

The synonymy of *Nonagria neurica* Hb. = *arundineta* Schmidt = *dissoluta* Tr.

by **J. W. Tutt**, F. E. S.,
Rayleigh Villa, Westcombe Park, Blackheath S. E.

In the „Stettiner Zeitung“, for 1869, Dr. Staudinger wrote some notes on this species which were translated by Mr. Albt. Müller, and published, April 1870, in the „Entomologist“. I gather from that note that the synonymy given there, was adopted in Dr. Staudinger's „Catalog“, published directly afterwards.

This being so, I find that Dr. Staudinger, in his „Catalog“, treats our British specimens, as *dissoluta* Tr. var. *arundineta* Schmidt, as he gives England as a locality for that species but not for *neurica* Hb.

In the two English counties, Norfolk and Cambridge, we get a species which has been variously known as *neurica* Hb., *arundineta* Schmidt and *dissoluta* Tr. Dr. Staudinger has, apparently, come to the conclusion that *neurica* Hb. is unknown in England, and that it is a species distinct from *arundineta* Schmidt.

There is no doubt that *neurica* Hb., fig. 381, represents a form which occurs in England; the distinct ocellus so characteristic of Hübner's fig. 381 is well developed. Our specimens of this form are simply a little redder than Hübner's figure.

Another variety of the same species, taken in England with the form described above (*neurica* Hb.), is undoubtedly *arundineta* Schmidt. According to Dr. Staudinger's own list we, in England, get *arundineta* Schmidt. If so, our *arundineta* is certainly only a variety of Hübner's *neurica*. We do not now get *dissoluta* Tr., but if this and *arundineta* are, as Dr. Staudinger and others agree, only varieties of the same species, then *arundineta* and *dissoluta* are both varieties of Hübner's *neurica*, fig. 381.

I have no doubt that Dr. Staudinger is wrong in separating these varieties. Certainly Hübner's *neurica* and Schmidt's *arundineta* must be grouped together, and since he himself groups *dissoluta* with *arundineta*, it follows that Treitschke was perfectly correct in treating all three forms in his collection as one species, *neurica* Hb.

So far as our English specimens therefore are concerned, the synonymy must be:

neurica Hb., 381.

var. *dissoluta* Tr., V, 2, 319.

var. *arundineta* Schmidt, Stett. entomol. Zeit. 1858, 369.

I should like to offer a few remarks on the principal points of difference relied on by Schmidt, „Stettiner Zeitung“, 1858, p. 367. He writes: „The difference is less in the markings than the different structure of the body and the wings. *Neurica* Hb., is the more slender. *arundineta* the more robust form.“ Our specimens of *neurica*, and its var. *arundineta* vary very much in the shape of the wings. Some specimens have the wings quite pointed, some very much rounded, and this of course makes a great deal of difference in general appearance, and makes the extreme forms in the one direction appear more robust than the extreme forms in the opposite direction. Schmidt then writes: „The colour of both forms varies in the same manner, but *arundineta* has a dark spot on the underside of each wing, which *neurica* never has.“ This is quite correct; I find the paler specimens (*neurica*) of our species have no dots, whilst the darker var. *arundineta* have them very distinctly, but I find that these spots are directly proportional to the depth of colouring on the upper surface, and that a complete gradation occurs. Schmidt also writes: „*Neurica* is on the wing 3—4 weeks earlier than *arundineta*.“ This is no proof of distinctness. Mr. W. Warren, F. E. S., writes in the „Entomologists' Monthly Magazine“, Vol. XXII, p. 256: „At the beginning of August, *Nonagria neurica* was abundant; near Cambridge I have never taken it before August, but in the Norfolk fens, I am told it is out during the second half of July.“ This shows that in two adjacent English counties, in localities only a few miles apart there is a difference of 2—3 weeks in the time of appearance. With regard to the statement of Schmidt as to his failure in pairing a *neurica* with *arundineta*, it proves nothing, as the ♂ may have partly lost its vitality. Such a thing often occurs when one breeds lepidoptera on a large scale.

The natural history of the species in England entirely upsets Schmidt's theory of distinction, and disposes effectually of all his chief arguments.

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Autor(en)/Author(s): Tutt James William

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