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# Notes on rare butterflies including two species new to Trinidad

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1. *Mimocastnia rothschildi* Seitz "Rare Green Dragon" (Riodinidae)

The female of this rare Riodinid was taken for the first time in Trinidad by myself in April 1980 in the Parrylands oilfield. Males have previously only been found in the Inniss Field area of Cats Hill. The female flew down into a sunlit clearing amongst dense forest and settled under a leaf about 1 metre off the ground, with its wings spread. Barcant (1970, *Butterflies of Trinidad and Tobago*, Collins, London) suggests that the forewing bar is yellow but, as in the original description, in this specimen it is white.

2. *Argyrogramma occidentalis* G. & S. (Riodinidae)

I caught two males of this species new to Trinidad in April 1980. They were flying together, in a shaft of sunlight in the otherwise shady forest, just to the north of the road leading to the main Textel Station from milestone 9¾ on the Arima-Blanchisseuse Road. The altitude here is about 600 metres. This species superficially resembles *A. holosticta* G. & S. (the Shower of Gold) but differs in that it is smaller, the wings are more angular, the ground colour is orange and there is a narrow silvery submarginal band.

3. *Polystichtis (Lemonias) maeonides* Godart (Riodinidae)

In October 1979 I caught a male of this species feeding on flowers of *Eupatorium inulaefolium* by the road leading to the main Textel Station from milestone 9¾ on the Arima-Blanchisseuse Road. This species has not previously been recorded from Trinidad. Scott Alston-Smith has, however, drawn my attention to specimens in his own collection (1 ♂) and in those of Clive Urich (2 ♂ 1 ♀) and Malcolm Barcant (1 ♂ 1 ♀). In appearance, the male resembles the male of *P. zeanger* Stoll but

without the dark apical shading and purplish spots of the forewing. The female has more rounded wings, with similar markings, but the ground colour is a much brighter yellow-orange and is more extensive on the forewing. It would appear to be an extremely rare species since the British Museum has only one specimen (the type, a male, from Guyana) and this may well be the first time the female has been described or illustrated. On the same occasion I also caught a male *Parcella amarynthina* Felder, a female *Mesene hya monostigma* Stich. (Orange Underwing) and a female *Syrmatia dorilas* Cramer (White-Spotted tadpole), three Riodinids which are seldom seen.

4. *Lemonias parthaon* Dalm. "Rare Yellow Underwing" (Riodinidae)

This appears to be another rare Riodinid in Trinidad. I know of two recent captures which seem worth recording. Scott Alston-Smith took a male at Fig Walk and I took one in the Guanapo Valley near the river crossing on the track from near milestone 3½ (February 1980).

5. *Pyrrhogyra crameri* Auriv. (Nymphalidae)

Barcant (1970), regards this as a doubtful Trinidad species. There are two records — one from Moruga (E.E. Fabian, March 1922) and one from Erin (F. Birch, February 1905). As reported in the Field Naturalist (March 1980) I took one on the field trip to Moruga Bouffe in February 1980. Since then, Clive Urich and Scott Alston-Smith have revisited this area and caught this species, confirming that it is breeding there.

My thanks to Dr. Jeremy Holloway of the Commonwealth Institute of Entomology who determined the *A. occidentalis* and *P. maeonides*, and to Scott Alston-Smith who drew my attention to the previous captures of *P. maeonides* and lent me the female shown in the plate.

