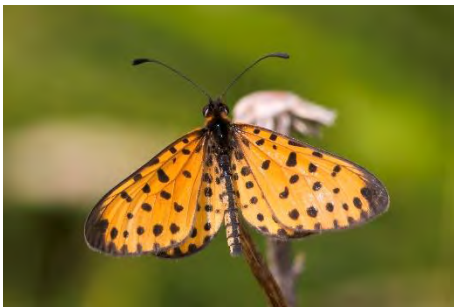
Alaena amazoula amazoula
(Umtamvuna, KZN)
Jeremy Dobson

Sunday 7 Jan saw us off to Sean and Alicia Culverwell's farm Marchmont up at Fawn Leas near Dalton. Alicia had posted some pix of Yellow Zulu *Alaena amazoula amazoula* and I told Haydon, who was keen as he wanted to get these. So off we went. The Culverwells were in church when we got there so I tried to navigate their sugar cane roads, got lost and ended up putting the Forester into a porcupine burrow... and had to be pulled out by their son Davey in his Ford bakkie.

Oh the embarrassment... but at least Haydon got his butterfly (and some of the *Crudaria* species that flies there, plus a female Straight-line Sapphire *Iolais silarius silarius*, a bonus.



Gnophodes betsimena diversa
Old Pont, Umtamvuna
(Steve Woodhall)



Pardopsis punctatissima
Umtamvuna
(Steve Woodhall)

After a visit to Gauteng for the braai (thanks Peter Ward for putting me up and taking me to Balfour) I decided it was a good idea to go to Kokstad on 10 Feb and pick up some putative Yellow Dodgers *Afrogegenes oca* from the Cintsa area that I'd inadvertently left in their [whose freezer?] freezer when passing through before Christmas. I picked up Luelle Watts at Bazley Beach (leaving her some Delegorgue's Prince *Ludia delegorguei* larvae that had hatched from brother-sister pairings of the brood I'd reared over Christmas). Chris Fey called to say the Pondoland Widows, *Dira oxylus*, weren't out, so we went to Umtamvuna instead. Luelle hadn't been there before and we got a lot of lifers for her. We saw 26 species there, including Yellow-banded Evening Brown *Gnophodes betsimena diversa* in the riverine bush. There were some typical South Coast butterflies like False Wanderer, *Pseudacraea eurytus imitator*, and even an Emperor Swallowtail, *Papilio ophidicephalus phalusco*. We then went up the hill to the grasslands where we only found five species. But two of these were the rare White-spotted Ketsi Blue, *Lepidochrysops ketsi leucomacula*, and Luelle's first Opal, Natal Opal *Chrysoritis natalensis*. It was great to renew my acquaintance with this lovely nature reserve.

The next weekend (18-19 Feb) saw KZN LepSoc off on a twitch. It was the right time of year for East Coast *Acraea*, *Acraea satis*. Johnny de Beer, who has a share in a house at Kube Yini near Phinda, kindly offered to put us up. Johnny had met LepSoc when we did a butterfly weekend there last year, and has been bitten by the bug - hard - as has his daughter Jana. We drove up on the afternoon of the 17th - Jenny Norman and me, Alicia Culverwell and Ian Gracie from Ladysmith. We nearly didn't make it. The driving behaviour on the N2 was suicidal and when we got close, Johnny contacted us to say the river at Kube Yini was in flood and impassable. We nearly had to book into the Baobab Inn, but luckily the river subsided and let us in.

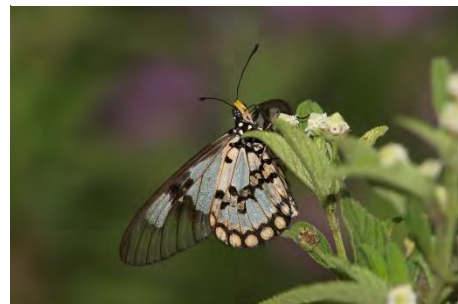
Only LepSoc could go to Zululand on the wettest weekend there for a decade! We woke up the next morning to the drip, drip, drip of rain. But I had faith in yr.no so we got up at sparrows and drove up to Hlatikulu in the mist and rain. It was so thick, I missed the reserve and we had to back

track when I used the satellite function in Google Maps to find out where we were! Eventually we got to the right place and started poking around in the wet vegetation. It wasn't cold and we started finding butterflies with wings open, hoping to catch a ray or two. And eventually we found the *satis*, mostly females, and got some great shots of them. Hlatikulu yielded 41 species, and I got some long sought-after pix such as Two-pip Policeman *Coeliades pisistratus* and female Queen Purple Tip, *Colotis regina*, form *anax*. For Ian, Johnny and Jana of course, everything was a lifer and it was great to see them getting all excited at the newness of it all.



Colotis regina
Kube Yini
(Steve Woodhall)

On Sunday Johnny had to leave early to get to work, so we had the reserve to ourselves. I have to say we were feeling really lazy and despite the sunny morning, made a late start. We were punished for this because the rain came in again. We managed to get up the big hilltop in the reserve and found 35 species including a nice male Queen Purple Tip, *Colotis regina*, and some lovely *Kedestes macomo* and *K. callicles*. Kube Yini must have some special stuff because it's probably where Ken Pennington and Col. Bridges found White-spotted Sapphire, *Iolais lulua*. We have seen its host plant there, but the specials remain elusive - we have been foiled now on three visits by drought, rain and the strange butterfly absence last November.



Acraea satis
Hlatikulu
(Steve Woodhall)

We decided to leave early and get home at a reasonable hour. And it's a good job we did. Later on, we heard the heavens opened, every river in Zululand came down in flood and we'd have been stranded there for the best part of a week. Not fun if you only had enough food and gin for a short weekend...

The final February exploit was a trip to the Feys' farm Fisherman's Bend at Kokstad, so I could collect my Dodgers and Chris Fey could show the Pondoland Widows *Dira oxylus* to some who hadn't seen them before. This was a day trip and Fran de Jager, Sandi du Preez and I left Madeleine Drive before 5am. Johnny de Beer (I told you he was hooked) drove from Ballito without Jana who had to go to a baptism (I wonder if she's speaking to her Dad yet for sneaking off?) and Ian Gracie from Ladysmith, collecting Chris's mum, Beth, on the way. Bennie and Andre Coetzer, and Andre's young lady Elmé, had driven down from Gauteng and stayed overnight.

Again we were waiting on the weather and trusting to [yr.no](#), which was forecasting a few hours of morning sun followed by rain. Chris, like all farmers I know, had a better handle on the weather and was confident it would be fine, which it turned out to be. We were there at 08:30 and the first Widows were on the wing. And boy, did they put on a show. Hundreds of big, stately black butterflies sailing and fluttering over the glorious grassy hillside, with innumerable flowers, stopping every so often to sip nectar or sun themselves on a rock, and show that they are not black, but have a subtle green sheen and large orange eyespots. To begin with it was cloudy and photos were easy. A male Star Blue, *Lepidochrysops asteris*, was found by Sandi roosting on a grass stem. He was photographed many times with his wings closed, but when the sun came out he opened them. A great introduction to the genus *Lepidochrysops* for Johnny. And to cap it off, when the sun really got up, he saw his first Mountain Beauty, *Aerpetes tulbaghia*. Too fast to photograph, but you have to leave something for next time.

I saw a total of 18 species (Bennie found *Lepidochrysops variabilis* as well, making 19 for the day). We then enjoyed lunch sitting by Chris and Thebie's dam, chatting with them and their son Rex, and dodging their tame Sacred Ibis Stanley - who is a sandwich thief of note, worse than the Vervet Monkeys in the Kruger. Sandi was totally star-struck because Chris's father was the well-

known Kenyan author Venn Fey - Beth was his wife, and Sandi is a huge fan. Beth is 94 years old and sharp as a tack, and a talented artist and botanist. But sadly we had to get on our way, as it was a long way back to Gillitts, Ladysmith and Ballito.

Fisherman's Bend is a treasure and well looked after by the Feys. All lepidopterists should make a pilgrimage there. It isn't only the Widows. They have a huge mountain, Nolangeni, which is full of great lycaenids and satyrines.



Lepidochrysops ketsi leucomacula
Umtamvuna
(Steve Woodhall)



Lepidochrysops asteris
Fisherman's Bend
(Steve Woodhall)



Dira oxylus
Fisherman's Bend
(Steve Woodhall)

Kotzesrus *Chryсорitis* (Andre Coetzer)

Andre Coetzer visited Namaqualand in September and forwarded these great pictures of various Opals (*Chryсорitis*) that he found there.



Chryсорitis aridus
(Kotzesrus, Northern Cape)
Andre Coetzer



Chryсорitis pan lysander
(Kotzesrus, Northern Cape)
Andre Coetzer



Chryсорitis thysbe psyche
(Kotzesrus, Northern Cape)
Andre Coetzer

***Trichophiala devylderi* (Dr Mario Raviglione)**

As noted in the last edition of ABN, Dr Mario Raviglione is looking for information regarding *Trichophiala devylderi*, a member of the Eupterotidae family, found in Namibia.

Updated contact details for Mario are indicated below.

Dr Mario C Raviglione F.R.C.P. (UK), F.E.R.S., Hon.R.S.P. (RF)
415F Route des Alpes
01280 Prévessin-Moëns, France

e-mail: raviglionemc@gmail.com

Tel. Cell: +33 7 88378912

LepSoc Africa Braai

The traditional LSA braai, arranged by the Highveld Butterfly Club, was held at the farm of Hermann Staude on Sunday 4 Feb. The event was well supported and despite some rather ominous clouds at times, we had great weather.

The HBC (the Gauteng, North West and Free State branch of LepSoc Africa) held a meeting at my house on Thursday 15 Feb. HBC Chairman, Jan Praet, outlined his plans for the coming year.



The turnout for the HBC meeting and for my “Best Butterfly Photos” talk at Nestle Centre, Walter Sisulu Botanical gardens the following week was rather poor unfortunately. Thanks to those of you did attend and for those who did not – you missed out!

Yebbo Goga

Yebbo Goga is the main public awareness program in the HBC calendar and will be held from Wednesday 9 May 2018 to Sunday 13 May; the venue – as usual – is the Oppenheimer Life Sciences building, East Campus, University of the Witwatersrand.

