

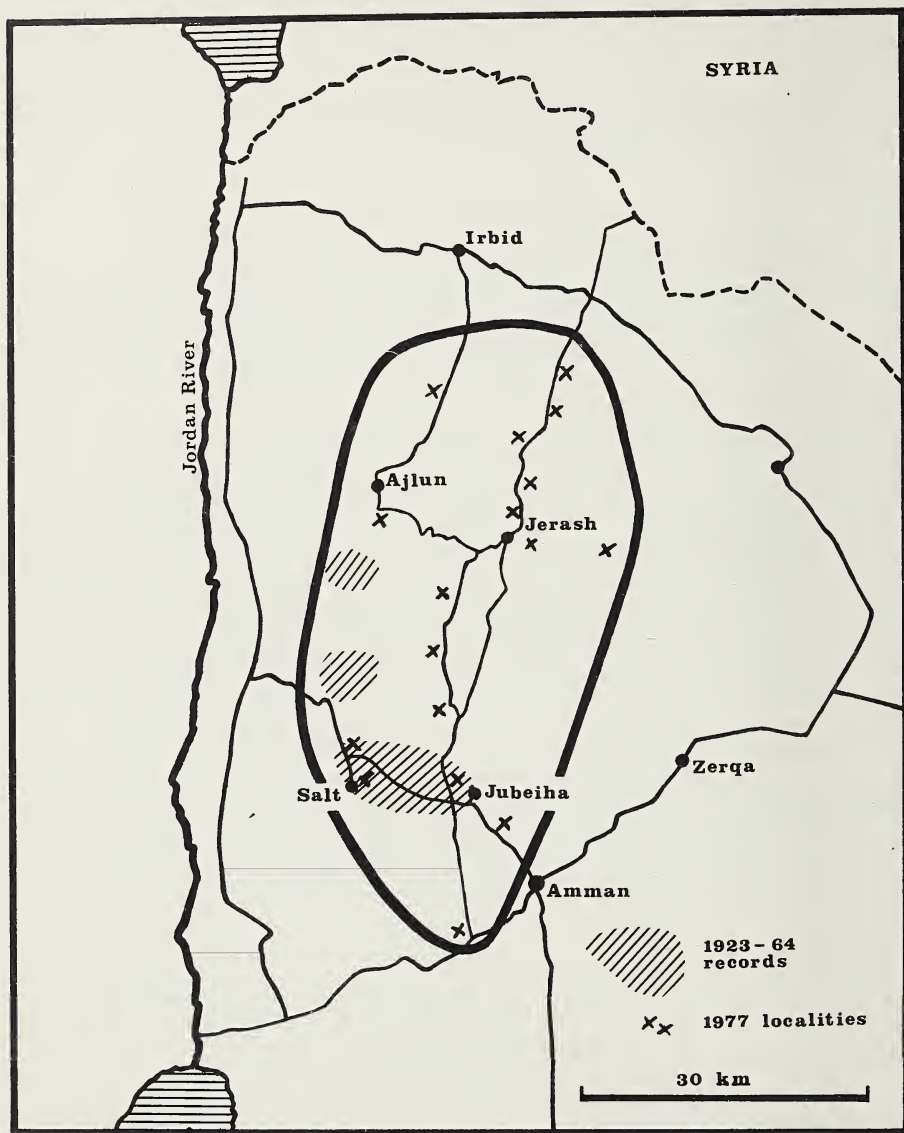
Recent expansion in the range of *Aporia crataegi* (LINNAEUS) in east Jordan. (Pieridae)

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The first Jordanian specimens of *Aporia crataegi* LINNAEUS were taken in and around the town of Salt in April 1923 H. St. John Philby. They were described as ssp. *angustior* by Graves, a name which I have subsequently accepted to cover the population of Jordan, Palestine and Lebanon. Between 1926 and 1928 two qualified collectors. Lockhart and Bewsher collected extensively, but entirely failed to find the species although they were well aware of its importance.

Between 1952 and 1964 one or more qualified collectors were active in East Jordan e.g. Dr. T. Trought, J. Klapperich, Mr. A. Showler. Trought found the species common near Salt in mid-April of 1955 and found a specimen also in Wadi Kafringi (120 m) in late March of 1952; the latter was probably a vagrant, considering the low altitude at which it was found. Klapperich found it in the Wadi Zerqa in mid-April of 1957. The two other collectors failed to find it. The total number of specimens is very small while large series are on hand of most other species. These facts led the author to believe, probably correctly at the time, that *crataegi* was localised in East Jordan and probably without significant migratory tendencies (Larsen 1975, 1976). Both Trought and Klapperich would have been well aware of the desirability of capturing long series of this butterfly, the female of which up to that time had not been captured in Jordan.

In the course of a month long expedition to East Jordan in the spring of 1977 (undertaken with the kind support of the Danish Carlsberg Foundation) my wife and I found *crataegi* widespread and abundant throughout the northern Mediterranean zone of the country (see map). In several localities hundreds were on the wing at any given time, especially on grassy slopes with stunted growth of *Crataegus azarolus*, the food plant. An extensive material in the collection of the University of Jordan, assembled under the supervision of Dr. H. Elmosa and Dr. A. Shazli, supports the observations and show that *crataegi* was equally common in 1975 and 1976. The level of collecting and observation in East Jordan has admittedly been low, but in view of the extensive collecting between 1952 and 1964 there is little doubt that there has been an expansion in both numbers and range of this butterfly over the last ten years. We certainly found it in several localities which earlier collectors had exploited without success at the same time of the year (not least all around Jerash). Syria was not visited, but the possibility that *crataegi* has once again linked up with the populations of the Antilebanon cannot be ruled out. Fluctuation in the range and numbers of *crataegi* are well known from Europe, especially near the fringes of its normal distribution; in the Judaeian Hills of Palestine the species is reported to have been uncommon in the early 1970ies where it previously flourished. The reasons for this are not well understood, but experience from the Middle East suggests that the dispersal is of a passive nature and not closely linked to active migration.



Observations of *Aporia crataegi* in East Jordan in April 1977 in relation to previously known localities.

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Zusammenfassung

Im Gegensatz zu den Beobachtungen anderer Sammler der Jahre 1952 – 1964 konnte im Frühjahr 1977 *Aporia crataegi angustior* in der gesamten nördlichen mediterranen Zone Ost-Jordanien als verbreitet und häufig festgestellt werden, was auf eine sowohl flächen- als auch zahlmäßige Ausbreitung in diesem Gebiet während der letzten zehn Jahre schließen läßt. Umfangreiches Material in den Sammlungen der University of Jordan aus den Jahren 1975 und 1976 stützt diese Aussage.

Résumé

L'*Aporia crataegi* a été cité pour la première fois de la Jordanie en 1923; malgré la présence de collecteurs qualifiés il n'a plus été récolté dans cette région entre 1926 et était considéré comme rare et localisé en Jordanie orientale entre 1952 et 1964. L'auteur et sa femme ont constaté que l'espèce était abondante et largement répandue en Jordanie orientale (voir carte) au printemps 1977, ce qu'ils attribuent à une extension récente de l'aire de répartition.

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