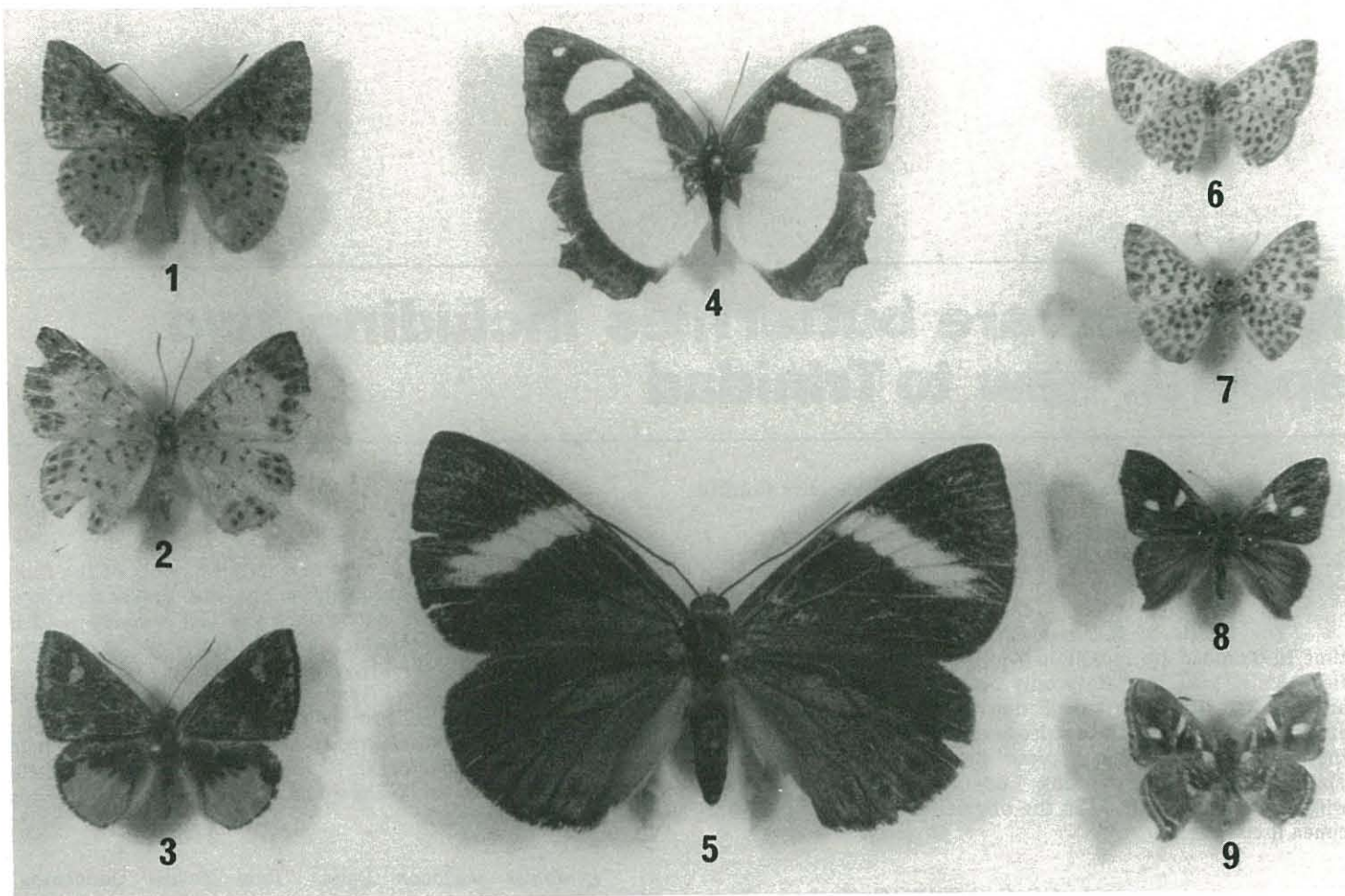


Plate 1. Some new or rare Trinidad butterflies not illustrated by Barcant (1970).

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| 1. | <i>Polystichtis maeonides</i> ♂    | Arima-Blanchisseuse Road, milestone 9¼. Textel Road, <i>Eupatorium</i> flowers. October 1979. |
| 2. | <i>P. maeonides</i> ♀              | Rio Seco, Matura, January 1978. S. Alston-Smith.  |
| 3. | <i>Polystichtis parthaon</i> ♂     | Guanapo Valley, February 1980.  |
| 4. | <i>Pyrrhogyra crameri</i>          | Nr. Moruga Bouffe, February 1980.   |
| 5. | <i>Mimocastnia rothschildi</i> ♀   | Parrylands, March 1980.   |
| 6. | <i>Argyrogramma occidentalis</i> ♂ | Arima-Blanchisseuse Road, milestone 9¼. In forest to north of Textel Road. March 1980.        |
| 7. | " " ♂ Underside                    | — do —  |
| 8. | <i>Anteros carausius</i> ♂         | Chacachacare Island, <i>Eupatorium</i> flowers. January 1980.                                 |
| 9. | " " ♂ Underside                    | — do —  |

*A. carausius* is recorded as a new species for Trinidad in the account of butterflies from Chacachacare Island elsewhere in this issue.