

A new *Erebia* species for the Greek fauna (Lepidoptera: Nymphalidae Satyrinae)

John Coutsis, Jos Dils, Nick Ghavalas & Dirk van der Poorten

Samenvatting. Een nieuwe *Erebia* soort voor de Griekse fauna (Lepidoptera: Nymphalidae Satyrinae). Een nieuwe *Erebia* soort voor de Griekse fauna wordt vermeld uit het centrale Pindosgebergte. Op basis van uiterlijke kenmerken en de mannelijke genitalia wordt deze soort voorlopig onder de naam *E. cassioides* (Reiner & Hohenwarth, 1792). Een korte beschrijving van het uiterlijk fenotype, de mannelijke genitalia en het biotoop worden eveneens gegeven. Deze soort vliegt samen met *E. ottomana* (Herrich-Schäffer, [1847]), doch deze laatste soort is dan reeds afgevlagen.

Résumé. Une nouvelle espèce d'*Erebia* pour la faune grecque (Lepidoptera: Nymphalidae Satyrinae). Une nouvelle espèce d'*Erebia* pour la faune grecque est rapportée de la partie centrale des monts du Pinde. Cette espèce est provisoirement nommée *E. cassioides* (Reiner & Hohenwarth, 1792) sur base du phenotype extérieur et des genitalia mâles. Une description succincte de l'aspect extérieur, des genitalia mâles, ainsi que du biotope, est également présentée. L'espèce cohabite avec *E. ottomana* (Herrich-Schäffer, [1847]), cette dernière étant alors déjà frottée.

Key words: *Erebia cassioides* – *Erebia ottomana* – Athamanon Mts. – Pindos – Greece.

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

Dils, J.: Krekelberg 149, B-2940 Hoenenen.

Ghavalas, N.: Karaoli Dimitriou 30, GR-12461 Athens.

van der Poorten, D.: Lanteemhofstraat 26, B-2140 Antwerpen.

Introductory remarks

During an entomological excursion early August 1992, Jos Dils explored the Athamanon Mts. in the central Pindos range, NW Greece. During this visit he captured 3 ♂ of a small *Erebia* species, that belong to the *E. tyndarus* group.

On the basis of this information, two further visits to the same area were carried out in the first half of August 1996 and 1997 by John Coutsis and Nick Ghavalas. During these ventures, 9 ♂ and 8 ♀ of the same *Erebia* species were added to the original series.

These specimens are smaller than *E. ottomana* (Herrich-Schäffer, [1847]), which is widespread in Greece; at the same time of their capture, the flight period of last-named species was almost over, very few worn specimen of it having been observed, while all the newly recorded specimens were fresh.

Further records of this taxon, that apparently is new to Greece, were also mentioned by Pamperis (1997), solely on the basis of photographic material in conjunction with observation dates (August). This author also mentions the coexistence of worn *E. ottomana* with fresh specimens of the “new” taxon.

Superficially, these butterflies come close to the taxon known as *E. cassioides* (Reiner & Hohenwarth, 1792) and, after study of the male genitalia and owing to the date of observation as well as the geographic location of this population, we are inclined at present to place them provisionally under this species name pending further karyological investigations and study of the early stages.

Diagnosis

External characters

- ♂ forewing length 19 to 21 mm (average 19.7 mm; n = 12);
- ♂ forewing upperside reddish brown band often invading cell, enclosing relatively large white-pupilled twin subapical ocelli;
- ♂ hindwing upperside ocelli not always well-defined;

