

# A new subspecies of *Pseudonympha trimenii* Butler\* (Lepidoptera : Satyridae) from the Eastern Cape Province

By C. G. C. DICKSON

\**Pseudonympha trimenii* Butler, Cat. Sat. Brit. Mus., p. 94, n.6 (1868).

Quite appreciable variation is found in the various populations of *Pseudonympha trimenii* Butler in its numerous known localities in the Cape Province, and several races of it seem to be present in its wide area of distribution. One of the best defined of these occurs in the Eastern Cape Province and is described hereunder.

*Pseudonympha trimenii ruthae* subsp. nov.

**Male.** Markings of both upperside and underside resembling, as a whole, those of *Pseudonympha trimenii trimenii* Butler, the chief differences being enumerated below.

**Upperside.** Ground colour lighter and of a somewhat greyish-brown tone and the fulvous patches more conspicuous.

**Forewing.** The two fulvous areas, which occur basally and adjoin the sub-apical bipupillate ocellus respectively, lighter and brighter in colour and distinctly more prominent than in typical *trimenii* (from the Cape Peninsula), the outer one especially so; though not a feature wholly characteristic of this race alone the dark-brown edging of the latter is partly dentate on the inner side (and, outwardly, curves up round the ocellus, subapically, here leaving a fawn-coloured space between its convex portion and the ocellus itself, and lighter than in most specimens of the typical race).

**Hindwing.** The reddish-orange elongated patch so enlarged (in the holotype) as to embrace three small sharply defined black, bluish-white centred, ocelli which are present in areas 2, 3 and 4; the submarginal dark-brown irregular line clearly defined.

**Underside.**

**Forewing.** The reddish-orange area which extends from base, on the whole, lighter and brighter than in typical *trimenii* and the ocellus more prominently surrounded with a lighter colour; subapically the silver-grey scaling occupies a broader area and is thus more conspicuous than is usual in the typical race.

**Hindwing.** The general pattern is better defined and gives a "cleaner" impression than in typical *trimenii*. The greyish-brown ground colour is devoid of the easily discernible dark irroration which is usually characteristic of the typical race, especially more basally, while the two main blackish, very irregular, transverse lines are broader and far more conspicuous and the first one comparatively sharply angled, in the cell. Five conspicuous black ocelli present in areas 2-6. Length of forewing, 21 mm.

**Female. Upperside.** As a whole very similar to male, but the general tone lighter (at least in the allotype).

**Hindwing.** The reddish-orange patch rather less extensive and the ocellus in area 4 much smaller than those in 2 and 3.

**Underside.** Also resembling that of the male, but somewhat lighter, generally.



*Forewing.* The silver-grey marking, subapically, less developed than in the male.

*Hindwing.* The irregular transverse lines not quite as prominent as in the male and the ocelli smaller and varying to some extent in size. Light greyish band on outer side of second irregular transverse streak much broader than in male (average width roughly 1.5 mm.). Length of forewing 22 mm.

♂ Holotype and ♀ allotype: Steynsburg, Eastern Cape Province, 13.ix.1965 (Mrs. Ruth J. Southey); six ♂ paratypes and one ♀ with same data and others collected by Mrs. Southey as follows:—from Hillmoor, Steynsburg, three ♂♂ 29.ix.1964, one ♂ 1.xi.1964, three ♂♂ 13.xi.1964, one ♂ 1.xii.1964 and from slopes of Keuseberg Mtn. (more or less on the Steynsburg-Burghersdorp boundary), one ♂ and two ♀♀ 13.x.1963; one ♂ and one ♀ paratype: Jachtpoort, C. P., 14.x.1941 (Gowan C. Clark); two ♀ paratypes: Carlton, C. P., 16-17.xi.1936 (Gowan C. Clark); further paratypes (all taken by Mr. K. M. Pennington):—Keuseberg Mtn., two ♂♂ and one ♀ 17.IX.1933 and one ♂ 24.X.1957, from Zuurberg (20 miles W. of Hillmoor), one ♂ and two ♀♀ 25.x.1957 and from New England (at 7,500 ft.-7,800 ft.), two ♂♂ and one ♀ 20.xi.1952. The holotype and allotype to be presented to the British Museum (Natural History), London. (British Museum type Numbers:—♂ holotype 18415, ♀ allotype 18416). The paratypes are in the collections of Mrs. Southey, Mr. Pennington, the Transvaal Museum and the author. The description itself applies in detail to the holotype and allotype.