This year’s theme is “Deception” – there are plenty of examples of this in the butterfly world. Please contact me, Jan Praet (jan.praet@gmail.com) or Peter Webb (peter@iconc.com) if you are available to help.

Western Cape Braai (Andrew Morton)

The Western Cape branch of LepSoc Africa held a meeting / braai at Andrew Morton’s house on 10 February. The meeting was attended by Andrew, Harald Selb, Pat Reavel, Jonathan Colville, Felicity Grundlingh and Len McLeod.

Several items were discussed, including the CRG Supplement, the *Aloeides* / BED Projects and the Swartland Butterfly Diversity initiative.

The Butterfly Whisperer

Some of you may have seen an article that appeared in the Saturday Star on 10 Feb. Mark Williams, who has been responsible for the rediscoveries of *Aloeides trimeni southeyae*, *Lepidochrysops lotana*, *Anthene crawshayi juanita* and *Erikssonia edgei* now has the Mbashe River Buff (*Deloneura immaculata*) in his sights. He is considering an expedition to Mbashe Mouth (staying at the glorious but inexpensive 'The Haven Hotel') in December this year. The more people who go, the better the chances of finding a bug that has not been seen for more than 150 years! If you are interested let him know (lepidochrysops@gmail.com).

You can download the article here:

<https://www.iol.co.za/saturday-star/fluttering-by-may-be-an-elusive-butterfly-13260028>

Butterfly Day at Durban Botanical Gardens (Jeremy Dobson)

Argentina-born Americo Bonkowitz hosted a butterfly training day on 10 Feb at Durban Botanical Gardens. I visited Durban to support the event and tagged on a brief Zululand trip afterwards.

Americo put together a detailed program, including notes on butterfly biology and host plant interactions. The day included a visit to Burman Bush, which was very quiet, unfortunately.

Americo is responsible for the Butterfly Domes in KZN (Eshowe, Port Edward and Tembe). He is keen to expand his operation into Gauteng if possible; if anyone has any ideas or suggestions, please contact me or Americo at info@butterflying.co.za



Douglas Kroon



Doug Kroon, long time LepSoc Africa member and author of numerous papers and publications, including *Lepidoptera of Southern Africa - Host-plants and other Associations*, was recently re-married.

We wish Doug all of the best and many years of happiness with his new wife!

Doug is an honorary Life Member of LepSoc Africa.

SCIENTIFIC ARTICLES

Updated Butterfly Phylogeny

Marianne Espeland and a team of co-researchers, including Kwaku Aduse-Poku and Naomi Pierce have constructed a new butterfly-phylogeny.

An introduction to their paper is reproduced below:

“Butterflies (Papilionoidea), with over 18,000 described species, have captivated naturalists and scientists for centuries. They play a central role in the study of speciation, community ecology, biogeography, climate change, and plant-insect interactions and include many model organisms and pest species. However, a robust higher-level phylogenetic framework is lacking. To fill this gap, we inferred a dated phylogeny by analysing the first phylogenomic dataset, including 352 loci (> 150,000 bp) from 207 species representing 98% of tribes, a 35-fold increase in gene sampling and 3-fold increase in taxon sampling over previous studies. Most data were generated with a new anchored hybrid enrichment (AHE) gene kit (BUTTERFLY1.0) that includes both new and frequently used (e.g., informative loci, enabling direct comparison and future dataset merging with previous studies. Butterflies originated around 119 million years ago (mya) in the late Cretaceous, but most extant lineages diverged after the Cretaceous-Paleogene (K-Pg) mass-extinction 65 mya. Our analyses support swallowtails (Papilionidae) as sister to all other butterflies, followed by skippers (Hesperiidae) + the nocturnal butterflies (Hedylidae) as sister to the remainder, indicating a secondary reversal from diurnality to nocturnality. The whites (Pieridae) were strongly supported as sister to brush-footed butterflies (Nymphalidae) and blues + metalmarks (Lycaenidae and Riodinidae). Ant association independently evolved once in Lycaenidae and twice in Riodinidae. This study overturns prior notions of the taxon's evolutionary history, as many long-recognized subfamilies and tribes are para- or polyphyletic. It also provides a much-needed backbone for a revised classification of butterflies and for future comparative studies including genome evolution and ecology”.

Further details can be downloaded via the following links:

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2018/02/180215153902.htm>

or:

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.cub.2018.01.061>

Evolution of *Hypolimnas* Butterflies

A group of researchers, including Niklas Wahlberg, Oskar Brattström, Steve Collins and Kwaku Aduse-Poku have produced a paper titled:

Evolution of Hypolimnas butterflies (Nymphalidae): Out-of-Africa origin and Wolbachia-mediated introgression.

An abstract and a figure from the paper (which is published in *Molecular Phylogenetics and Evolution*) are included below:

Hypolimnas butterflies (Nymphalidae), commonly known as eggflies, are a popular model system for studying a wide range of ecological questions including mimicry, polymorphism, wing pattern evolution, and Wolbachia-host interactions. The lack of a time-calibrated phylogeny for this group has precluded understanding its evolutionary history. We

reconstruct a species-level phylogeny using a nine gene dataset and estimate species divergence times. Based on the resulting tree, we investigate the taxon's historical biogeography, examine the evolution of host plant preferences, and test the hypothesis that the endosymbiotic bacterium *Wolbachia* mediates gene transfer between species. Our analyses indicate that the species are grouped within three strongly supported, deeply divergent clades. However, relationships among these three clades are uncertain. In addition, many *Hypolimnas* species are not monophyletic or monophyletic with weak support, suggesting widespread incomplete lineage sorting and/or introgression.

Biogeographic analysis strongly indicates that the genus diverged from its ancestor in Africa and subsequently dispersed to Asia; the strength of this result is not affected by topological uncertainties. While the larvae of African species feed almost exclusively on *Urticaceae*, larvae of species found further east often feed on several other families. Interestingly, we found an identical mitochondrial haplotype in two *Hypolimnas* species, *H. bolina* and *H. alimena*, and a strong association between this mitotype and the *Wolbachia* strain *wBo1a*. Future investigations should explore the plausibility of *Wolbachia*-mediated introgression between species.

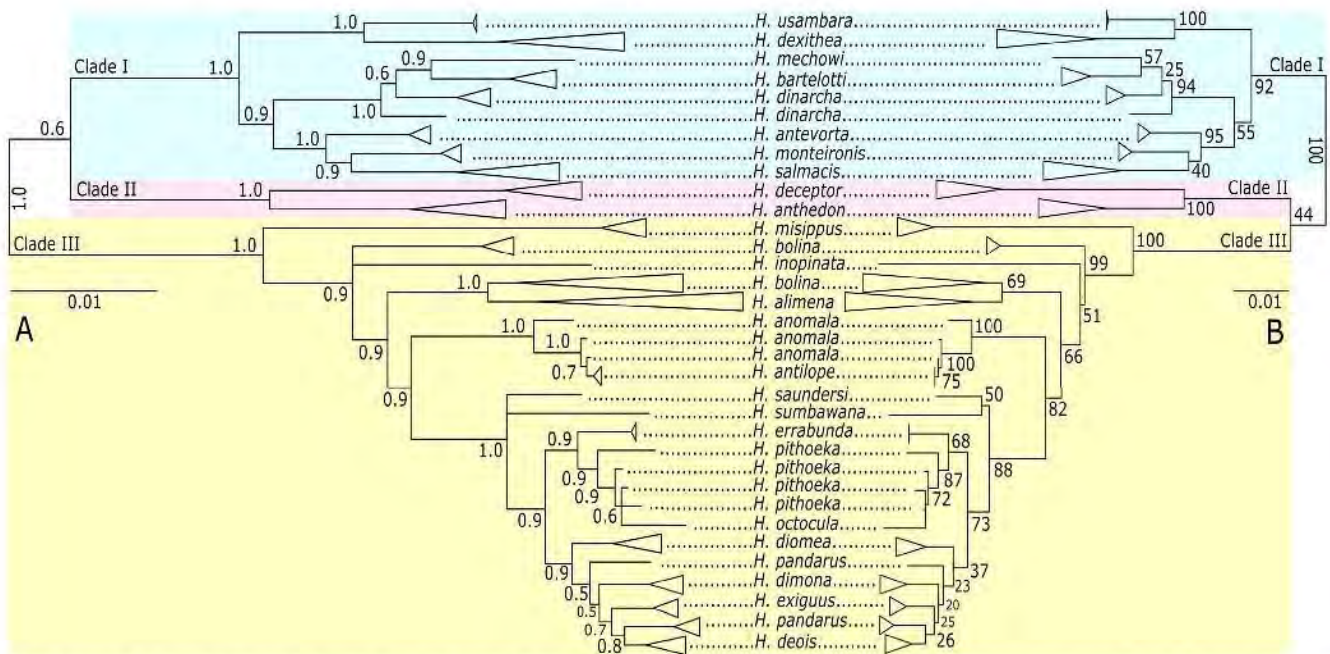
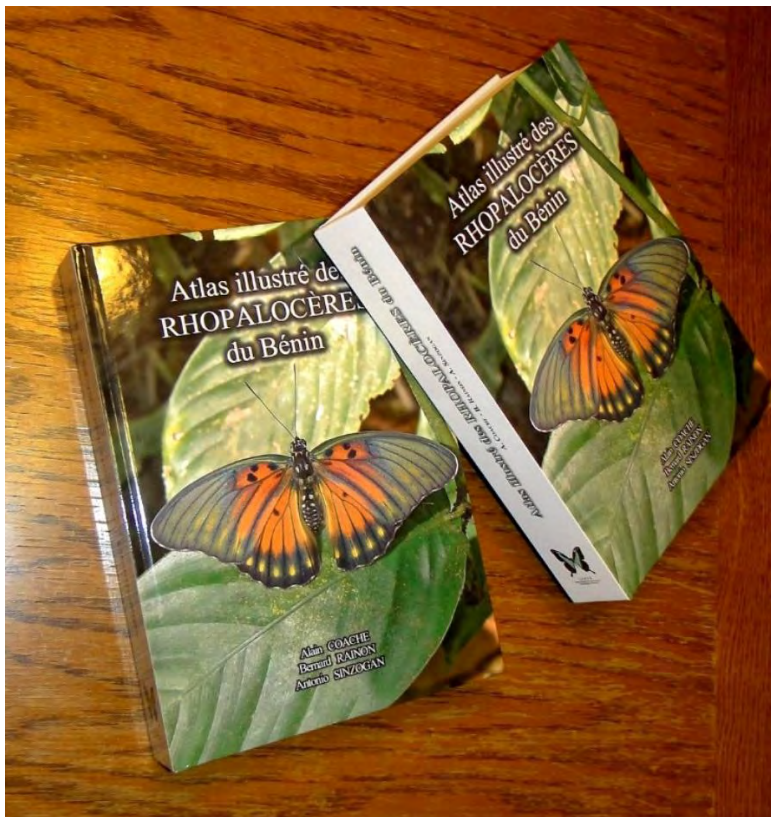


Fig. 1. Comparison of Bayesian Inference (BI) and Maximum Likelihood (ML) phylogenetic analyses of the combined nuclear and mitochondrial dataset. (A) The phylogeny from the BI analysis with posterior probability node support indicated. (B) The phylogeny from ML analysis with bootstrap values indicated.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/29428509>

BOOKS

Butterflies of Benin



Alain Coache has produced an Atlas of the Butterflies of Benin.

