

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
BIOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTONA NEW BUTTERFLY FROM THE SOLOMON
ISLANDS.¹

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Among the butterflies sent home from the southwest Pacific area by Mr. James Paul Burke is an interesting undescribed form of the widely distributed and highly variable *Papilio priamus*, the first of the giant ornithopteras or "bird-winged butterflies" to come to the attention of Europeans.

This new form appears to be intermediate between *Papilio priamus urvillianus* from the Bismark Archipelago and the northern Solomon Islands and *P. p. coelestis* from the Louisiade Archipelago southeast of New Guinea. The average size is smaller than that of the former, while the color approaches that of the latter which, however, is markedly smaller.

In this species the colors of some of the forms, especially the blue or golden ones, are subject to a certain amount of alteration after preservation, and indeed may be variable in life. In the case of the specimens described below fifteen were received so soon after capture that they were still sufficiently flexible to be set without recourse to relaxation. The colors are presumably, therefore, those of the living insect.

Papilio priamus burkei, subsp. nov.

Male.—*Above*: Resembles the male of *P. p. urvillianus* from New Mecklenburg and Bougainville, but in fresh specimens slightly less greenish and somewhat darker, with age becoming a deeper purplish blue—plum purple of Ridgway; the greenish tinge frequently seen near the inner border of the hind wings in *P. p. urvillianus* is lacking. *Beneath*: In general similar to *P. p. urvillianus*; on the fore wings all the markings are darker and less greenish, and the spots in the interspaces are smaller; the hind wings are darker, the anterior and outer portions darker and more bluish green, the central and inner portions darker and more or less tinged with violet. The average size (length of fore wing) is less than in *P. p. urvillianus*, but the largest specimens of *P. p. burkei*

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are considerably larger (4 mm.) than the smallest of *P. p. urvillianus*. Described from 45 specimens.

Female.—*Above*: Resembles the female of *P. p. urvillianus*, but the light markings are lighter, clearer, and less infuscated, and on the fore wings more extensive, the band in the cell of the fore wings being usually large, broad, and conspicuous. *Beneath*: Resembles the female of *P. p. urvillianus*, but the light markings are clearer grayish white, not at all or only slightly infuscated. The body is less strongly tinged with yellow that it is in *P. p. urvillianus*. The average size (length of fore wing) is considerably less (11 mm.) than in *P. p. urvillianus*, and the largest specimens only just equal the smallest of that form. Described from 27 specimens.

Measurements.—There are available for comparison 20 specimens of *P. p. urvillianus* bearing the following data—New Mecklenburg (1); Bouin, Bougainville Island (5); "Siam" (presumably an erroneous transcription of "Bouin") (6); Solomon Islands (1); and without locality (presumably commercial specimens from Bougainville Island) (7).

The length of the fore wing in the specimens of *P. p. burkei* and *P. p. urvillianus* at hand is as follows:

<i>P. p. burkei</i>	<i>P. p. urvillianus</i>
♂ ♂ 76–89 mm. (average of 45, 84 mm.).	83–92 mm. (average of 9, 89 mm.)
♀ ♀ 82–106 mm. (average of 27, 99 mm.)	105–116 mm. (average of 11, 110 mm.)

Locality.—Southern Solomon Islands; collected by James Paul Burke.

Holotype, ♂, *Allotype*, ♀, and *Paratypes* ♂ and ♀, U. S. N. M., Cat. No. 57176. Other paratypes, male and female, have been presented by Mr. Burke to the Museum of Comparative Zoology, Cambridge, Mass.; the American Museum of Natural History, New York, N. Y.; the Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, Pa.; and the British Museum (Natural History), London, England.

Remarks.—Fresh males do not differ much in color above from males of *P. p. urvillianus*, but apparently they soon acquire the characteristic purplish cast which deepens with age so that worn males are markedly different. Males of any age are at once distinguishable by the smaller spots in the interspaces of the forewings below, and by the purer blue color of these spots. The females, judging from the series at hand, appear to be quite constant in their pattern, and are readily distinguishable from those of *P. p. urvillianus*.



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