

A la Découverte des Papillons du Jour des Antilles Françaises.

L. Brévignon and C. Brévignon. 2003

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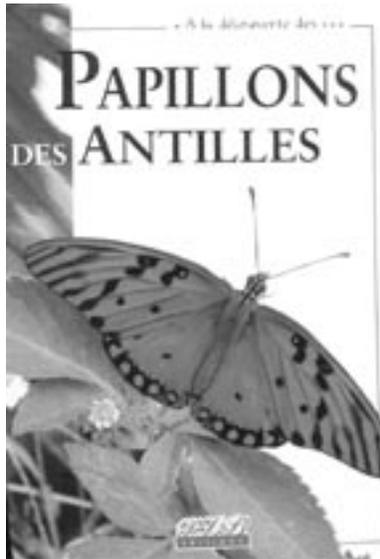
This little book presents (in French) the butterflies of Guadeloupe, Martinique and associated islands, with occasional reference to St. Bartholomew in the Virgin Islands. It covers 57 species: 13 Nymphalidae, 12 Lycaenidae, 12 Pieridae, 1 Papilionidae and 19 Hesperidae, of which 11, 5, 12, 1 and 14 respectively also occur in Trinidad, although in several cases as different subspecies. Each species gets a one page summary, including comments on preferred habitat and observed food plants, and pictures of a pinned adult and a living adult. No less than 47 species have been reared and the early stages of these are also illustrated. At the back are two further pages illustrating pinned adults – new to Guadeloupe, or endemic subspecies. The illustrations are in full colour throughout.

It is of particular interest to see the early stages of the two species of *Junonia* side by side. *Junonia evarete* is the donkey's eye, one of Trinidad's commonest garden butterflies. The brown, patterned caterpillars feed on *Stachytarpheta*. In contrast, *Junonia genoveva* is restricted to mangrove swamps and adjacent areas, as the black caterpillars feed on black mangrove, *Avicennia germinans*. Although both species were described long ago, they have been treated as synonyms, and only recently confirmed as distinct. *Junonia genoveva* has not been formally reported from Trinidad, although it is present, and S. Alston-Smith (pers. comm. 2004) has found larvae.

I was particularly interested and appreciative that colour illustrations of the early stages are included. Comparisons of the food plants and early stages in Trinidad, particularly of species treated as distinct subspecies will be of interest. For example, I note that the caterpillar of the grass-feeding skipper butterfly,

Nyctelius nyctelius agari, matches the one that I illustrated from Nevis (Cock 2001), but differs from that of ssp. *nyctelius* from Trinidad (Cock 2001, 2003); it seems likely that the larvae are consistently different for the two subspecies. Similarly, based on the picture of the caterpillar of *Astraptus talus* on *Mucuna urens*, I now believe that I have found, but not reared, larvae of this rather uncommon skipper butterfly on *M. rostrata* in Trinidad.

This book is a useful introduction to the butterflies of Guadeloupe and Martinique. It is not technical, and includes no references, but rather it is written for the amateur naturalist. It is very informative, yet leaves plenty of unanswered questions to encourage those interested to go out and fill the gaps. I obtained my copy on the internet from the amazon.fr website for 11 Euro plus postage.



REFERENCES

Cock, M. J. W. 2001. Notes on butterflies seen or collected on a short visit to Nevis, W.I., including the life history of *Epargyreus zestos*

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