

NEW RECORD OF *MEMPHIS GRANDIS* FROM VENEZUELA (LEPIDOPTERA: NYMPHALIDAE)

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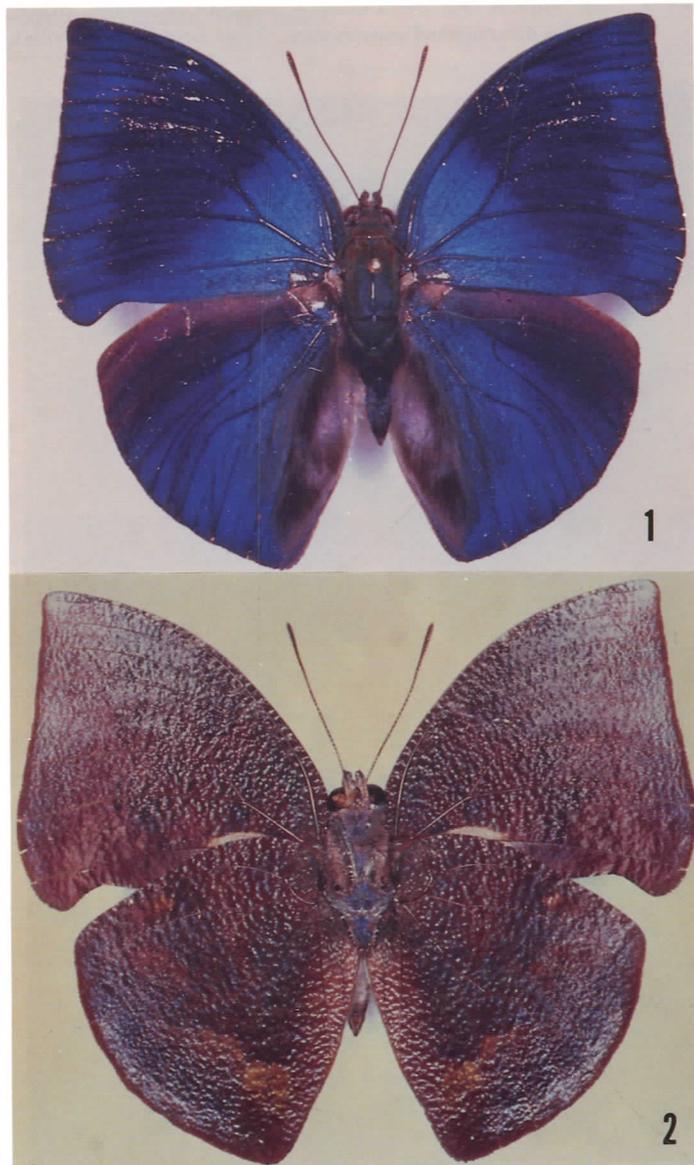
ABSTRACT.— *Memphis grandis* Druce is recorded from southern Venezuela extending considerably the range of this species.

key words: Amazon, Bolivia, Brazil, distribution, Neotropical, Peru, South America.

Our knowledge on *Memphis grandis* since its description by Druce, in 1877 did not improve essentially. Its habits, hosts and early stages remain totally unknown. While its general appearance indicates its affinity with *Memphis polycarmes* Fabricius (it was placed next to this species in the systematical arrangement of Comstock, 1961), the male genitalal structure places it closer to *Memphis lynceus* Röber. As far as its distribution is concerned, it was considered until now as a typical inhabitant of the Central Amazon basin, as it was found mainly along this river between Manaus and Obidos. Bryk (1953) recorded a single female from San Martin province (northern Peru, foot of the Andes) and described it as a distinct subspecies: *Memphis grandis tuoma*. This name was not recognized by Comstock (1961). Witt (1970) did not list this species among Bolivian representatives of the genus *Anaea* (sensu lato). The recent research carried out by Emmel and Austin (1990) in the lowland forests of the Rondonia province (western Brazil) did not prove the existence of *M. grandis* in the southern portion of the Amazonian hylea.

My survey of the Venezuelan, private and public, butterfly collections, carried out in 1991/1992 revealed one specimen of *Memphis grandis* collected in Venezuela. This specimen, a beautiful fresh male, is stored in the collection of Mr. Benito Gutierrez, in Altigracia de Orituco (Guarico State), and was caught in the area of Para falls, middle Caura river, Bolivar State, in January 1990. This finding extends considerably northward the range of *M. grandis*. The fact that only one specimen was taken until now in the quite well explored zone of the Caura river, around Jabillar, means that *M. grandis* is either extremely rare or/and a canopy inhabitant.

Forewing length of the Venezuelan specimen is 32mm. The dark blue ground color is slightly lighter along the forewing margin. Hindwing tornus is rounded, differing in this respect from the specimen illustrated by Comstock (1961). This specimen represents, as far as I know, the first published photography of *M. grandis* (D'Abrera, 1988, did not find any material in the BMNH, London).



1. *Memphis grandis* Druce, male. recto

2. *Memphis grandis* Druce, male. verso

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