

Designation of the lectotype of *Actias chapae* MELL, 1950 (Lepidoptera: Saturniidae)

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Festlegung des Lectotypus von *Actias chapae* MELL 1950 (Lepidoptera: Saturniidae)

Zusammenfassung: Die Syntypenserie von MELL'S Taxon *Actias (Argema) chapae* besteht aus zwei Arten. Um Interpretationsproblemen vorzubeugen, wird das Männchen dieser Typenserie, im Museum A. Koenig, Bonn, als Lectotyp festgelegt (Designation).

MELL (1950: 55) described the new species *Actias (Argema) chapae* (this original combination with a subgenus without a doubt interpreted from the small headlines of MELL'S text; MELL himself wrote only "*A. chapae* sp. n." in the text and "*Argema chapae*" in the main headline) within a paper dealing mainly with seasonal variability and biology of Chinese *Actias* species. In this description, no holotype specimen was designated; MELL wrote "Typen ♂♀ Koll. HÖNE, Mus. A. Koenig", which can only be interpreted as "one male, one female".

These two specimens, 1 ♂ and 1 ♀, are deposited in Museum A. Koenig, Bonn, as was already noted by NÄSSIG (1994: 344). The male is slightly worn and bleached; his genitalia were removed at some time (we do not know by whom), and the deposition of the slide or vial containing them is presently unknown.

The female of this syntype series, however, does *not* belong to what is called *Actias chapae*, as was already speculated earlier (unpubl.) and was eventually proven in late October 1994, when Viktor SINIAEV collected a small series of males and females of *Actias chapae* in North Vietnam (Mt. Fan Si Pan, North slopes, Cha-pa [= Sapa], 2350 m) and at lower altitudes. The female of *Actias chapae* is very similar to the male; it differs only slightly in the wing shape (being a little more rounded), the size (a little larger), and in the lacking of the red apical dot of the forewing apex. The eyespots of the forewing of the ♀ collected by SINIAEV are as big as

¹ 39th contribution to the knowledge of the Saturniidae.

those of the ♂ and pink in the distal part. Instead, the female specimen of MELL's series doubtlessly is a female of *Actias rhodopneuma* RÖBER 1925 with a different wing shape and smaller eyespots.

According to the rules of zoological nomenclature (ICZN 1985) the identity of MELL's taxon *Actias chapae* is depending on the designation of a lectotype out of the (mixed) syntype series; selecting the female as lectotype would result in a synonymization of *chapae* with the older taxon *rhodopneuma* and would require a new name for the Vietnamese species. Such an act would not appear to be logic and is to be avoided.

To stabilize zoological nomenclature and to avoid any misinterpretations of the situation, we designate herewith the male of MELL's series as the lectotype of *Actias (Argema) chapae* MELL, 1950. A label will be added accordingly. The identity of the taxon *chapae* is thereby fixed to the monochromous greenish species with big forewing eyespots in both sexes. *Actias chapae* is, to our present information, an endemic of the mountain range near Chapa (= Sapa) in northern Vietnam. No information about life history or preimaginal morphology is available presently.

The female of MELL's series, although belonging to another species, thereby automatically becomes a paralectotype of *chapae*.

Both sexes of *A. chapae* will be described and figured in colour in the forthcoming monography (BRECHLIN, in prep.), including male genitalia.

References

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