Plate 1



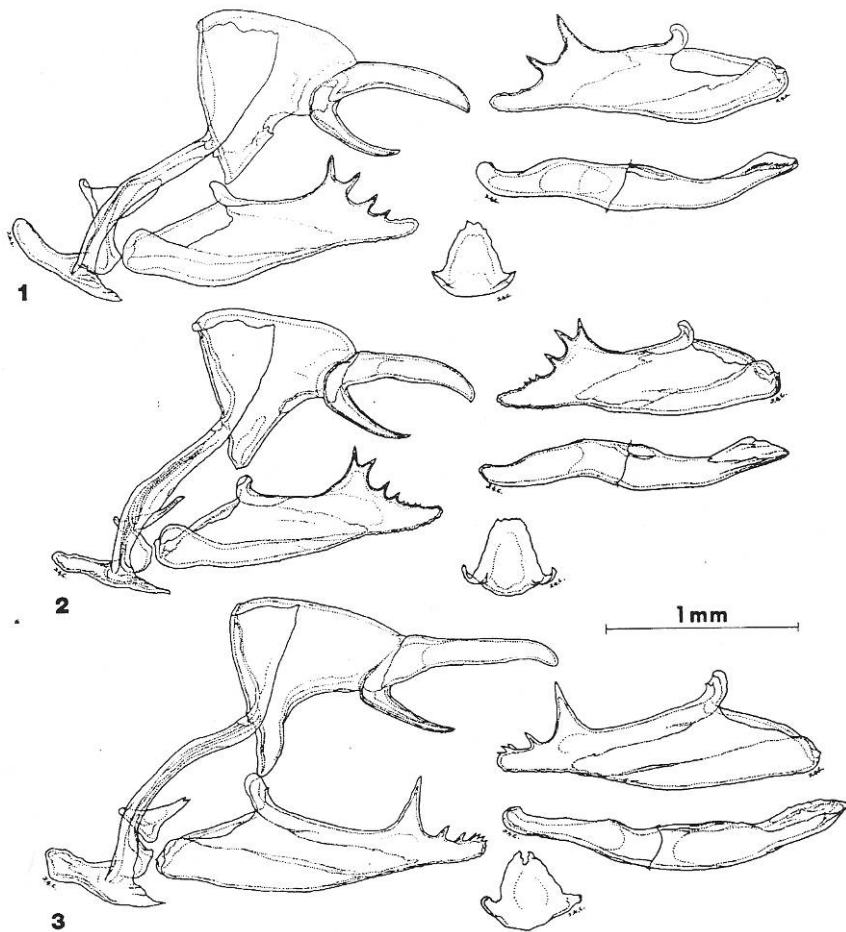


Fig. 1: *Erebia cassioides*, ♂ genitalia, Greece, Central Pindos Mts., Athamanon Mts., 1700 m, 3.VIII.1992, prep. JGC2560.

Fig. 2: *Erebia cassioides*, ♂ genitalia, Austria, Gross Glockner, 2000 m, 15.VIII.1972, prep. JGC2563.

Fig. 3: *Erebia ottomana*, ♂ genitalia, Greece, Mt. Timfi, 1400 m, 23.VII.1978, prep. JGC2619.

Legend of plate 1:

Figs. 1–8, 10–17: *Erebia cassioides* (Reiner & Hohenwarth, 1792)

Figs. 1–4, 6, 10–13, 15. Greece, Central Pindos Mts., Athamanon Mts., 1900 m, 11.VIII.1996, leg. J. Coutsis & N. Ghavalas.

Figs. 5, 14. Greece, Central Pindos Mts., Athamanon Mts., 1800 m, 3.VIII.1992, leg. J. Dils.

Figs. 7, 16. Bulgaria, Central Stara Planina, Mts. under Ravnetz Top, 1920 m, 8.VIII.1995, leg. S. Beshkov.

Figs. 8, 17. SW. Bulgaria, Mt. Rila, alpine meadows near Grantchar chalet, 2600–2700 m, 4.VIII.1994, leg. Z. Kolev.

Figs. 9, 18: *Erebia ottomana* (Herrich-Schäffer, [1847])

Figs. 9, 18. Greece, Trikala, Kataras Pass, 1850 m, 18.VII.1981, leg. D. van der Poorten.

(Figs. 1–4, 6, 10–13, 15 × 0.84)

(Figs. 5, 7–9, 14, 16–18 × 1.03)

- ♂ hindwing underside light blue–grey with washed out irrorations and indistinct to absent darker distal band (this last character probably related to adaptation to the substrate, a phenomenon known in many satyrine butterflies);
 - ♀ forewing length 18 to 23 mm (average 21.1 mm; n = 8);
 - ♀ upperside ground-colour and markings as in male, but paler;
 - ♀ hindwing underside as in male, but of a lighter colour;
- The specimens are shown on plate 1.

Male genitalia

The most important differentiating characters are the relative length of the uncus (longer in *E. ottomana*) and the length and shape of the apex angularis of the vinculum (longer, slenderer at base and with more or less parallel sides in *E. ottomana*, shorter, wider at base and triangular in *E. "cassioides"* (compare figs. 1–2 and 3).

Habitat

The butterflies were found flying together with *E. melas* (Herbst, 1796), a few worn *E. ottomana* and *Parnassius apollo* (Linnaeus, 1758) at an altitude of 1800–1900 m over screes, richly covered with flowers. We observed a blue-flowered *Eryngium* species to be a major nectar source.

Reference

Pamperis, L., 1997. *The Butterflies of Greece*. A. Bastas-D. Plessas Graphic Arts S.A., Athens. XII + 559 pp.