

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

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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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Zeitschrift/Journal: [Entomologische Zeitung Stettin](#)

Jahr/Year: 1888

Band/Volume: [49](#)

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Artikel/Article: [The synonymy of \*Nonagria neurica\* Hb. = \*arundineta\* Schmidt= \*dessoluta\* Tr. 239-240](#)