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A new species of *Halpe* MOORE, 1878 from North Vietnam

(Lepidoptera, Hesperidae)

by

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Summary: A new species, *Halpe frontieri* spec. nov., from N. Vietnam (Tam Dao and Ba Vi localities) is described and figured. It combines characters of different species-groups, being most similar to the *H. homolea* (HEWITSON, 1868)-complex.

The material collected in 1994–1996 in North Vietnam by A. L. MONASTYRSKY contains a *Halpe* species, which, after comparison with all known taxa of the genus, proved to be previously undescribed.

In the description below I follow EVANS (1949) in respect of terminology of external morphology and genitalia, for the purpose of easier comparison with his "Catalogue " which remains the only revisional work on the genus *Halpe*.

Halpe frontieri spec. nov.

Holotype ♂: North Vietnam, Prov. Vinh Phu, Tam Dao, 1.X.1994 (leg. A. MONASTYRSKY).

Paratypes: 1 ♂, the same label as the holotype, 26.X.1996; 4 ♂♂, 3 ♀♀, North Vietnam, Prov. Ha Tay, Ba Vi; 1 ♂, 8.VI.1996, 2 ♂♂, 2 ♀♀, 26.VI.1996; 1 ♀, 27.VI.1996; 1 ♂, 6.VII.1996 (all A. MONASTYRSKY leg.)

All type specimens are deposited in the collection of the Department of Entomology of Moscow State University.

Description

♂ (colour plate VIIIb, figs. 1–2). Antennae: above black, club ringed white before the apiculus; below shaft chequered, club white. Wings comparatively broad and rounded, hindwing tornus produced. Forewing: length 15–16 mm (holotype 15 mm). Upperside: ground colour dark chocolate brown, with thin yellowish hairs at bases of spaces 1a (to mid-dorsum) and 1b (before stigma); scarce yellowish scales also along basal part of costa; a single (upper) cell spot; two subapical spots in spaces 6 and 7; two short subequal discal spots in spaces 2 and 3; all spots hyaline, pure white, variable in size; a usual oblique *Halpe*-type stigma from base of space 2 almost to dorsum. Underside: ground colour slightly paler than on the upperside, darker at base, with yellowish superscaling along costa; an additional faint non-hyaline subapical dot in space 8; submarginal spots white or slightly yellowish, conspicuous and sharply defined, forming a continuous row from the apex to space 1b, the last two spots being fainter and more diffuse than the others. Cilia chequered white and brown.

Hindwing: upperside ground colour the same as of forewing, with a diffuse paler discal area and yellowish hairs along veins 1b and 2. Underside: ground colour slightly paler than on the upperside, with more or less dense yellowish and whitish superscaling in the basal half of wing, along costa and especially along dorsum, few scales reaching termen. Discal spots well separated by veins, conspicuous but mostly diffuse, whitish or yellowish, variable. Sub-marginal spots sharply defined, white or slightly yellowish, as on forewing, arranged in a continuous row from space 1c to space 7, variable in size. Cilia white, chequered brown narrower than on forewing.

♀ (colour plate VIIIb, figs. 3–4). Forewing length 15.5–17 mm. The three females at my disposal differ from the males in having the hindwing tornus less produced and the hindwing underside discal pattern less clear.

♂-genitalia (fig. 1, A–D). Uncus relatively broad, its maximum width near the middle, excavate at the distal end, the excavation being rounded or almost rectangular in ventral view. Lateral processes long and slender, not reaching the distal end of uncus, moderately expanded at ends. Gnathos horns more or less straight and pointed. Clasp narrow; footstalk long and slender, parallel-sided, delicately serrate in the distal part; inner surface of costa at its base with a kind of finely spined ridge. Cuiller with two widely separated processes, the proximal being short and spine-like, the distal long, bent inwards at the end which is finely serrate; no teeth on cuiller otherwise. Aedeagus slightly curved and expanded in the distal part in lateral view, its end being also expanded in dorsal view, as in other *Halpe* species; vesica with a long and curved sclerotized band of tiny cornuti. Proximal end of aedeagus slender, curved upwards and slightly expanded terminally.

♀-genitalia (fig. 1, E). Antevaginal plate heavily sclerotized, with two long and strong horns sitting on rectangular bases, which surround the ostium; postvaginal plate short and wide, weakly sclerotized, the degree of sclerotization diminishing in the proximal direction. Ductus bursae relatively short and wide, with a weakly sclerotized area in the middle. The intersegmental membrane covering the genitalia tough and skinny.