The book, *Atlas illustré des Rhopalocères du Bénin*, was recently awarded a prize by SEF (Société Entomologique de France), for the best book on butterflies for 2017.

The book is dedicated to Torben B Larsen with forewords from Steve Collins and Szabolcs Sáfaián; it took ten years to produce and it weighs more than 3 kg!

All 470 Benin butterfly species are represented, with full size images of male and female upper sides and undersides, including detailed distribution maps.

This book is available from the author at:



alain.coache@gmail.com

Steve Woodhall's Butterfly App



A reminder that Steve Woodhall's Butterfly App "*Woodhall's Butterflies of South Africa*" is now available and can be purchased for R290.

The App has a "MY LIST" feature, which can be used for saving butterfly-lists from field trips and exporting them to an Excel spreadsheet.

This should be a great help for those of you who are submitting data to Lepibase, for the Karoo BioGaps Project, as well as the Butterfly Index (refer to the FEATURES section).

For the first two submissions, you should probably record individual coordinates of species; for the latter, species can be lumped with a single locality – I don't even require the list, merely the Species Count Number at the top of the page.

The App can be bought from the following sources:

Google Play:

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.mydigitalearth.butterfliesofsouthafrica>

iTunes:

<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/woodhalls-butterflies-rsa/id1293695330?mt=8>

UPCOMING EVENTS

Butterfly Evening

The next Butterfly evening will be held on Thursday 8 March; 18h30 for 19h00.

This will continue Hermann's "meet the family" program, introducing LepSoc Africa members to the amazing diversity of Butterflies (Lepidoptera).

The next family of butterflies that Hermann will be featuring are the Geometridae – this could be a long session...

The cost is R100 per person (R175 for non-LepSoc members), which includes dinner. Note that Butterfly Evenings, arranged by Hermann Staude, are held at Ruimsig Country Club, Roodepoort, on the 2nd Thursday of every 2nd month – please diarize!

Afrotropical Lepidoptera Workshop – Madagascar 2018

LepSoc Africa is hosting the 3rd Afrotropical Lepidoptera Workshop, which will be held at ValBio, Ranomafana, Madagascar between 7 and 15 April 2018. The second stage of the expedition, a field trip to Toliara, takes place from 15 to 21 April.

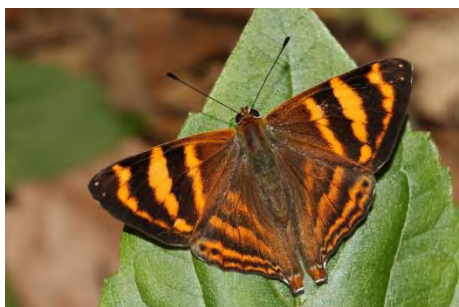
43 delegates, including 5 local Malagasy representatives are attending this event.



International Conference on the Biology of Butterflies

The International Conferences on the Biology of Butterflies are international gatherings, organized every four years, of primarily professional biologists who study evolutionary biology, behaviour, ecology, systematics, biogeography, genetics, developmental biology, and biodiversity conservation, with butterflies as their focal study organisms.

The 8th edition of this conference will be held between 11-14 June 2018, and will be hosted by the National Centre for Biological Sciences, Bangalore (NCBS), and the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research, Thiruvananthapuram (IISER-TVM).

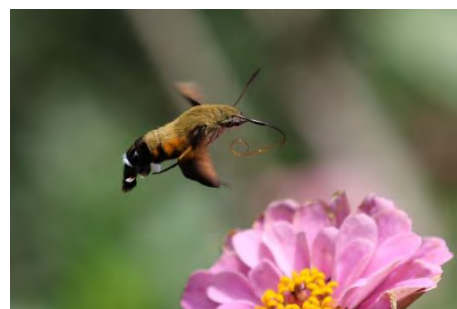


It will be held at NCBS, a premier research institute in India that works in frontier areas across the biological sciences. Situated away from the bustle of Bangalore city, NCBS campus provides a comfortable environment for academic interaction within the international scientific community.

The following field trips have been planned in conjunction with the conference:

PRE-CONFERENCE FIELD TRIP TO MAKALIDURGA (10 June 2018):

A good opportunity to catch up with old friends and colleagues and interact with local butterfly watchers and experts while observing some endemic butterflies in a beautiful hilly scrub forest. We will leave early in the morning for this field trip and return by early afternoon, well in time for a late lunch and the evening pre-conference social. The field trip fee is € 40 / \$ 50 / ₹ 3,000, which includes local transportation, packaged meal and bottled water. It can be paid during registration.



POST-CONFERENCE FIELD TRIPS (16-18 June 2018, three days and two nights):

These field trips should be especially attractive for family vacations. Payments can be made separately (details will follow). You can choose between three field trip options:

1. Mysore-Kabini River Lodge: Spend two days visiting temples and palaces in the historic, beautiful little town of Mysore, and one day at the Kabini River Lodge, where you have a chance at encountering wild elephants, gaurs, leopards, tigers and Asiatic wild dogs, among other fascinating mammals and birds in the Nagarhole National Park.

2. Hampi-Daroji Wildlife Sanctuary:

Visit Hampi, a UNESCO World Heritage Site of the poignant ruins of the historical Vijayanagara Empire, along with Daroji Wildlife Sanctuary, home of the sloth bear, saw-scaled viper, and a fascinating diversity of endemic and charismatic birds such as the Indian peafowl and yellow-throated bulbul.

3. Karwar-Dandeli Wildlife Sanctuary:

Visit the temples, forts and other historic sites along a charming coastline of northern Karnataka, and look for hornbills, trogons, flycatchers, birdwings, tree nymphs, atlas moth and other rich bird and Lepidoptera fauna in the evergreen forests of the Western Ghats. This may also be an excellent opportunity to see an incredible endemic amphibian fauna of the Western Ghats.

POST-CONFERENCE TRAINING WORKSHOP (19-21 June 2018, three days and two nights):

A training workshop for students and young professionals, plus a butterfly-watching trip to the famed evergreen forests of the Western Ghats, a globally recognized biodiversity hotspot. Details to follow shortly.

The registration fee for the conference is \$455 (\$525 after 30 April). Accompanying guests are \$150 each. The fees cover: (a) a pre-conference social (10 June evening) with snacks and a choice of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, (b) on-site registration with stationary and souvenir gift items, (c) four-course Indian meals (lunch and dinner, choice of vegetarian and meat) with two drinks (choice of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages) for all four days of the conference (excluding the banquet), (c) tea, coffee and snacks during all breaks, and (d) local transportation (daily pick-up and drop-off between the conference hotels and conference venue, and assistance with airport shuttle on arrival in Bangalore).

ADDITIONAL, OPTIONAL FEES:

Banquet: \$ 50

Pre-conference field trip to Makalidurga (10 June): \$ 50 (includes local transportation, packaged meal and bottled water).

Local sightseeing and family outings during the conference (11-14 June):

Packages for accompanying family members to be announced in January.



Post-conference wildlife-watching trips and cultural tourism (16-18 June 2018): See details on the [Field Trips](#) page.

Post-conference training workshop and field expeditions on the Biology of Butterflies (19-21 June): The Western Ghats. Venue, program and other details to be announced in January.

Accommodation (9/10 to 14/15 June, choice to be made during online payment):

Rooms are blocked in three five-star hotels for regular participants, with several dozen additional rooms blocked in three-star hotels as well in the NCBS Guest House at special discounted rates that are affordable even for students and post-docs from developing countries. See [Accommodation](#) for further details of the conference hotels and room rates. Room reservations should be made by conference attendees directly with the hotels (online links to credit card-based room reservations on

<http://www.biologyofbutterflies.org/>

Middle East Conference (Dubi Benyamini)

A reminder that LepSoc Israel is hosting the 3rd International Conference of Butterflies of the Middle East, which will be held in Tel Aviv, Israel between 31 May and 2 June this year. Please contact the organizers
If you wish to take part parpar4u@gmail.com

The Israeli Lepidopterists Society 

Butterflies of the Middle East - 3rd International Congress
The Steinhardt Museum of Natural History & Ramat Hanadiv, Israel

31.5-2.6.2018

General Program

1st day, Thursday - 30/5/2018

Opening of the Congress and First Session with an emphasis on the butterflies of the Middle East: the Steinhardt Museum of Natural History, Tel Aviv Univ., 12 Klausner Street, Ramat-Aviv, Tel Aviv.
Registration - 08:00, Lectures - 09:00 - 16:00.
Welcome by Museum Chair - Prof. Tamar Dayan.

2nd day, Friday - 1/6/2018

Second session with an emphasis on butterfly monitoring in Israel and other countries:
Ramat HaNadiv, Zikhron Ya'akov,
Registration - 08:00, Lectures - 09:00 - 14:00.
Welcome by Mr Hugo Jan Trago Ramat Hanadiv CEO & Sustainability Coordinator - Dr. Racheli Schwartz-Tzachor.

