

Notes on Erebiid Species.

By. B. C. S. WARREN, F.E.S.

(1) *E. pronœ*.—I have recently received specimens of a remarkable little race of this species, from the mountains near Krunn, on the south-side of the Isar Tal, in the Bavarian Highlands. This new race at once reminds one of the beautiful little race *gardeina*, Schaw., but the latter is characterised by the reduction of all markings on the upperside, while the new race is very strongly marked. It may be described as:—

Race **varia**, nov.—The smallest form of the species, ♂ averages 46-48, ♀ 42-46mm. Other average sizes are; *pronœ* 50-52mm. both sexes; races, *tarcenta*, Frhst. 48-50mm. both sexes, *gardeina* ♂ 46-50mm., ♀ 44-48mm.

On the upperside *varia* is suggestive of *tarcenta*, for all the black spots excepting the apical two on the forewings, are much reduced in size, and any, or all of them may be lost. The two apical ones remain as large as in typical *pronœ*. *Varia* differs from *tarcenta* in that, in spite of its small size, the bands are as fully developed as in typical *pronœ*, and the coloured spots on the hindwings often even more developed. In *tarcenta* the bands are narrow on the forewings, and reduced to mere dots on the hind. In the ♀ *tarcenta* they are extremely reduced on the forewings and entirely wanting on the hind. In the *varia* ♀ they are broader on the forewings than in ♀ *pronœ* and equally so on the hind. This, of course, makes the reduction of the spots all the more conspicuous. There is much variation in the width of the bands on the forewings, which can sometimes be as narrow as in *tarcenta*, but such specimens still differ from the latter by their smaller size and the invariably greater size of the reddish spots on the hindwings. The variation in the number of the black spots, other than the two apical ones, is endless; but even when all are present they are never fully developed as in *pronœ*. The underside is typical of the species.

(2) *E. neoridas*, Boisd.—There have been many uncertain references as to the locality of typical *neoridas*. In the *Index Meth.*, 1829, Boisduval merely gives "Alpes" as the locality, which naturally has been interpreted in various different meanings. Fortunately in the *Icones* in 1832 he is more explicit and writes: "Cette espèce a été découverte par nous aux environs de Grenoble. Elle a été retrouvée depuis dans le département des Basses Alpes . . . et de la Drôme." The typical race is therefore that of the mountains of the Isère. A decidedly different race occurs in Lozère, which I would describe as:—

Ssp. **lozerica**, nov.—A much smaller race, averaging 40-43mm. in both sexes; typical *neoridas* averages 44-52mm. The colour of the bands on the upperside of the forewings is golden rather than a dark reddish, the spots on the hindwings of the same colour but very small; the black spots are reduced in size on both wings and the white pupils frequently wanting on the hindwings. Sometimes the black spots are also lost, and specimens with quite black hindwings, all markings lost, also occur. In the feature of the hindwing markings, *lozerica* resembles the little race of the Sibillini mountains—*sibyllina*, Vty.—but in this the spots are still smaller and the colour of the

bands darker; the colour of the *lozerica* ♂ being very like that of the *sibyllina* ♀. The underside of the hindwings in *lozerica* is a pale brown, the antemarginal band only very faintly silvered, and the basal area practically unmarked, and merged with the median area. This underside is very different from *sibyllina* where the bands contrast strongly, but it is extremely like the underside in *E. zapateri*, in fact both in colouring and marking *lozerica* might well be taken for a race of the latter. Types from the Causse above Mende, Lozère.

(3) Some races of *E. ottomana*.—One of the most interesting discoveries in connection with the *Erebias* was made last year by Herr Dannehl, who found a race of *ottomana* on Monte Baldo above lake Garda; which he is describing. This race is closest to the ssp. *balcanica*, Rbl., but differs in being much darker on the upperside, the rusty patches around the apical spots on the forewings being reduced to mere rings, and the spots on the hindwings to mere points, in some cases hardly visible. On the underside of the hindwings, especially in the ♂, the Garda race is strongly banded and therefore strikingly different from the more even colour of *balcanica*. The antemarginal band in the ♀ is also a little better marked than in the ♀ *balcanica*. In his description of the latter, Rebel included specimens from all the known Balkan localities, north of Greece. But *balcanica* varies a good deal, and the form from the Durmitor in north Montenegro, forms a remarkable transition to the Garda race. This race I would describe as:

