

# THECLINAE OF RONDÔNIA, BRAZIL: *IASPIS* KAYE, TAXONOMIC COMMENTS AND DESCRIPTIONS OF NEW SPECIES (LEPIDOPTERA: LYCAENIDAE)

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**ABSTRACT.**—*Iaspis* is a colorful genus of Neotropical Theclinae (Lycaenidae). The seven previously recognized species are briefly characterized and two additional species, *Thecla exiguus* H. H. Druce and *Thecla castimonia* H. H. Druce, newly associated with the genus based on examinations of types and other material. Lectotypes are designated for *Thecla beera* Hewitson, *T. castitas* H. H. Druce and *T. verania* Hewitson. Twelve species of *Iaspis* were found during studies near Cacaupônia, Rondônia, Brazil. Of these, only *Iaspis thabena* (Hewitson) and *I. verania* represented described species. The remaining ten species, *Iaspis rufa* n. sp., *Iaspis grandis* n. sp., *Iaspis rubricunda* n. sp., *Iaspis flava* n. sp., *Iaspis purpurata* n. sp., *Iaspis ornata* n. sp., *Iaspis minuta* n. sp., *Iaspis ambiguanota* n. sp., *Iaspis fumosa* n. sp., and *Iaspis sinenota* n. sp., are described and illustrated. The results of this paper further stress the importance of carefully studying local faunal samples with reference to a consilience of internal and external features and correctly associating names with comparable constellations of characters in historical type material.

**KEY WORDS:** Ecuador, Eumaeini, *Iaspis ambiguanota* n. sp., *Iaspis flava* n. sp., *Iaspis fumosa* n. sp., *Iaspis grandis* n. sp., *Iaspis minuta* n. sp., *Iaspis ornata* n. sp., *Iaspis purpurata* n. sp., *Iaspis rubricunda* n. sp., *Iaspis rufa* n. sp., *Iaspis sinenota* n. sp., Neotropical, *Rhamma*, *Thecla*.

The region in the vicinity of Cacaupônia, central Rondônia, Brazil, studied since 1989 (Emmel, 1989; Emmel and Austin, 1990), harbors the greatest known diversity of butterflies with over 1500 recorded species (Austin *et al.*, ms). The area investigated includes about 4000 ha of variously disturbed typical lowland tropical rainforest with a strikingly seasonal climate (Austin *et al.*, in prep.; Austin and Johnson, 1995). This paper on *Iaspis* Kaye continues a series of papers on the Theclinae (Lycaenidae) fauna of the Cacaupônia region.

## *IASPIS* Kaye

**Historical Review.**—*Iaspis* was proposed for *Thecla temesa* Hewitson, 1868 without further description or elaboration of congeners (Kaye, 1904; see also Hemming, 1967). Because of this, the name has been little-used in the literature and seldom employed for local or regional lists of Eumaeini. Johnson (1991) gave a detailed diagnosis of the genus, recognized five described species of Draudt's (1919) *Thecla thabena* Hewitson, 1868 group as members: *Thecla temesa*; *Thecla thabena*; *Thecla talayra* Hewitson, 1868; *Thecla beera* Hewitson, 1870; and *Thecla castitas* Druce, 1907, and identified holotypes or designated lectotypes for them. Lamas (1994) included *Thecla verania* Hewitson in *Iaspis*.

Examination of private and museum collections of Eumaeini indicated these names have been rather haphazardly employed by workers, without reference to the type specimens and, particularly, to such important characters as forewing androconia on

males. In fact, although the number of species names generally employed for *Iaspis* is small, the genus is actually very diverse. When type specimens and their characters including general wing pattern are studied, many of the identifications in collections (and hence, in the literature) prove incorrect. Johnson (1992) noted a similar situation for the speciose "elfin" group *Rhamma*. In *Rhamma*, as in *Iaspis*, a few historical names had been variously applied to a large number of species without attention to accurate initial diagnosis of gender or external characters other than general color and pattern. Specimens without forewing brands (even if males) were often identified as females of similar looking males; brand size and location in males, if consulted at all, were very generalized and genitalic dissections were seldom made. This problem in lycaenid systematics has recently received attention by several workers (Bálint, 1992; Johnson, 1992, 1995) and explains the "explosive" increase in recognized diversity in studies like the present one (see also discussion in Austin and Johnson, 1995). For instance, Johnson (1991), who studied *Iaspis* only as an outgroup and described *Iaspis diffusa*, knew of only two undescribed species referable to the genus. Recent concentration on identifying the group in numerous study areas in Latin America, however, has revealed a spate of species requiring description. This results primarily because the historical types of *Iaspis* in many instances derive from haphazard South American localities in regions primarily characterized by lowland tropical forest. Thus, not only do each of these localities actually have numerous additional *Iaspis* species, the applicability of the historical names outside these regions (for instance to Central