3rd day, Saturday - 2/6/2018

Field Trip to Mt. Hermon.
Meeting at the lower Hermon cable car parking - lot at 09:30.
Guides: Dubi Benyamini, Stav Talal.

4th day, Sunday - Field Site to another Biotop - optional

Registration to the Congress:

Fee - \$200 foreign guests, Register at - parpar4u@gmail.com
Free hosting and transportation in houses of members of the Israeli Lep. Soc. - for first 8-10 foreign guests.



Highveld Butterfly Club (Jan Praet)

Jan has listed the HBC activities for 2018 (below); Please note!

MONTH	DATE	EVENT	DETAILS
JANUARY	11 Jan 2018	Butterfly Evening	Noctuoidea
	25 Jan 2018	Public Evening Talk 1	Gardening for Butterflies
FEBRUARY	4 Feb 2018	LepSoc Opening Braai	The not to miss classic
	15 Feb 2018	Highveld Butterfly Club Meeting	Year planning
	22 Feb 2018	Public Evening Talk 2	My best butterfly pictures and the story behind them
MARCH	8 Mar 2018	Butterfly Evening	Geometridae
	15 Mar 2018	Public Evening Talk 3	The story of the Brown-veined White
	24 Mar 2018	Field outing	To be decided
APRIL	7-15 Apr 2018	Afrotropical Lepidoptera Workshop	Madagascar
	19 Apr 2018	Public Evening Talk 4	Butterfly Photography
	28 Apr 2018	Field outing	To be decided
MAY	10 May 2018	Butterfly Evening	To be decided
	17 May 2018	Public Evening Talk 5	South African Butterflies - an introduction
	24 May 2018	Highveld Butterfly Club Meeting	Season review - pictures from Madagascar etc.
JUNE	16 Jun 2018	Public Weekend Talk 1	Butterflies for beginners
JULY	12 Jul 2018	Butterfly Evening	To be decided
	26 Jul 2018	Public Evening Talk 6	A collection of unique RSA Butterflies and their stories (collectors invited to make a unique tray of specimens for display)
AUGUST	TBC		
SEPTEMBER	TBC		
	13 Sep 2018	Highveld Butterfly Club Meeting	Conference planning
OCTOBER	TBC		
	22 - 23 Sep 2018	Annual Conference	Midlands
NOVEMBER	TBC		
DECEMBER	TBC		
	7 Dec 2018	Year close-off social event	Mandatory attendance for Martin, Andy and Johan

FEATURES

Butterfly identification plates (Mark Williams)

'WOW' CENTRAL AFRICAN CHARAXES



Charaxes dilutus



Charaxes zingha



Charaxes hadrianus



Charaxes ansorgei jacksoni



Charaxes lactetinctus ungemachi



Charaxes superbus



Charaxes lydiae



Charaxes acraeoides



Charaxes fournierae fournierae



Charaxes jolybouyeri

Butterfly Index (Jeremy Dobson)

This is a new feature for the newsletter, with a commencement date of January 2018.

Les Underhill (LepiMAP / ADU) suggested that LepSoc Africa look at some kind of index to monitor the relative abundance of butterflies in South Africa. This follows recent comments regarding the apparent scarcity of butterflies in many parts of the country: while many of us intuitively believe that this is a fact, we have little objective evidence to support it.

There are several fairly scientific methods of performing butterfly-counts, however it is considered none of these are likely to be repeated on a regular, ongoing systematic basis. What we can do (and many of us do so already) is to take species-counts while we are in the field. Steve Woodhall's Butterfly App is a great way of capturing lists – refer to “Butterfly App” under the BOOKS Section (above).

Essentially, we will take species counts from various areas and try and relate this to an abundance factor; these factors will be adjusted depending on the biome within which the lists were taken: for example 30 species in lowveld savanna might have a similar rating to 5 species in the Karoo.

Monthly provincial “scores” will be included in this newsletter and, after a bit of trial and error (and retrospective adjustments), I believe we will end up with a useful tool for measuring relative butterfly abundance country wide.

Biome	Factor
Lowveld Savanna or Forest (L.S.)	100%
Highveld Savanna (H.S.)	60%
Highveld Grassland (H.G.)	40%
Arid Savanna (A.S.)	20%
Karoo (K)	20%
Fynbos (F)	20%
Afromontane Forest (A.M.)	40%

ABUNDANCE INDEX		NUMBER OF SPECIES RECORDED FROM A SINGLE LOCALITY IN A SINGLE DAY						
		BIOME						
		Lowveld Savanna or Forest (L.S.)	Highveld Savanna (H.S.)	Highveld Grassland (H.G.)	Arid Savanna (A.S.)	Karoo (K)	Fynbos (F)	Afromontane Forest (A.F.)
5	Excellent	>80	>48	>32	>16	>16	>16	>32
4	Good	56 to 80	34 to 48	23 to 32	12 to 16	12 to 16	12 to 16	23 to 32
3	Average	31 to 55	19 to 33	13 to 22	7 to 11	7 to 11	7 to 11	13 to 22
2	Poor	6 to 30	4 to 18	3 to 12	2 to 6	2 to 6	2 to 6	3 to 12
1	Very Poor	≤5	≤3	≤2	≤1	≤1	≤1	≤2
0	No Data							

Methodology

1/. Each Province will receive a monthly rating between 1 and 5 (Lesotho and Swaziland are included as Provinces)

2/. The rating will be based on the highest recorded individual monthly species-count within the province under consideration. The numbers are based on representatives of the Papilionoidea superfamily (traditional butterflies); should lists of all lepidoptera encountered at a locality be submitted, the number will be divided by 10!

3/. In instances where data is acquired from several biomes within a Province, the highest rating will be used. Annual prizes will be awarded to the most active provincial representatives!

Objectives

1/. To monitor long term trends in butterfly abundance throughout South Africa

2/. To compare seasonal and annual abundance indexes

Data from January and February:

PROVINCE	2018									
	Jan					Feb				
	Index	Score	Locality	Biome	Observer	Index	Score	Locality	Biome	Observer
Gauteng	2	10	Northcliff	H.G.	Jan Praet	2	8	Devon	H.G.	Jan Praet
KwaZulu-Natal	2	19	Krantzkloof	L.S.	Steve Woodhall	3	49	Tembe	L.S.	Jeremy Dobson
Limpopo	2	11	Bateleur	H.S.	Jeremy Dobson	0				
Mpumalanga	2	9	Greylingstad	H.G.	Jeremy Dobson	3	20	Balfour	H.G.	Steve Woodhall
Western Cape	0					0				
Eastern Cape	0					0				
Northern Cape	0					0				
North West	0					0				
Free State	0					0				
Lesotho	0					0				
Swaziland	0					0				

If anyone has any fieldtrip species-counts from January and/or February please forward them to me and I'll update the table accordingly.

TRAWLING THE ARCHIVES...

This is a new feature that will appear in ABN from now on. Inspired by talk around February's braai at Hermann Staude's farm, we will reproduce historical pieces from Metamorphosis.

Let's kick off with this classic, from the late John Joannou.

PHOSPHOR FROLICS

By John Joannou

Bowkeria (now *Chrysoiritis*) *phosphor* - no lepidopterist worth his salt can hear these words without an involuntary raising of an eyebrow or a quickening of the pulse. This is truly a butterfly that never fails to stir some sort of emotion in all of us, and so, in tribute to this prince of the coppers, I recount some of the moments experienced with the magic *phosphor*.

I shall never forget my first sighting of this forest jewel. I recall, in minutest detail, how my mouth suddenly went dry and how I instantly developed goose bumps the size of golf balls, even though it really was quite warm. It flew - if that's the right word - around a bunch of bramble flowers, and I vaguely recall watching and waiting for it to land. It never did of course and with 20/20 hindsight I know now that I should have swung my net there and then - but that's academic now. During those brief mesmerised moments, scratching for my scattered marbles, I saw in its place a golden red electron orbiting its atomic nucleus of flowers and then it was gone. I don't mean that it flew off, I mean it just disintegrated, and I cringed, waiting for the blast and mushrooming smoke that never came. And suddenly, I was aware that I was standing on the roadside on Kowyns Pass with Chris Ficq shaking my shoulder and asking "Hey, Jo, what the *&%@\$%#!fs the matter with you, are you OK?" Inexplicably, my response to his concern was to shout disjointed words like *phosphor*, mushroom, bang, gone, where? suitably interspersed with some ripe expletives. All this mind you, pitched at a few hundred decibels some six inches from Chris' ear. His perplexed face floated back into view and in his kindest, most gentle and patronising voice said "Let's go sit in the shade a while, I told you should have brought a hat!"

Fully focused now, I retorted "Don't be daft old son, there's *phosphor* on the wing and we got to catch them!" And right on cue, one scorched over our heads, slowed down to about a zillion miles an hour to examine the flowers and disappeared again. This was the pattern for the next ten minutes or so. I watched Chris perform some ballet moves that made Nijinsky look like a hippo. He would leap ten foot in the air before executing the most incredibly tortuous bodily twists necessitated by the sudden swerve of the *phosphor*. I, all the while, stood firm, my toes growing roots as I realised I was no match for these insects. Despite all this, however, they beat Chris too and we had to change our strategy. The insects although not feeding, were showing some interest in the bramble flowers. It was their incredible speed, however, which made them difficult to contend with. In the end we decided to stand at opposite ends of the bramble patch, facing each other and shouting as an insect flew over one's shoulder giving the other advance warning of its arrival. What the passing motorists made of these two idiots apparently duelling with nets, Lord alone knows, but at the time this was the least of our concerns. Our strategy provided some near misses and many laughs but no *phosphor* and eventually at about 10 am they stopped flying and we disconsolately focused our attention on other species.

