

Lepidoptera of Nariva Swamp

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RECENTLY, I examined the *Studies on the Biological Resources of Nariva Swamp, Trinidad* by Bacon et al. (1979) put out as Occasional Paper Number 4 of the Zoology Department, UWI. While the bulk of this work makes most interesting reading (and I recommend it to members of the Field Naturalists' Club), I was soon turning to the faunal list of Appendix 8, and examining the list of Lepidoptera (pp. 405 — 7) — this being one of my particular interests. I have to admit that I was disappointed, although the quality of this section gives no measure of the quality of the rest of the work.

Of the 36 species listed, eight are mis-spelt, one is a synonym, one is an old name no longer used, and five or six species and one aberration must be regarded as probable mis-identifications. Although left as a question mark, the family to which *Lycorea ceres* belongs is Danaidae, as is readily ascertainable. The order in which the families are listed appears to be random. The correct order for the families listed should approximate to Uraniidae, Hesperidae, Papilionidae, Pieridae, Lycaenidae, Riodinidae, Nymphalidae, Heliconiidae, Morphidae, Brassolidae, Satyridae, Ithomiidae, Danaidae, as could have been found by consulting a text-book of entomology.

The incorrect spellings are: —

	Correct Spelling
HESPERIIDAE "Coloclopsis musa"	<i>Cobalopsis musa</i>
PIERIDAE "Eurema venarta"	<i>Eurema venusta</i>
NYMPHALIDAE "Anartia amalthea" "Phepona meander" Branded king shoemaker "Biblis hypena"	<i>Anartia amathea</i> <i>Prepona meander</i> Banded king shoemaker <i>Biblis hyperia</i>
BRASSOLIDAE "Cutobelpia beucynthia" "Dynastor mucrosiris"	<i>Catoblepia berecynthia</i> <i>Dynastor macrosiris</i>
ITHOMIIDAE "Aecea eurymedia agna"	<i>Aeria eurimedia agna</i>

Cobalopsis musa is a synonym of *Arita arita* Schaus; while *Cystineura cana* is now known as *Mestra nypermestra cana* Erich.

The species needing confirmation which are probably mis-identified are: —

HESPERIIDAE <i>Arita arita</i> (= <i>Cobalopsis musa</i>)	One of a group of similar species.
PIERIDAE <i>Eurema gratiosa</i>	A forest species of the Northern Range.
RIODINIDAE <i>Nymphidium onaeum</i>	A rare species normally found in the south. Several similar species.
 <i>Calociasma lilina</i>	 A very rare species normally on hilltops of the Northern Range.
NYMPHALIDAE <i>Metamorphia epaphus</i>	First record outside Northern Range but this species is spreading.
 <i>Prepona meander</i>	 This is based on an error by Barcant (1970). The correct name for this species is <i>Prepona amphimachus</i> F. The true <i>P. meander</i> does occur, although rarely, in the NW of Trinidad.
HELICONIIDAE <i>Heliconius ethillus</i>	Not normally seen below 1,000 feet.
BRASSOLIDAE <i>Dynastor macrosiris</i>	A very rare species normally only taken at light.
ITHOMIIDAE <i>Hypothyris euclea forbesi</i>	An aberration in Trinidad only taken once previously.

In addition, I would like to include a list of butterflies which I have collected from the area to the west of milestone 46 of the Manzanilla-Mayaro Road extending to the Nariva River Bridge. The list makes no attempt at completeness (except for the Hesperidae) since the records only reflect species taken owing to my interest in them.

