

Short communications — Kurze Mitteilungen — En bref

A large migration of the Plain Tiger, *Danaus chrysippus* L., through north-eastern Algeria (Lepidoptera : Danaidae)

B. SAMRAOUI & S. BENYACOU, Annaba University, Station Biologique El-Mellah, 4, rue Hassi Beida, Annaba, Algeria.

Résumé

Danaus chrysippus L. a été observé en grand nombre dans le nord-est de l'Algérie durant l'été 1990. On pense que les specimens ont immigré d'Égypte, mais la possibilité qu'ils aient traversé le Sahara ne peut être exclue.

On the 8th May 1990, our attention was drawn by a butterfly that flew past us across a lake (Lac des Oiseaux, 45 km east of Annaba). The following week, in the same locality, we again observed two more individuals flying in the same direction (east to west).

During the third week, the trickle became a flood as more butterflies passed by and except for a few individuals which reverted their direction, most were following the above course. Four specimens were captured and identified as *Danaus chrysippus*. Over the following weeks, more than one hundred individuals were seen all over north-east Algeria, from Annaba to El-Kala.

On the 27th August 1990, at least 20 specimens were observed at Touggourt in the Sahara. All but one were heading west. The last individual to be seen was flying in Annaba on the 17th October.

According to HIGGINS & RILEY (1984), the Plain Tiger has never been reported from Algeria, although migrations have been reported from Morocco and Tunisia. The foodplant, Milkweed (*Asclepias*), is not known to exist in Algeria, and the butterflies seen probably came from Egypt, where the species is reportedly abundant. However, we wonder whether it might not cross the Sahara Desert.

Reference

HIGGINS & RILEY, 1984. A field guide to the butterflies of Britain and Europe. 5th edition. Collins, London.

***Tecoma* (Bignoniaceae) — an unusual larval foodplant of *Lampides boeticus* L. (Lepidoptera : Lycaenidae)**

Alexander PELZER, Melkberg 4, D-2120 Lüneburg, Bundesrepublik Deutschland

Zusammenfassung

Die Raupe des Bläulings *Lampides boeticus* L. lebt nicht nur an Schmetterlingsblütlern (Papilionaceae), sondern — zumindest in West-Australien — auch an dem subtropischen Zierbaum *Tecoma stans* (Bignoniaceae).

Résumé

La chenille du lycénide *Lampides boeticus* L. ne vit pas exclusivement sur les Papilionaceae, mais — du moins en Australie — sur l'arbre d'ornement subtropical *Tecoma stans*.

The Pea Blue, or Long-tailed Blue, *Lampides boeticus* (LINNAEUS, 1767) is a very widespread butterfly occurring throughout the warmer parts of the Old World. Its biology is well known ; the larvae feed on various plants of the pea family (Papilionaceae), usually inside the seed pods (WILLIAMS, 1969 ; HIGGINS & RILEY, 1971 ; COMMON & WATERHOUSE, 1972). So far, no non-papilionaceous larval foodplants seem to have been reported.

During a visit to Armadale, Western Australia, I noted several specimens of *L. boeticus* flying around and settling on a small decorative tree (*Tecoma stans*, Bignoniaceae). It was observed that males were defending territories and females were laying eggs. Eggs were laid on younger shoots, but not necessarily on flower buds. There were no flowering papilionaceous plants in the vicinity. As the butterflies were observed for six weeks between December 1989 and January 1990, it is unlikely that these were only chance observations. Instead, *T. stans* may be regarded as a further, if unexpected, natural larval foodplant of *L. boeticus*. It still remains to be shown, however, that the butterfly can complete its development on this plant.

I would like to thank my mother and sister for sending me dried leaves and flowers of the tree, which helped much to identify it.

References

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Autor(en)/Author(s): Samraoui Boudjema, Benyacoub Slim

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