In other specimens seen by the writer, any variation has, principally, been in the size of the hindwing ocelli, on both surfaces, and in the development of the light greyish banding of the hindwing underside; also that of the reddish-orange marking of the hindwing upperside and to some extent in the depth of this colouring on the upperside. The Jachtpoort and Carlton examples are considered to belong to the same race, although the male in question shows considerable reduction of the reddish-orange patch of the hindwing upperside: a point which is of no real significance.

Compared with typical *trimenii* from the Cape Peninsula, the more elongated shape of the forewing is immediately noticed, in the presently described insect; also the greater average size of the latter race (but this point not applying to New England specimens as a whole). A somewhat similar form, but not as distinct from typical *trimenii* on the upperside in some respects (although the underside is equally different) frequents the Nieuwveld Mountains, near Beaufort West. The description, by Dr. G. van Son, of a race from Little Namaqualand is awaiting publication.

This new race is named, with pleasure, after Mrs. Ruth J. Southey of Steynsburg, whose thorough investigation of the butterflies of her district is bringing so many interesting facts to light.

Mrs. Southey writes as follows, regarding its habits:—"This insect appears to be plentiful from approximately mid-September to mid-November; at this altitude of 5500 feet above sea level it flies freely even in the windiest weather, provided the sun shines.

In veld composed roughly half and half of scrubby Karroo bushes and grass, both sweet and sour, these butterflies have almost invariably been found on gentle hillslopes where tussocks of rough sour grass predominate. Most of the specimens captured have been netted flying swiftly and low



over this grass, where they settle at times, or even disappear into the tussock. Specimens have often been flushed out from this shelter, and once on the wing are very astute dodgers. Odd ones have been seen to settle on a small yellow-flowered chickweed."

"Blencathra," Cambridge Avenue, St. Michael's Estate, Cape Town.

## Cranleigh Butterflies 1965

By Major A. E. COLLIER

A very cold January and February, followed by a bitter March, kept hibernators well out of sight until 28th March, when the first warm day of the year brought *Gonepteryx rhamni* L., *Nymphalis io* L. and *Aglais urticae* L. out from their winter quarters.

After many rather barren years *io* appeared in good numbers, as also did *urticae*, but this very promising start was checked by a cool summer, and in the autumn the Michaelmas Daisies and the Devils Bit Scabious in the marshes were almost completely devoid of butterflies.

*Polygonia C. Album* L. was the greatest disappointment after the wonderful display in September 1964. I did not come across a *C. Album* until 24th July, and in September my best count in the marshes was a singleton, as opposed to 48 in the previous year.

*Vanessa atalanta* L. was rarely seen throughout the season.

*Euchloe cardamines* L. appeared on 24th April, and eggs could be found fairly easily from early May onwards.

*Pieris brassicae* L., *P. napi* L. and *P. rapae* L., were much as usual, and it is many years locally since *brassicae* has been a plague in the vegetable gardens.

*Leptidea sinapis* L. gave a good account of itself from 11th May, *Syrictus malvae* L. and *Pararge aegeria* L. having been on the wing since 6th May.

*Clossiana euphrosyne* L. and *Erynnis tages* L. were first seen on 12th May.

*Malvae* and *tages* were very abundant and freshly emerged insects were met with up to the middle of June.

*Euphrosyne* is holding its own in a few undisturbed localities, and is slowly building up its numbers where the environment is particularly favourable. Unfortunately the same cannot be said for *Argynnis selene* L. which appeared first on 21st May, and reached its maximum strength on 13th June. *Pararge megera* L. was as usual a rare butterfly in this part of the country, and *Eumenis semele* L. was not seen at all in its favourite haunt on the North Downs.

*Coenonympha pamphilus* L. was widespread and plentiful in June, but unaccountably almost disappeared in late summer; this is the third consecutive year for such a failure to occur.

An occasional specimen of *Mesoacidalia charlotta* Haw., was seen on the North Downs, but again *Fabriciana cydippe* L. was absent from all





Dickson, C G C. 1966. "A new subspecies of *Pseudonymphia trimenii* Butler (Lepidoptera: Satyridae) from the Eastern Cape Province." *The entomologist's record and journal of variation* 78, 85–87.

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