My second encounter with *phosphor* was at that delightful patch of forest between KMP's legendary homestead 'Yellowwoods' and Curries Post in the Natal midlands. Steve Woodhall and I had gone down for *Papilio euphranor* and were not expecting to encounter the prince on this particular outing. Steve saw the first incoming missile and asked, rhetorically, (for in reality the vision had been branded full flush on his grey matter) "What the?*&%# was that?" Knowing Steve's

propensity for exaggerated enthusiasm, I lifted my gaze from the *Streptocarpus* plants I was observing and nonchalantly encircled my nose with thumb and forefinger and accompanied the gesture with a shrug of the shoulders. "I don't know Steve, what do you think it was?" came my eventual laconic verbal response. "It was a *phosphor* man, a *phosphor* I tell you!" shouted Steve, his underpants obviously severely twisted because he now spoke in strangled tones some four octaves higher than his norm. I hurried across to where he stood and together we peered intently down into the bramble covered ravine. Sure enough another red bullet came hurtling towards us, but ten feet from where we stood it went into a vertical climb to disappear in the forest canopy behind us. We watched, helpless, as oblivious to the greetings of passing motorists as to the choking dust raised by their vehicles. A half dozen times *phosphor* repeated this performance until eventually Steve's enthusiasm got the better of him. He waded into the sloping, four foot deep bed of brambles to the point where the insects had begun their vertical climb. With eyes riveted down the ravine, but head twisted through one eighty degrees, Steve, in a theatrically muted tone, whispered over his shoulder "Good-stuff brambles, they're holding me in place. I'll be able to swing with either hand when the little @%#* comes past." And the little @%#* did come past, rigidly adhering to Murphy's law by still flying just out of reach. Steve lunged forward to swing his net but, surprisingly, he remained in the same place. And it was only then that the enormity of his folly struck him. To cut a long story short, Steve eventually managed to free himself and for the next ten minutes or so, passers-by were treated to the occasional glimpse amongst the bushes of pale, English derriere as bramble thorns were being gingerly extricated. Then, as had happened at Kowyns, shortly before ten, the jewels ceased to fly. We went on to catch *euphranor*, but even they were a poor substitute for the fiery prince and we left the forest with the score two/love in phosphor's favour.

Round three was the result of a deliberate visit following the capture of a red prince by Chris Ficq. Chris had been visiting the Shiyalongubo forest above Barberton and while indulging in his favourite pastime, had somehow managed to collect a *phosphor*. The details of that excursion are better left unrecorded and we move on to when Graham Henning, Steve Woodhall and I duly arrived at the forest the following weekend with great expectations. I got out of the car, deciding that my first priority was to rid myself of the two glasses of orange juice I had had with breakfast. Like any good lepidopterist, knowing butterflies' affinity for bodily salts, I decided to replenish a drying mud puddle on the road. I was standing there, revelling, squint eyed at the relief offered by this most basic of human functions when I was rudely awakened by Graham shouting "Duck!" I peered down the road, curious as to what species of waterfowl would inhabit a forest, when suddenly, Graham's net, singing like telephone wires in the wind, re-arranged my hairstyle. I was furious. "What the **&%# are you doing?" I sputtered. Not only was this behaviour dangerous, it had caused my aim to waiver and I had a soggy left boot. Graham responded wild-eyed, in one word "*Phosphor*" The insect had been orbiting some flowers not six inches above my head and Graham had decided that my possible decapitation was well worth the risk of a swipe. He missed and the jewel departed, not giving anybody a second chance. All the nets were at the ready now, three pairs of eyes scouring the flowers and surrounding foliage. Three minds willing the prince to make a re-appearance. This with so much intensity that all the spoons within a hundred mile radius were surely buckled beyond recognition. But no *phosphor*. Eventually the intensity wore off, we flexed muscles stiff from being clenched motionless and life continued. The excitement was too much for Steve and he wandered off a few paces to replenish a puddle of his own. Net in one hand, aiming with the other, his cursing just audible above the waterfall sounds he was generating. Suddenly an anguished "YeeoouLIVM!" erupted from his direction. We turned to see Steve executing a series of precisely orchestrated Chinese swipes. My first impression was that he was being attacked by wasps - Steve has this ongoing affair with these insects and we have come to expect that he be stung at least once per outing. But it was not the case. A *phosphor* had come to investigate his activities and one of the swipes had actually netted the insect! Words cannot describe the scene that followed. In his haste and excitement, his previous preoccupation had

been simply abandoned and there he was now, jumping up and down, hanging free so to speak, shrilling "I've got one, I've got one". Well we could see that and having duly admonished him for his serious lapse in dress code we approached to inspect the prize. All the superlatives at my command seem inadequate in trying to describe that first, close up view of a living *phosphor*. All due credit to Steve, he kept the jewel alive, risking damaged scales, in order to later photograph the insect. We caught, indeed saw, no more princes that day, but we left Shiyalongubo happy, basking in Steve's success. Needless to say, the trip home was unbearable. If Steve repeated the story and all its variations once, he repeated it a thousand times. But in the end we forgave him because it was, after all, a *phosphor*!

June 1994 *METAMORPHOSIS*, VOL. 5, No. 2

CONSERVATION AND RESEARCH

LepiMAP (Les Underhill)

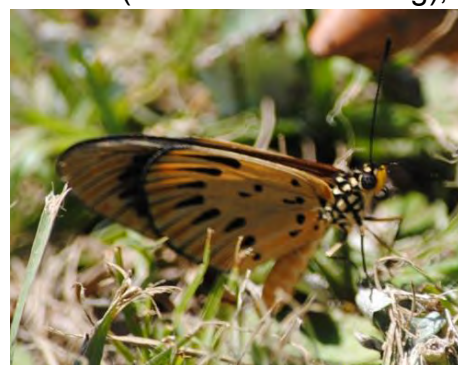
Are the LepiMAP-ers being lazy? It is the 23rd of January, and the total number of butterflies and moths submitted so far this month is still less than 2/3rds of the best January ever, which was way back in 2015.

No, the LepiMAP-ers are not lazy. The harsh reality is that there genuinely seem to be far fewer butterflies and moths around. Jeremy Dobson, President of LepSoc Africa (who lives in Gauteng), comments: "I don't know what the Western Cape is like at the moment, but the scarcity of butterflies on the Highveld is unprecedented in my experience. I'm sure this is drought related. We had good late summer rain last year, but we haven't had decent spring rain for many years. Hopefully the butterflies will rebound when the drought ultimately breaks."

The implications of this are massive. Caterpillars, which (magically) turn into butterflies and moths, are the primary food of many insectivorous bird species, and most of the granivores also feed caterpillars to their nestlings. If the butterflies and moths go down, many bird species will have poor breeding seasons, and after a bit of a delay go down with them!

~ Les Underhill

<http://www.adu.uct.ac.za/>



Telchinia encedon encedon aberration
submitted to the Virtual Museum (VM
639999)

COREL

As noted in January's newsletter, Steve Collins, Hermann Staude, Mark Williams and Jeremy Dobson visited Bateleur Nature Reserve on 03 January and found single male and female specimens of *Erikssonina edgei*.

While the butterfly appears to be in serious trouble, it should be noted that all the specimens that have been observed in the last two seasons have been found in the locality within Bateleur Nature Reserve, which is the area that was subjected to a controlled veld-burn in August 2016.

No records whatsoever have been made in the second colony beyond the Bateleur fence, which was not burned: this used to be the stronger of the two sites.

While it is too soon to draw any conclusions, it seems possible that the veld-burn, initiated by LepSoc Africa and paid for by the Brenton Blue Trust may have been responsible for saving this butterfly from extinction!

To date, no observations of the Brenton Blue (*Orachrysops niobe*) have been made this year. A few adults were observed in November. However, the autumn emergence is usually the stronger one.

SALCA (Silvia Kirkman)

The SALCA project is in its final weeks. SANBI has reviewed all 165 conservation and red listing assessments. Comments have been returned to all LepSoc authors for updating. Authors have been working very hard on these assessments and have done very well. Most assessments have been updated and we are now busy with the last few updates. Once the assessments are complete, we'll also be able to finalise the butterfly Red List Index for South Africa, as well as determine the protection levels for our butterflies. Basic moth analyses will be undertaken shortly and these will give us a good idea of the distribution of moth biodiversity in South Africa.

Dave Edge has summarized the aims of the project, as follows:

- Upgrading of the accuracy of our distribution database for the c. 160 taxa which are of conservation concern.
- Updating the 2012 conservation assessments based on higher quality data, research being conducted through the COREL project, and field work (ground truthing) by LepSoc Africa members.
- Enhancing LepSoc Africa's reputation for conservation with SANBI and other government bodies.
- Demonstrating that LepSoc Africa's members have the knowledge and project management skills to deliver such a large and complex project. This will ensure our future involvement whenever such skills are needed.
- Ensuring that our knowledge is incorporated into the "Critical habitat mapping" database which will provide legislative protection to butterfly habitats.
- Achieving the first conservation assessments of a wider group of Lepidoptera (moths) which will provide a baseline for future moth conservation.



From left to right:
Hermann Staude, Mark Williams, Wouter Schreuders and Steve Collins at Bateleur, Bela-Bela, Limpopo
3 Jan 2018

Butterfly Evolutionary Diversity (BED) (Jonathan Colville)

The Butterfly Evolutionary Diversity project (BED) is a three-year research enterprise led by SANBI. BED project seeks to map patterns of evolutionary diversity for butterflies across South African landscapes. It aims, through collecting DNA samples of all South African butterfly species, to identify areas not only of high butterfly species richness and conservation concern, but also areas of high evolutionary importance. LepSoc Africa will be the main collecting agency for this project, which will also provide the phylogenetic analyses to enable us to resolve a number of taxonomic issues.

To date, 94 genera, 250 taxa, and 410 specimens have been contributed so far towards the BED project. There is quite a lot of additional material that still requires processing.

A key aim of the BED project is to obtain representatives of all genera found in South Africa: please refer to this list of “missing” genera below and try and focus on these. It is hoped to have a working genus-level phylogeny for SA butterflies by mid-2018.

