

Euchloe tagis HB. and *Artogeia ergane* G.-H.
in Piedmont (North Italy). Pieridae

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Summary

Euchloe tagis Hb. ssp. *bellezina* Boisd., a new species for Italy, has been found in great numbers in the Maritime Alps. *Artogeia ergane* G.-H., which seemed extinct in the Cottian Alps is still present, although rare and local, in Piedmont.



● E. TAGIS

○ A. ERGANE

EUCHLOE TAGIS HB.

Euchloe tagis Hb. is widely distributed, but local, in North Africa (Morocco and Algeria), Portugal and Spain. Ssp. *bellezina* BOISD., which flies in South-East France, has previously been taken in Italy only on the French border (Col di Tenda, Maritime Alps) at an unusually high altitude (1.500-1.900 m) (GALLO, 1978). However, recent captures have definitely shown that this species has passed the barrier of the Alps and is permanently established well within the Italian political and geographical frontier.

On June 19th, 1980, we found two very worn males and one fairly fresh female close to Borgo San Dalmazzo, in the Province of Cuneo, a few km up the Gesso Valley (Italian Maritime Alps), at approximately 780 m (P. CAMEROUN-CURRY and V. CAMEROUN-CURRY, 1981). Considering the distance between this locality and the French border, it seemed unlikely that these insects could be vagrants from the Col di Tenda area. The altitude also seemed more typical for this species. Moreover, the poor conditions, especially of the males, suggested an emergence in late April and May, which is the usual period reported for *E. tagis bellezina* in France. Further investigations seemed desirable to confirm the presence of this species in Italy and to establish the extension and strength of the colony.

We therefore returned to the same locality on May 17th, 1981 when, to our surprise, we found an extremely abundant emergence of *E. tagis bellezina* and easily captured several scores of specimens, in spite of the difficult nature of the ground. On May 21st, 1981 and May 13th and 16th, 1982, hundreds of this species were again flying over the central part of the explored area, which consists of a series of steep screes reaching up to approximately 1.000 m. Here *E. tagis* was by far the predominant species. The only other butterflies that were present were an occasional *Artogeia manni*, *Artogeia napi*, *Colias australis*, *Callophrys rubi*, *Mellicta deione* and *Plebicula dorylas*.

Since we have also been informed that numerous specimens of *E. tagis bellezina* have been recently taken in the adjacent Stura Valley (SAVERI, 1981), there can be no doubt that this species is an established component of the Italian fauna. Its range extends to the area between the Maritime and Cottian Alps. It is unknown in other parts of Italy.

ARTOGEIA ERGANE G.-H.

Artogeia ergane G.-H. is a very local species found in scattered colonies from North-East Spain through the West Pyrenees, South-East France,

Dalmatia, the Balkans and Asia Minor to Syria, Iraq and Iran. It mostly inhabits sunny, steep, rocky slopes between 200 and 1.000 m, exceptionally at sea level or as high as 1.700 m. In Italy it is most common in Abruzzi, Lazio, Lucania and Calabria and is especially abundant on the Gran Sasso and Mount Pollino. Other localities include Lake Garda, South Tyrol (although there are no recent reports from this area), Venezia Giulia (where G. LEIGHEB and E. RIBONI collected a series on May 20th, 1931 – VERITY, 1947). The only known colony in the Western Alps was discovered by VERITY on July 24th, 1925, near Cesana (Cottian Alps) at 1.300 m on the road to Sestriere, but no other captures had been reported from this locality for many years and the colony seemed extinct. However, we recently re-discovered *A. ergane* not far from the locality described by VERITY (3 ♂♂ and 2 ♀♀ on August 9th, 1981, 2 ♂♂ and 2 ♀♀ on August 16th, 1981, 1 ♂ and 1 ♀ on June 20th, 1982). Although rare and very local, *A. ergane* is therefore still present in Piedmont, in two broods.

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