Race **durmitorensis**, nov.—A transition between *balcanica* and Garda specimens, nearest the former, being similar to it on the underside. All the markings on the upperside are considerably reduced, the black spots being affected as well as the bands, the two apical on the forewings being a little smaller than in *balcanica* and all the others reduced to mere points, or completely lost. In the loss of markings *durmitorensis* resembles Garda specimens, though as a rule the spots on the hindwings in the latter are still smaller. I have one specimen, however, which is indistinguishable from Garda ones on the upperside, but this is not normal, and the underside remains closer to *balcanica*. From these notes it might seem that *durmitorensis* was scarcely worthy of a name, but if attention was not drawn to this race it would be a certain source of trouble, for Durmitor specimens if taken as typical of *balcanica* would mislead anyone into concluding that the Garda race was the same as *balcanica*, or that it occurred in Montenegro, either of which would greatly confuse the records of the future.

(4) Nomenclature.—I take this opportunity to make three changes which unfortunately are necessary:

(a) *E. erinna*, Stg.—This name has already been changed once, by Staudinger himself, but as it is a secondary homonym of *Pap. erina*, Fab. 1787, it must be changed a second time. I propose the name *E. erinnyn*, nov. pro *erinna*, Stg.

(b) *E. tyndarus* var. *retjezatica*, Diósz.—This name is a primary homonym of *manto* var. *retjezatica*, Diósz. which has page priority over the former. For this Transylvanian form of *tyndarus* I propose the name, **transylvaniensis**, nov.

(c) *E. evias orientalis*, Rbl. (1914).—A primary homonym of *E. epiphron orientalis*, Elw. (*Trans. Ent. Soc. Lond.* 1900). I propose the name **rebeli** pro *orientalis*, Rbl.

It may be noted that in the case of (a) *erinna*, Stg., was never a valid name under any rules, only a synonym. If it were not for the rules on homonyms, it would fall under the law of priority. The older name, *erynnis*, is also a secondary homonym, which was why Staudinger changed it, noting that it was not wise to retain two similar names in the genus. He overlooked the *erina* of Fabricius or he would certainly have chosen another name. Whatever changes entomologists may make, it is to be hoped they do not alter the rules on homonyms, which are nearly "fool proof" in use, and of great value in dealing with the earliest names. But for them such familiar names as *E. aethiops* and *E. euryale* would be lost under the law of priority.

[These 3 examples of the homonymic stupidity of the "Zoological" Rules well emphasise the necessity for the Entomologists to make their own Rules which would apply as such to quite 95% of the world's organisms. As this is being done (notoriously slowly) it does not seem wise to add further to the already overloaded nomenclature. (a) *erinna* is not strictly a homonym of *erina*. (b) There seems no practical reason why the name *retyezatica*, Diósz. should not be applied to every *Erebia* species if necessary, even if it were a subspecies and (c) *orientalis* can be applied to every species if necessary.—Hy.J.T.]

Extracts from a letter dated November 7th, 1932 from H. W. Wilson, Hon. Sec., Lancashire and Cheshire Entomological Society.

Only three *Plusia gamma* and *Pyrameis atalanta* have been recorded for Lancashire and Cheshire this year.

Pyrameis cardui in the larval stage is usually observed on the coast sandhills in July, but I am not aware that the species has been seen there in 1932. It had been noted in three of the four preceding years including 1931. Since writing this I have learnt that a single imago was observed early in May at Freshfield, Lancs.

It would be interesting to know what evidence there is of the migration of *Plusia moneta*. The increase in the range of this species has been steady and its northward progress has been noted step by step. In these circumstances there does not seem to be any adequate reason for discarding the theory of its introduction with imported delphiniums, unless of course it has been observed well out to sea.

Pyrameis atalanta is apparently classified with *P. cardui* as a migrant, but its status as a migratory species seems to call for careful consideration. It is curious that although this insect is a very more abundant and more generally distributed species in this country than *P. cardui* the evidence of migration is not nearly so conclusive. I have not seen any reference to a migrating swarm consisting solely of *P. atalanta*, but mere notes of its presence, in much smaller numbers, accompanying migrating hordes of *P. cardui*.*

* See *Ent. Record*, Vol. XI, p. 279, 1899, *P. atalanta* seen in numbers 500 miles from the Lizard bound for S. America and *Ent. Mo. Mag.* No. 809, October 1931, p. 229, which gives an instance contradictory to this view.—T.D.



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