Abantis; Acada; Acleros; Afrodryas; Alenia; Andronymus; Aphnaeus; Argyraspodes; Artitropa; Aslauga; Astictopterus; Baliochila; Brephidium; Caprona; Chloroselas; Cnodontes; Coenyras; Coenyropsis; Colias; Cupidopsis; Cyrestis; Deloneura; Dingana; Durbaniella; Durbaniopsis; Eagris; Erikssonina; Euphaedra; Euryphura; Fresna; Gnophodes; Harpendyreus; Hemiolaus; Iolaus; Lachnocnema; Lycaena; Melampias; Melanitis; Moltena; Myrina; Neita; Ornipholidotos; Parnara; Paternympha; Phasis; Physcaeneura; Pieris; Platylesches; Pontia; Protogoniomorpha; Pseudonacaduba; Pyrrhiades; Stugeta; Teriomima; Tirumala; Torynesis; Trimenia; Tsitana; Tylopaedia; Uranothauma; Zenonia; Zophopetes

Everyone can assist with this project: for further information, go to <http://www.lepsoc.org.za/projects/butterfly-evolutionary-diversity/>

The BED project is going to have an important role to play in the *Aloeides* Project.

Once this is in place, coupled with the Data Sheets, we will be in a uniquely strong position to review the genus!

Please contact me at jchdobson@gmail.com or +27 82 783 8213 if you have any queries, or wish to participate. Kits of preservative, vials and plastic envelopes are available to anyone wishing to contribute.



Typical specimen label

***Aloeides* Gallery (2017-2018 Season)**



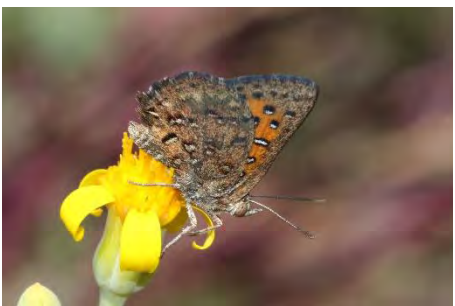
Aloeides molomo molomo
(Irene, Gauteng)
Peter Webb



Aloeides taikosama
(Mabula, Limpopo)
Jeremy Dobson



Aloeides titei
(Wakkerstroom, Mpumalanga)
Justin Bode



Aloeides damarensis damarensis
(Loxton, Northern Cape)
Jeremy Dobson



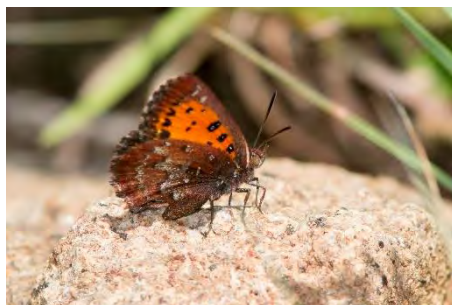
Aloeides aranda
(Umtamvuna, KZN)
Jeremy Dobson



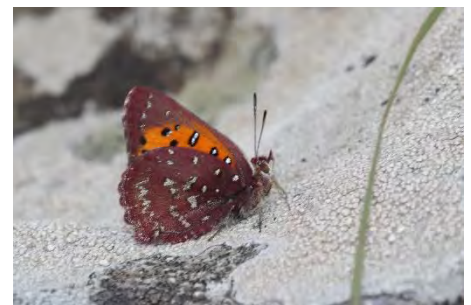
Aloeides rossouwi
(Dindela, Limpopo)
Jeremy Dobson



Aloeides susanae
(Karkloof, KZN)
Simon Joubert



Aloeides oreas
(Karkloof, KZN)
Steve Woodhall



Aloeides dryas
(Shiyalongubu, Mpumalanga)
Jeremy Dobson

Caterpillar Rearing Group (CRG) (Hermann Staude)

To date, caterpillars of 1624 species have been reared by the CRG; this includes 520 new life histories

Anybody wishing to join, please refer to the LepSoc website for details (<http://www.lepsoc.org.za/>) or visit the Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/caterpillarrg/>).

Karoo BioGaps (Dave Edge)

This is a 3 year project in association with SANBI. The focus is on assessing biodiversity in areas threatened by potential fracking developments and approximately 50 critical sites have been identified that require surveys.

Dave submitted his annual report to SANBI in March. More than 30 sites have been visited to date, so good progress is being made. Refer to Mark Williams's "Karoo" article under LATEST NEWS in the previous issue of ABN.

The objectives of the project are as follows:

- Improved knowledge of distribution of butterflies across the Karoo - this is of value not only for threatened species but also for more widespread migratory species.
- Raising the awareness of the farming communities across the Karoo to butterfly conservation.
- Again demonstrating to SANBI that LepSoc Africa is serious about butterfly conservation and has to be involved in all such projects.
- Contribution to the protection of sensitive Karoo environments from undesirable developments.
- Upskilling of LepSoc Africa members in butterfly surveying and data collection.

PUBLICATIONS

Metamorphosis (Mark Williams and Dave Edge)

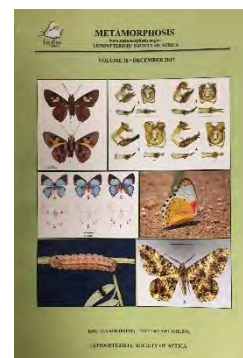


Dave Edge and Mark Williams, hard at work reviewing *Metamorphosis* Vol. 28
(Photo by Tildie Williams)

Metamorphosis Volume 28 – 2017 has been printed and distribution is in progress.

The price is R125 plus postage – various delivery options are available.

Dave and Mark are currently busy with a supplement to Volume 28, which will incorporate numerous life histories described by the ABRI group.



REGIONAL ROUNDUP

Gauteng

Mark Williams, Graham Henning, Jan Praet and Jeremy Dobson visited Bapsfontein in early Jan; the Roodepoort Copper (*Aloeides dentatis dentatis*) was flying in reasonable numbers.

Jan Praet and Marianne Coetzee visited Albert's Farm in late January; this is an interesting patch of rocky-grassland in the Northcliff area, containing a high diversity of plants.

They recorded 10 species: Yellow Pansy (*Junonia hierta cebrene*), Rayed Blue (*Actizera lucida*), Meadow White (*Pontia helice*), African Monarch

(*Danaus chrysippus*), Citrus Swallowtail (*Papilio demodocus*), Grass Jewel (*Chilades trochylus*), Grass Yellow (*Eurema brigitta*), Painted Lady (*Vanessa cardui*), Star Sandman (*Spialia asterodia*), Blue Pansy (*Junonia oenone*).



Aloeides dentatis dentatis
Bapsfontein, Gauteng



Lepidochrysops patricia
Koppieskraal, Gauteng

The Koppieskraal locality near Suikerbosrand was revisited in January by Peter Ward, Steve Collins and myself. No Mijburgh's Blue (*Orachrysops mijburghi*) were flying, but there a few Patrician Blues (*Lepidochrysops patricia*) and a solitary Roodepoort Copper (*Aloeides dentatis dentatis*).

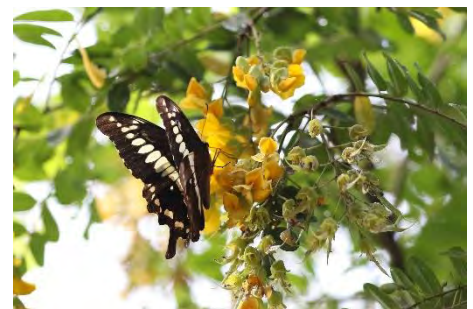
Jan Praet accompanied CREW on an outing to the Devon area. Although the weather was cloudy, they found a few interesting species, such as the Marsh Sylph (*Metisella meninx*) and Clark's Sorrel-copper (*Lycaena clarki*). They also recorded the African Clouded Yellow (*Colias electo electo*), which has become a very scarce species north of the Vaal River.

Mpumalanga

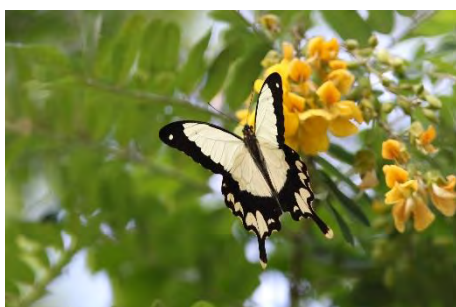


Chrysothrix aureus
Greylingstad, Mpumalanga

Steve Collins, Peter Ward and I visited Greylingstad in early January - the Heidelberg Copper (*Chrysothrix aureus*) was fairly common. There were a few Ketsi Blues (*Lepidochrysops ketsi*) on the adjacent hills, but not much else. We stopped at Balfour on our way back, and found a solitary Basuto Skolly (*Thestor basuta basuta*)



Papilio euphranor
Shialongubu, Mpumalanga



Papilio dardanus cenea
Shialongubu, Mpumalanga

In February, Raimund Schutte and I visited Elandhoogte and Shialongubu forests in Mpumalanga. Butterflies were generally fairly scarce, but the forest Papilios were out in reasonable numbers.

Dietmar Ley visited Nelshoogte in mid-February and found the Marsh Sylph (*Metisella meninx*) and Wallengren's Ranger (*Kedestes wallengrenii*).

Western Cape

Refer to Andrew Morton's report under LATEST NEWS.

Dietmar Ley visited Kammanassie in January. There was virtually nothing flying, although he did find the Kammanassie Widow (*Serradinga kammanassiensis*).

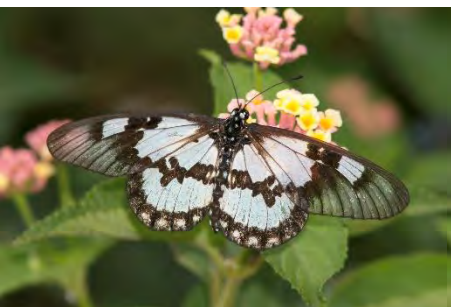
Limpopo



Erikssonina edgei
Bateleur, Limpopo

Steve Collins, Hermann Staude, Mark Williams and I visited Bateleur on 4 Jan. To our relief we saw two specimens of the Waterberg Copper (*Erikssonina edgei*), one male and one female. This is the first sighting of this species this season, following a handful of observations last season.

