

# Larvae found in the abdomen of Pyrginae Burmeister, 1878 (Lepidoptera : Hesperiiidae)

John G. Coutsis

**Samenvatting.** Rupsen gevonden in het abdomen van Pyrginae Burmeister, 1878 (Lepidoptera : Hesperiiidae)

Tijdens een studie van enkele vrouwelijke vlinders uit de subfamilie Pyrginae ontdekte de auteur een rups in het abdomen van *Muschampia proto* (Ochsenheimer, 1808) en van *Pyrgus serratulae* (Rambur, [1839]). Hoewel hij dit verschijnsel verklaart door het uitkomen van de eieren in het reeds dode moederdier, sluit hij de mogelijkheid van ovovivipariteit niet uit.

**Résumé.** Des chenilles trouvées dans l'abdomen chez les Pyrginae Burmeister, 1878 (Lepidoptera : Hesperiiidae)

Pendant l'étude de quelques papillons femelles appartenant à la sous-famille des Pyrginae, l'auteur découvrit une chenille dans l'abdomen de *Muschampia proto* (Ochsenheimer, 1808) et de *Pyrgus serratulae* (Rambur, [1839]). Bien qu'il explique ce phénomène comme étant dû à l'éclosion des oeufs dans l'animal femelle déjà mort, il n'exclut pas la possibilité d'ovoviviparité.

**Key words :** *Muschampia proto* - *Pyrgus serratulae* - ovoviviparity

Coutsis, J.G. : 4 Glykonos Street, GR-10675 Athens, Greece.

In the course of studying the genitalia of female butterflies belonging to the subfamily Pyrginae I came across two instances in which a single first instar larva was found in the abdomens of a *Muschampia proto* (Ochsenheimer, 1808) and a *Pyrgus serratulae* (Rambur, [1839]).

At first they were thought to be parasitic Hymenoptera, but a more careful examination disclosed that they were in fact larvae of Lepidoptera.

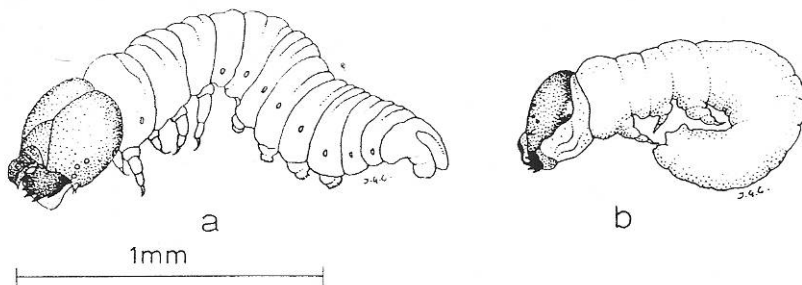


Fig. 1. First instar larva of : a) *Muschampia proto* (Ochsenheimer, 1808), Greece, Pelopónnisos, Mt. Didimo, 600 m, 12.IX.1965; b) *Pyrgus serratulae* (Rambur, [1839]), Greece, Mt. Timfristós, 1800 m, 12.VII.1974.

Fortunately and despite the adverse effects on them of KOH, they retained their general characters, thus making it possible for me to draw them fairly accurately with the aid of a stereomicroscope and its drawing tube (Fig. 1).

This phenomenon is at present not clearly understood; it suggests either that members of the Pyrginae may at times be partially ovoviviparous, or that the larvae under consideration developed from fertilized eggs within the dead and probably already dried-up bodies of the parental butterflies and finding no way out, subsequently themselves died within the parental abdomen. Although the second hypothesis appears more probable, one cannot rule out the first one, unless observations carried out on live Pyrginae conclusively show this not to be the case.

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