Discussion

Externally the new species has a strong resemblance to *H. (homolea) nephele* LEECH, 1894 (which is, most probably, a distinct species as some other subspecies of *H. homolea* (HEWITSON, 1868), too), practically copying its facies, except for the white-ringed antennal club. The genitalia, however, are quite different, according to EVANS' description and figure of *nephele* (EVANS, 1949). Male genital armature of the new species shows no definite affinities, in some respects of uncus and clasp resembling those of the *H. homolea*-group, while in others—those of *H. zola* EVANS, 1937 or even *H. porus* (MABILLE, 1876). The most characteristic of the aedeagus is the long band of cornuti, which seems not to be mentioned for any other *Halpe* species.

The unusual horned structure of the antevaginal plate in the female genitalia bears a remote resemblance to the *H. zola*-*H. zema* (HEWITSON, 1877) group; however, I do not have sufficient comparative material of females of other species of the genus.

The white-ringed club is a character shared by a mixed group of species, otherwise very different in many respects.

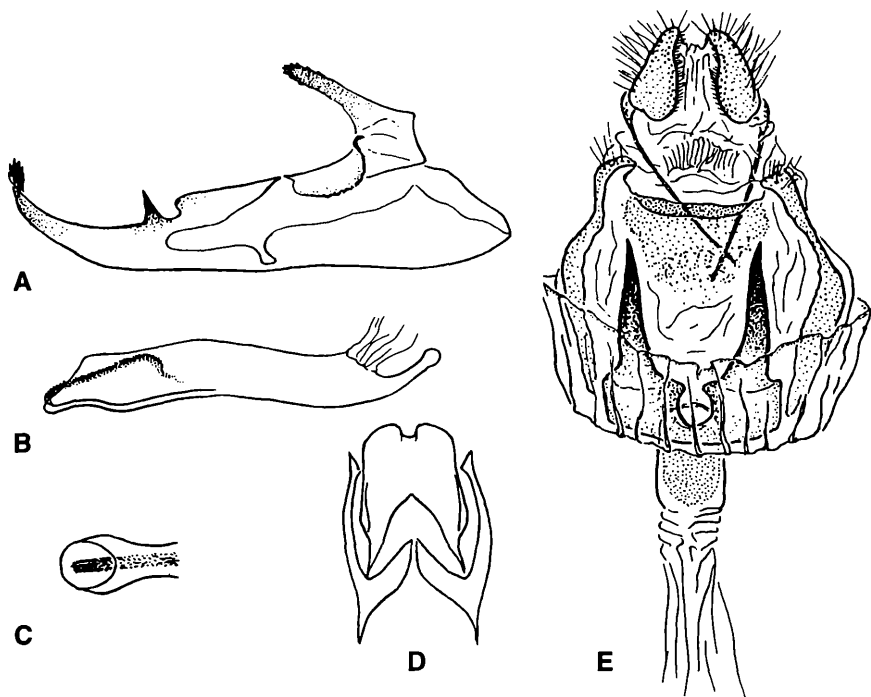


Fig. 1: *Halpe frontieri* spec. nov., genitalia: A – left clasp (from inside); B – aedeagus; C – distal end of aedeagus (dorsal view); D – uncus and gnathos (ventral view); E – female genitalia.

Thus, the precise taxonomic position of the new species within the genus is at present difficult to define; being generally most similar to the *H. homolea*-group, it seems at the same time to have no direct affinities to any species of the genus.

Giving the new species the name *frontieri*, I dedicate it to the Frontier organization ("Conservation through exploration") (London), the volunteers of which have significantly contributed to the study of the butterfly fauna of North Vietnam.

Acknowledgements

I am greatly indebted to Dr. A. L. MONASTYRSKY (Russian-Vietnam Tropical Centre, Hanoi) for supplying me with valuable material, and to Mr. P. R. ACKERY (The Natural History Museum, London) for giving me the opportunity to examine comparative material in the collections of the British Museum.

References

EVANS, W. H. (1949): A catalogue of the HesperIIDae from Europe, Asia and Australia in the British Museum (Natural History). – Trust. Brit. Mus., London, 502 pp., 53 pls.

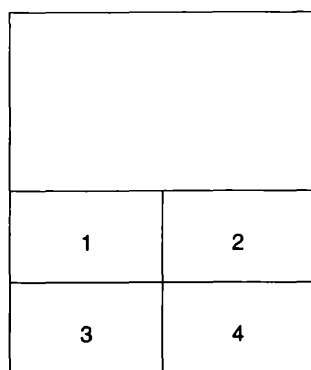
Explanation of colour plate VIIIb (p. 209):

Fig. 1: *Halpe frontieri* spec. nov., ♂ paratype. N. Vietnam, Prov. Ha Tay, Ba Vi, 6.VII.1996, A. MONASTYRSKY leg., upperside.

Fig. 2: id., underside.

Fig. 3: *Halpe frontieri* spec. nov., ♀ paratype. N. Vietnam, Prov. Ha Tay, Ba Vi, 26.VI.1996, A. MONASTYRSKY leg., upperside.

Fig. 4: id., underside.



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