KwaZulu-Natal

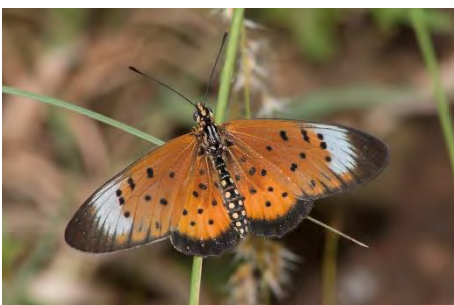


Acraea satis
Steve Woodhall
Hlatikulu, KZN

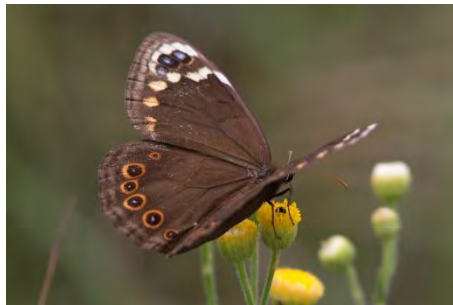
After attending the DBG Butterfly Day on 10 Feb, I undertook a brief visit to Zululand. The area adjacent to Tembe Elephant Park was quite good - I recorded 49 species ("average" according to the Butterfly Index), including the Southern Clear-wing Acraea (*Acraea rabbaiae perlucida*). A few Sesbania Blues (*Leptotes pulcher*) were found along the banks of the Pongola river.

East Coast Acraeas (*Acraea satis*) was flying in reasonable numbers at Hlatikulu forest.

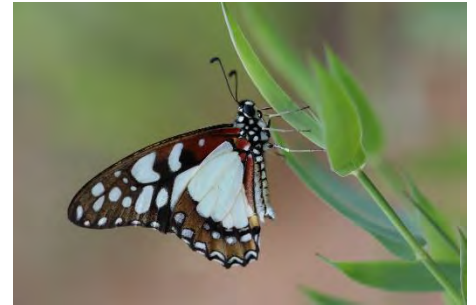
Steve Woodhall has been on a few field trips in KZN recently, including Hlatikulu (where he also found *A. satis*); Kube Yini near Hluhluwe and Fisherman's Bend near Kokstad, where he recorded the Pondoland Widow (*Dira oxylus*) and Brilliant Blue (*Lepidochrysops asteris*).



Acraea oncaea
Steve Woodhall
Hluhluwe, KZN



Dira oxylus
Steve Woodhall
Kokstad, KZN



Graphium morania
Jeremy Dobson
Tembe, KZN

Andrew Mayer and Johan Greyling visited the Kokstad area in January and found Shaka's Ranger (*Kedestes chaka*) in good numbers and also the Pondoland Widow (*Dira oxylus*).

OTHER BUTTERFLIES

I've attached some more photos from Nick Dean (below). Nick has attempted to name most of this selection – if you have any comments / corrections please let me know.



Acontia transfigurata
South Africa
Nick Dean



Autocharis jacobsalis
South Africa
Nick Dean



Gelechiidae sp.
South Africa
Nick Dean



Autocharis sp.
South Africa
Nick Dean



Hypena strigatus
South Africa
Nick Dean



Latoia latistriga
South Africa
Nick Dean

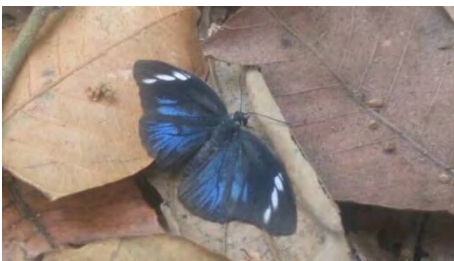
Tarmo Virtanen is a lecturer at the University of Helsinki, Finland. I've attached some more photographs of his, from Ranomafana, Madagascar.



AFRICA DESK

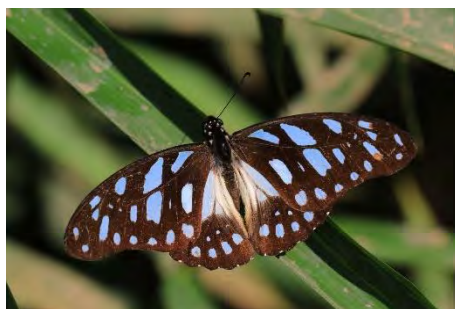
Uganda (Rogers Muhwezi)

Some recent photographs from Mpanga by Rogers:



Gabon (Michael Ochse)

Michael Ochse has submitted some photos from last November's expedition to Raponda Walker and Ivindo forests.



LEPSOC AFRICA COUNCIL

Elected Executive Councillors:

- Jeremy Dobson (Chairman)
- Justin Bode (Secretary)
- Dave Edge (Treasurer)

Co-opted Councillors

- Mark Williams (Editor of *Metamorphosis* in a caretaker capacity)
- Reinier Terblanche (Conservation and Research)
- Jan Praet (Marketing)
- Peter Ward (Permits)

Note that increases to annual subscriptions were approved at October's AGM; an updated schedule is attached below.

We are trying to finalize printing costs for *Metamorphosis* Volume 28 and will include a few postage options, with different pricing. Details will be forwarded shortly.

Category	Annual subscription fee (current year i.e. 2018)		<i>Metamorphosis</i> printed copy (preceding year i.e. 2017)		Annual subscriptions, <u>plus</u> printed copy of <i>Metamorphosis</i>	
	South African	Inter-national	South African	Inter-national	South African	Inter-national
Sponsor	R 1 200	R 1 400	Included	Included	R 1 200	R 1 400
Ordinary	R 270	R 400	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Pensioner (over 60 yrs)	R 200	R 280	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Student (under 23 yrs)	R 150	R 250	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC

FOCUS ON....

This features a member of LepSoc Africa in each edition.

Ernest Llewellyn Pringle longstanding LepSoc Africa member and the Society's Eastern Cape representative is this month's subject.

It is never an easy task to write about oneself, especially without sounding egotistical: perhaps if my wife wrote this, the view would be more balanced. I was born in Bedford on 15th April 1954, and have lived all my life on our family farm Huntly Glen. This was given to us by Lord Charles Somerset in 1820, and we have remained stubbornly on it ever since. I have never been sure whether this was because of tenacity or stupidity, or perhaps both. As a result, I have been farming all my life, except for a sojourn to get educated at St Andrews in Grahamstown, and degrees from the University of Natal (Pietermaritzburg) and U.C.T. I completed my training in law by getting admitted as an Attorney in 1983, after serving my Articles in Port Elizabeth for two years.



I have collected insects for as long as I can remember, initially using the illustrations in Skaife's book *African Insect Life* for identification. My father, who was always a gifted naturalist, and who collected bird's eggs and succulent plants for most of his life, encouraged this, and provided me with store boxes and display cabinets. On Gowan Clark's recommendation, he then purchased Swanepoel's *Butterflies of South Africa*; this enabled me to identify some of the butterflies from the plates – even though initially I was not able to read the book. This set me on the journey of a lifetime.

Because travelling is an integral part of Lepidoptery, it was necessary to rope my father in as a chauffeur, and over time I was able to convince him that this was a fascinating and worthwhile field of study. We then started going on expeditions, the first of which was to the (then) Northern Transvaal in 1968, to meet Swanepoel in Tzaneen. This was followed by expeditions to Natal and the (then) Eastern Transvaal with Pennington, and trips to Namaqualand and Cape Town, where we met Charles Dickson. We were to remain close friends with Pennington and Dickson for the rest of their lives.

In 1981, I married Anne, who fortunately is also a keen naturalist, with a very good knowledge of plants. As Lepidopterists, we are all aware of the tensions that can be caused in a marriage by our single-minded dedication to our quarry, and Anne's real interest in nature has made this manageable.

In 1983, my first description of a new species (*Aloeides maluti*) was published, and this has since been followed by descriptions of a further 17 new species and subspecies, together with (in collaboration with my good friend Alan Heath) the revision of two difficult genera, *Thestor* and *Chrysoritis*. Slogging up South Africa's mountains, koppies and ridges over the years have also resulted in the discovery of 20 new species and races, some of which we (the Pringle collecting team) are honoured to have had named after us.

As a collector, however, I have a special place in my heart for the two species which I removed from those listed at that time as Endangered (*Trimenia malagrida maryae* and *Chrysoritis zeuxo cottrelli*) by finding good viable alternative colonies for both, and for the viable new populations which I found for *Chrysoritis dicksoni* (at Witsand), and for *Orachrysops niobe* (at Brenton-on-Sea), and for *Thestor strutti* (at Tulbagh). All of the three last-mentioned butterflies remain endangered or rare, but the first two had disappeared from their known localities, and were believed to be probably extinct at the time I found them. It takes real patience and dedication to pull this off, as the six fruitless trips to the South Coast searching for *dicksoni* will bear testimony,

before success was finally obtained on the seventh trip. I recall that, like Wallace, I was trembling so much from excitement that I struggled to remove the first specimen from my net.

The 1990's were a big decade for me. In 1994, the revised Pennington's was published after five years of continuous work. Unfortunately my old mentor Charles Dickson died in 1991, so did not see this project come to fruition. In 1995, as a result of this and other work, I was awarded the Stephenson Hamilton Award by the Zoological Society of South Africa; this is given from time to time to the person thought to be the region's top amateur naturalist. In 1996, the news came through that we had won the fight to save the last-known colony of the Brenton Blue from extinction at the hands of a property developer. This campaign was initiated by Dave Edge and myself, and was brought to fruition by a number of organisations, most notably the Endangered Wildlife Trust. It also led to the creation of the Brenton Blue Trust, which now finances and manages butterfly conservation across the country, and on which I currently serve as Chairman. In 2001, another conservation project was realised with the creation of a special Reserve, known as Butterfly Valley, for the conservation of the Coega Copper. For this, I was awarded the Chairman's Award by the Lepidopterists Society of Africa in 2002.

During all this, I became Honorary Curator of Lepidoptera at the Albany Museum and was later able to contribute to the *Conservation Assessment of Butterflies of South Africa, Lesotho and Swaziland*, run by SANBI and the ADU. This has now mutated to become the SALCA project, which does the detailed analysis and assessment of our rare and endangered species. Hopefully, this work will never stop.

About 20 years ago, Dr Renzo Perissinotto presented me with a book titled *Fruit Chafers of Southern Africa*, written by Holm and Marais. Having another group of insects that could readily be identified was irresistible, and I promptly widened my interests to include this group of Coleoptera. This is in line with my childhood impulse to be an insect generalist. As a result, I have now discovered five new species of Fruit Chafer beetles, as well as - unheard of in the butterfly world - one new genus. There is an exciting world out there.