HESPERIIDAE
Pyrhopyge amycles amycles Cramer 1♂ September '79

<i>Polythrix octomaculata octomaculata</i> Sepp	1♀ June '79; Sept. '79
<i>P. auginus</i> Hewitson	1♂ March '79
<i>Urbanus proteus proteus</i> Linnaeus	1♀ September '79
<i>U. esmeraldus</i> Butler	1♀ February '80
<i>U. simplicius</i> Stoll	1♂ September '79
<i>U. procne</i> Plotz	2♂ March '79
<i>Nisoniades rubescens</i> Moschler	1♂ June '70
<i>Pellicia dimidiata dimidiata</i> Herrich-Shaeffer	1♂ March '79
<i>Gorgythion begga pyralina</i> Moschler	1♀ Sept. '79, 1♂ Feb. '80
<i>Xenophanes tryxus</i> Stoll	1♂ March '79, 2♂ Sept. '79
<i>Timochares trifasciata trifasciata</i> Hewitson	1♀ June '79
<i>Chiomera asychis simon</i> Evans	1♀ Oct. '78; 2♂ 1♀ Mar. '79; 2♂ 2♀ Sept. '79; 1♂ Feb. '80
<i>Corticea corticea corticea</i> Plotz	4♂ February '80
<i>Mnasicles hicetaeon</i> Godman	1♀ September '70
<i>Papias</i> sp. nr. <i>dictys</i> Godman	1♀ September '79
<i>Lerema ancillaris ancillaris</i> Butler	2♂ February '80
<i>Enosis angularis angularis</i> Moschler	1♂ February '80
<i>Argon argus</i> Moscher	1♀ February '80
<i>Carystus phorcus phorcus</i> Cramer	1♂ February '80
<i>Phlebodes</i> sp. nr. <i>torax</i> Evans	2♂ June '79; 4♂ 1♀ Feb. '80
<i>Quinta cannae</i> Herrich-Shaeffer	1♂ Sept. '79; 1♂ Feb. '80
<i>Wallengrenia druryi curassavica</i> Snellen	1♂ February '80
<i>Panoquina ocola</i> Edwards	1♂ Sept. '79; 1♂ Feb. '80
LYCAENIDAE	
" <i>Thecla</i> " <i>hesperitis</i> Butler	1♂ March '79
" <i>Thecla</i> " <i>echion</i> Linnaeus	1♀ March '79
" <i>Thecla</i> " <i>marsyas</i> Linnaeus	1♂ September '79
" <i>Leptotes cassius</i> Cramer	1♂ September '79
RIODINIDAE	
<i>Nymphidium molpe</i> Hubner	1♂ 1♀ February '80
HELICONIIDAE	
" <i>Dryadula phaetusa</i> Linnaeus	2♂ March '79

A number of comments are worth making on the above list of my captures of Lepidoptera.

1. It is massively incomplete. In particular no moths are included.

2. It is heavily biased towards Hesperidae owing to my interest in this family.

3. *Dryadula phaetusa* (The Caroni Flambeau) — this is probably the furthest North this species now occurs in Trinidad.

4. The following species are additions to the list of Trinidad butterflies given by Barcant (1970) (based on that of Kaye (1921) for the Hesperidae) although recorded by Evans (1951 — 55) from Trinidad. *U. esmeraldus*, *U. procne*, *M. hicetaeon*, *L. ancillaris*. The other species which do not appear in

Barcant (1970) are the correct names of some of the species he lists.

5. The following species, although recorded by Kaye, are not in the British Museum collection as recorded by Evans (1951 — 55) and thus confirm the species as occurring in Trinidad. *P. octomaculata*, *E. angularis*.

6. I have not been able to identify with certainty the *Phlebodes* sp. and the *Papias* sp. They may well be new to science and if so, represent the only butterflies endemic to the Nariva Swamp, Trinidad.

A further record for Nariva Swamp is given in Barcant (1979, p. 124). Many who have read Barcant's *Butterflies of Trinidad and Tobago* will recall his account of a visit to Bush-Bush in which he describes the capture of nearly a hundred specimens of *Helicopsis cupido* Linnaeus (Riodinidae). This is another record for Nariva Swamp of a very local, typical swamp butterfly. It is also a good example of the sort of collecting that is not required in a wildlife sanctuary.

The shortcomings of our knowledge of the butterflies of Nariva Swamp are all too apparent. Yet, for the Nariva Swamp, butterflies are comparatively well-known and our knowledge of most other insect groups is negligible. This makes only too clear the need for a long-term research programme on Nariva Swamp to include the insect fauna. To this end, the establishment of a field station on Bush-Bush by UWI is to be highly recommended. Assistance towards a more complete study of the flora and fauna is one area where perhaps the Trinidad and Tobago Field Naturalists' Club could be of assistance particularly where club members do have extensive knowledge of Trinidad's flora and fauna.

Let us hope that the Government of Trinidad and Tobago will heed this report and its lucid conclusions and recommendations and avert what could only be an ecological and conservation disaster if the alternative plan of the Overseas Technical Cooperation Agency of Japan should ever be put into operation.

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