

A new species of *Mycalesis* HÜBNER from the Bismarck Archipelago, Papua New Guinea (Lepidoptera: Nymphalidae, Satyrinae)

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Abstract: *Mycalesis mulleri* sp. nov. is described from the Bismarck Archipelago (New Ireland and New Britain). Holotype in BMNH.

Eine neue Art der Gattung *Mycalesis* HÜBNER vom Bismarck-Archipel, Papua-Neuguinea (Lepidoptera: Nymphalidae, Satyrinae)

Zusammenfassung: *Mycalesis mulleri* sp. nov. wird vom Bismarck-Archipel (Neuirland und Neubritannien) beschrieben. Der Holotyp ist im BMNH.

Introduction

The satyrine genus *Mycalesis* HÜBNER, 1818 comprises probably more than 100 taxa in the Oriental and Australian regions and the group is in need of revision. PARSONS (1998) reported 28 species from the New Guinea region including (erroneously) *M. sara* MATHEW, 1887, which is restricted to the Solomon island of San Cristobal (TENNENT, in press), and two undescribed species.

One of these undescribed taxa, reported and illustrated as “*Mycalesis* Species a” (PARSONS 1998: 548, plate 87, figs. 2516–2519) was said to be known from only four female specimens in the Australian National Insect Collection (ANIC), CSIRO, Canberra, the Bernice P. Bishop Museum, Honolulu (BPBM), and the Papua New Guinea National Insect Collection, Port Moresby. A male thought to be of this species was said to have been seen flying close to the ground in forest understorey on the Lelet Plateau on New Ireland, but evaded capture (PARSONS 1998: 548).

In 1998, Chris MULLER, of Sydney, Australia, collected a number of new butterfly taxa in New Ireland, in addition to several species previously known from very few specimens. These included a fresh male *Mycalesis*, which is clearly associated with the females mentioned above. Specimens were observed between 1250 and 1400 m in the Hans Meyer Range, adjacent to Weiten Rift Valley, flying in thick undergrowth on steep

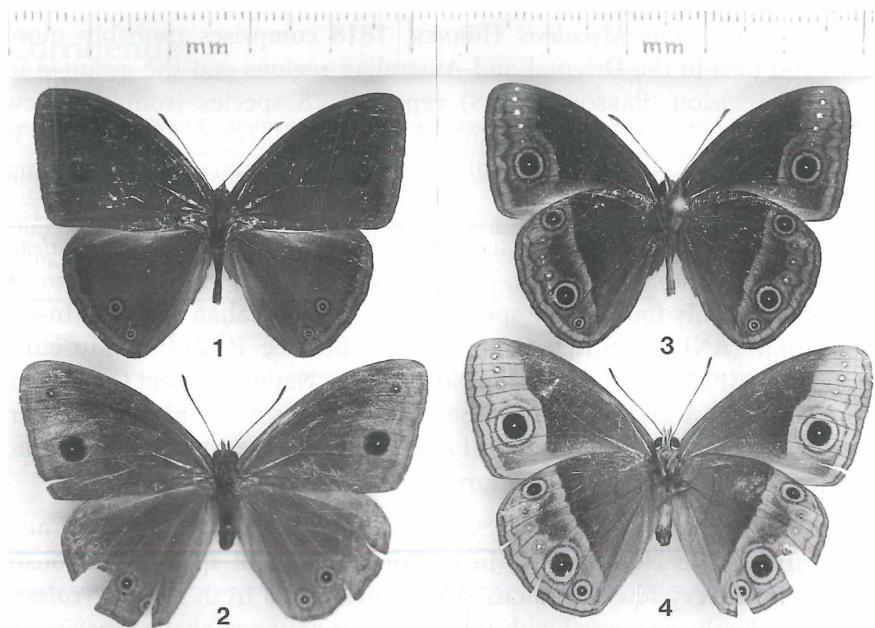
mountain slopes. The terrain made capture of specimens difficult and only a solitary male was secured, whilst resting in foliage in full sunshine (Chris MULLER, pers. comm.).

The new taxon is associated with *M. nerida* GROSE-SMITH, 1902, described from, and apparently endemic to, the main island of New Guinea, including an apparently undescribed race from the Hydrographer mountains (PARSONS 1998: 548). The distinctive appearance of this taxon, particularly the white postmedian spots, which are unlike any known Indo-Australian *Mycalesis* taxon, suggests a distinct species.

Abbreviations used as in TOLMAN & LEWINGTON (1997: 10).