From the bottom of my heart, I must thank all the unfortunate souls who have in the past, and are in the present, accompanying me on this strange journey.

PHOTOGRAPH OF THE MONTH

Please forward any photographs that you would like to display in this Newsletter and they will be included if at all possible; any photographs accompanied with proof-of-payment to LepSoc Africa, to the amount of R50 per picture, will automatically be included!

There will be a Photograph of the Month (two in each episode); the decision, by the editor is final and will be based on photographic merit, but may be swayed by donations to the Society.

Would any photographers out there please send any recent pictures that you would like to include, with your identification and the month that the photograph was taken to jchdobson@gmail.com



AUGUST 2017
Peter Webb
Aloeides molomo molomo
(Irene, Gauteng)



SEPTEMBER 2017
Justin Bode
Orachrysops violescens
(Graskop, Mpumalanga)



NOVEMBER 2017
Nick Dean
Charaxes achaemenes
(Chobe, Zambia)



DECEMBER 2017
Steve Woodhall
Euchromia amoena
(Cintsa East, Eastern Cape)

Entries for January



Aloeides dentatis dentatis
Jeremy Dobson
(Bapsfontein, Gauteng)



Colotis euipe omphale
Evelyn Stoddard
(East London, Eastern Cape)



Kedestes chaka
Reinier Terblanche
(Midlands, KZN)



Catacroptera cloanthe cloanthe
Steve Woodhall
(Kranzkloof, KZN)



Aloeides penningtoni
Simon Joubert
(Midlands, KZN)



Lepidochrysops patricia
Alicia Culverwell
(Dalton, KZN)



JANUARY

January's winner is Peter Alfrey for this stunning picture of a Western Fantasia (*Bebearia phantasiella phantasina*), taken at Ankasa, Ghana.

Peter, from England, has an environmental management business and is actively involved with conservation and research projects.

Entries for February



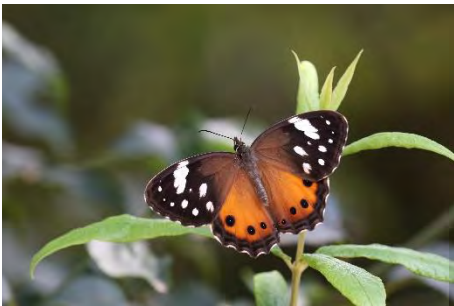
Coeliades pisiistratus
Steve Woodhall
(Hlatikulu, KZN)



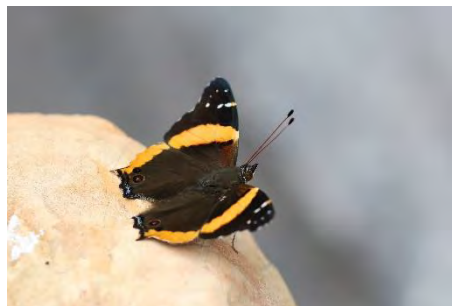
Lepidochrysops asteris
Steve Woodhall
(Kokstad, KZN)



Acraea satis
Steve Woodhall
(Hlatikulu, KZN)



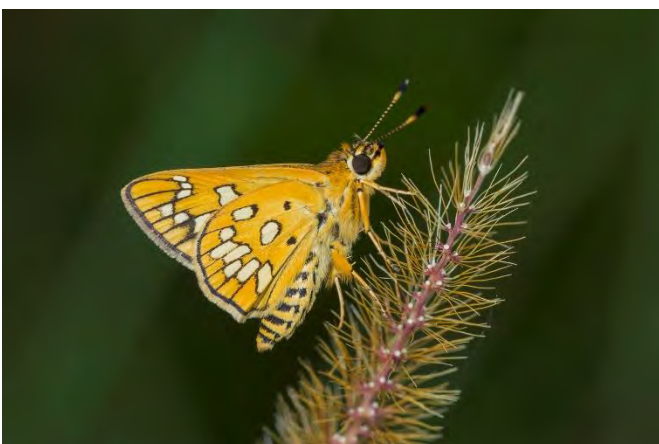
Paralethe dendrophilus junodi
Jeremy Dobson
(Elandshoogte, Mpumalanga)



Vanessa dimorphica dimorphica
Jeremy Dobson
(Elandshoogte, Mpumalanga)



Capys alphaeus extentus
Jeremy Dobson
(Barberton, Mpumalanga)



FEBRUARY

February's winner is Steve Woodhall for this picture of a Pale Ranger (*Kedestes callicles*), taken at Kube Yini Hilltop, near Hluhluwe, KZN.

A relatively common butterfly, but a beautiful one nonetheless...

LIVES BEHIND THE LABELS...

Frederick Courteney Selous



Frederick Courteney Selous (31 December 1851 – 4 January 1917) was a famous British explorer, officer, hunter, and conservationist, well known for his exploits in South-east Africa. His real-life adventures inspired Sir Rider Haggard to create the fictional Allan Quatermain character. Selous was also a friend of Theodore Roosevelt, Cecil Rhodes and Frederick Russell Burnham.

He was born on at Regent's Park, London, one of five children of an aristocratic family of part-Huguenot heritage.

From a young age, Selous was drawn by stories of explorers and their adventures. While in school, he started establishing personal collections of bird-eggs and butterflies and studying natural history.

On 15 January 1867, 17-year-old Selous was one of the survivors of the Regent's Park tragedy, when the ice covering the local lake broke with around 200 skaters on it, leaving 40 dead by drowning and freezing. He escaped by crawling on broken ice slabs to the shore.

He was educated at Bruce Castle School, Tottenham, then at Rugby, and finally abroad in Germany and Austria. His imagination was strongly fuelled by the literature of African exploration and hunting, Dr David Livingstone and William Charles Baldwin in particular.

On 4 September 1871, at the age of 19, he left England with £400 in his pocket, determined to earn his living as a professional elephant hunter; by the age of 25 he was known far and wide in South Africa as one of the most successful ivory hunters of the day. His expeditions added greatly to the knowledge of the country now known as Zimbabwe.

In 1890, Selous entered the service of the British South Africa Company, at the request of magnate Cecil Rhodes, acting as guide to the pioneer expedition to Mashonaland. He then went east to Manica, concluding arrangements which brought the country there under British control. Coming to England in December 1892, he was awarded the Founder's Medal of the Royal Geographical Society in recognition of his extensive explorations and surveys, of which he gave a summary in a journal article entitled "Twenty Years in Zambesia".

Selous returned to Africa to take part in the First Matabele War of 1893 and was wounded during the advance on Bulawayo. It was during this advance that he first met fellow scout Frederick Russell Burnham, who had only just arrived in Africa and who continued on with the small scouting party to Bulawayo and observed the self-destruction of the Ndebele settlement as ordered by Lobengula.

When the Second Matabele War broke out, Selous took a prominent part in the fighting which followed, serving as a leader in the Bulawayo Field Force, and published an account of the campaign entitled *Sunshine and Storm in Rhodesia* (1896). It was during this time that he met and fought alongside Robert Baden-Powell, who was then a Major and newly appointed to the British Army headquarters staff in Matabeleland.

In the First World War, at the age of 64, Selous re-joined the British Army and saw active service in the fighting against German colonial forces in the East Africa Campaign. On 23 August 1915, he was promoted to Captain in the uniquely composed 25th (Frontiersmen) Battalion, Royal Fusiliers, and on 26 September 1916 was awarded the Distinguished Service Order.

On 4 January 1917, Selous was fighting a battle on the banks of the Rufiji River against German colonial Schutztruppen and was outnumbered five-to-one. He was creeping forward in combat during a minor engagement when he raised his head and binoculars to locate the enemy. He was shot in the head by a German sniper and was killed instantly.

Many of the Selous trophies were incorporated into museums and international taxidermy and natural-history collections, notably that of the Natural History Museum in London. In the BM's Selous Collection are 524 mammals from three continents, all shot by him, including nineteen African lions. In the last year of his life, while in combat in 1916, he was known to carry his butterfly net in the evening and collected specimens for the same institution.

Overall, more than five thousand plants and animal specimens were donated by him to the Natural History section of the British Museum. Selous was one of the first conservationists and noted the impact European hunters were having on game populations. The Selous Game Reserve in south-eastern Tanzania is a hunting reserve named in his honour.

Butterflies named after him: *Bicyclus angulosus selousi* and *Charaxes baumanni selousi*

PENNINGTON'S 2
WIKIPEDIA

FOOTNOTE

This newsletter is compiled by Jeremy Dobson and is edited by Mark Williams, who endeavours to correct significant grammatical or taxonomic errors, while retaining the style and tone of the original article as submitted by the author.

This magazine relies on material from you, the members of LepSoc Africa. Please forward any news or photographs that might be of interest to jchdobson@gmail.com.

If anyone has any ideas regarding future format or content, please feel free to make suggestions.

PDF's of previous editions of African Butterfly News can be downloaded here:

EDITION	DATE	LINK
2016-5	Sep 2016	http://metamorphosis.org.za/articlesPDF/1414/African%20Butterfly%20News%202016-5.pdf
2016-6	Nov 2016	http://metamorphosis.org.za/articlesPDF/1415/African%20Butterfly%20News%202016-6.pdf
2017-1	Jan 2017	http://metamorphosis.org.za/articlesPDF/1416/African%20Butterfly%20News%202017-1.pdf
2017-2	Mar 2017	http://metamorphosis.org.za/articlesPDF/1417/African%20Butterfly%20News%202017-2.pdf
2017-3	May 2017	http://metamorphosis.org.za/articlesPDF/1418/African%20Butterfly%20News%202017-3.pdf
2017-4	Jul 2017	http://metamorphosis.org.za/articlesPDF/1421/African%20Butterfly%20News%202017-4.pdf
2017-5	Sep 2017	http://metamorphosis.org.za/articlesPDF/1423/African%20Butterfly%20News%202017-5.pdf
2017-6	Nov 2017	http://metamorphosis.org.za/articlesPDF/1426/African%20Butterfly%20News%202017-6.pdf
2018-1	Jan 2018	http://www.metamorphosis.org.za/articlesPDF/1449/African%20Butterfly%20News%202018-1.pdf