Mycalesis mulleri sp. nov. (Figs. 1–5)

Material examined: (1 ♂, [4] ♀♀): ♂ Holotype: Papua New Guinea, southern New Ireland, Hans Meyer Range, 1400 m, 23. viii. 1998 (gen. prep. BMNH (V) 4974) (BMNH). Paratypes: 2 ♀♀ New Ireland, Schleinitz Mountains, Lelet Plateau, 3000 feet [ca. 885 m], 2. x.–15. xii. 1959, W. W. BRANDT (ANIC) (for 1 ♀, see PARSONS 1998: plate 87, figs. 2518–2519, right side upper- and underside transposed); 1 ♀, PNG, New Ireland, Lelet Plateau, ± 1000 m, 4. x. 1978, coll. T.



Figs. 1–5: *Mycalesis mulleri* sp. nov.: Fig. 1: ♂ holotype. Fig. 3: ditto, underside. Fig. 2: ♀ paratype. Fig. 4: ditto, underside.

FENNER (PNG National Insect Collection, Port Moresby) (not examined; see PARSONS 1998: 548; plate 87, figs. 2516-2517); 1 ♀, Papua New Guinea, east New Britain Province, Ilugi, 230 m, 8. XII. 1962, J. SEDLACEK (Bernice P. Bishop Museum, Honolulu) (not examined; see PARSONS 1998: 548).

Description: Male fwl 25 mm; superficially resembles *M. nerida*; fw apex more pointed; ups gc very dark brown, almost black (brown in *nerida*); upf basal two-thirds and most of uph suffused very dark fuscous-brown (dull orange in *M. nerida*); upf with large indistinct ocellus in space 2, indistinctly ringed orange and with vestigial white pupil; uph with small ocellus in space 3 and smaller ocellus in space 2, both pupilled and clearly ringed orange; uns gc very dark purple-brown (dark brown in *M. nerida*); postmedian line irregular, edged purplish-blue distally; ocelli as ups, with additional unh ocellus in space 7; unf with five distinct white subapical spots, extending post medially (lowest one vestigial); unh with 3 white post median spots in spaces 4-6. Genitalia (fig. 5) typical of

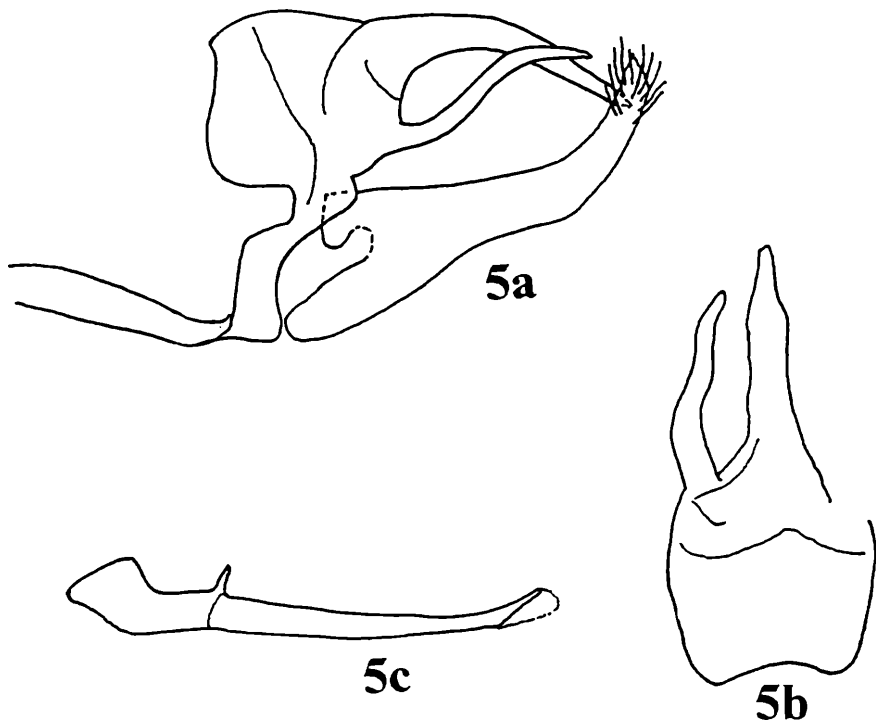


Fig. 5: ♂ genitalia: a: genitalia (lateral view, aedeagus removed); b: tegumen, uncus, left brachium, dorsal view; c: aedeagus, lateral view.

Mycalesis (cf. AOKI et al. 1982); tegumen deeply indented laterally; valve long; aedeagus with large and distinctive anterior lobe. Female similar; paler brown; ocelli as male, but with addition of small, indistinct upf ocellus in space 5 and vestigial white spot in space 6; uns basal half dark brown; distal half pale grey-brown; arrangement of ocelli as male, larger.

Distribution: New Britain and New Ireland.

Acknowledgements

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