



# TROPICAL LEPIDOPTERA NEWS

December 1991

No. 4

## A Lepidoptera Expedition to Western Kenya

During August 10-22, 1991, fifteen avid lepidopterists and photographers took off for Kenya. Our goal was to explore the westernmost parts of that country, north of Lake Victoria, where the most eastern extension of the West African rain forest barely enters Kenya. Our quest was rewarded by some of the most spectacular African photography and collecting that we had ever experienced. A major article, illustrated in color, will be published on our findings in a 1992 issue of the journal *Tropical Lepidoptera*, and we can only briefly touch on the highlights here.

The first week was spent exploring the Kakamega Forest area near the town of Kakamega in extreme western Kenya. We had every possible cooperation from the Kenya Wildlife Service, which had been previously contacted for the proper permits and research authorization. On a typical day, we would drive out on muddy roads to a trail head and then spend most of the day hiking through the woods, photographing and sampling the great diversity of butterflies here. More than a dozen species of *Charaxes* were found, and at least seven species of *Acraea*. A remarkable diversity of swallowtails, *Precis* buckeyes and other nymphalid species, a half dozen or more hairstreak species, several species of giant *Salamis* nymphalids, many satyrid species, and many pierid species were encountered. Because of the elevation of this rain forest (averaging around 5,300' above sea level), conditions were relatively cool and pleasant throughout the day. Baiting with urine and feces was especially successful for *Charaxes* (and a surprising number of other species). Baiting along open trails was at least as successful as using bait traps for sampling.

After a week of working the area around Kakamega, we drove to Lake Naivasha where we found a rather surprisingly large number of dry savanna butterflies flying at the height of the dry season there. These included a half dozen species of pierids, numerous hairstreaks and blues, as well as *Papilio dardanus*, *P. demodocus*, and three species of *Precis*. From here we reached our next main sampling site on August 18, at Sekenani Camp, a private safari camp located just outside the boundary of Masai

Mara Game Reserve in southwestern Kenya. Here at Sekenani Camp, several springs in separate canyons fed two streams, and a rich riverine forest had developed here. The camp was only two years old, and offered outstanding lodging and meals. Whereas we had encountered about 200 species of butterflies at Kakamega Forest in a week, here in the savanna country we were surprised to find as many as 100 species flying in the Sekenani Camp area. In fact, photography and collecting were so good here that most of the group preferred to stay in the camp area for the entire day rather than taking some of the big game drives that were also available! Regardless of one's choice of activities, both butterfly sampling and big game viewing were outstanding and we vowed with equal fervor to return to Sekenani Camp at the next possible opportunity and spend a longer time as well!

Overall, Kenya offers marvelous collecting and photographic opportunities for the lepidopterist. Like in all tropical collecting, the timing and location are key. We found Kakamega Forest and Sekenani Camp to be superb in August, and plan a return expedition, tentatively slated for August 1993. Further details will be published on the 1991 trip in a *Tropical Lepidoptera* article, and *Tropical Lepidoptera News* will carry an announcement of the dates and details of the 1993 trip by summer 1992 to allow time for advanced planning.

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**TROPICAL LEPIDOPTERA SEPARATES:** Articles from *Tropical Lepidoptera* can now be purchased for \$1 for the first page and 25¢ for each additional page. Specify author, volume, and page numbers when ordering. Members may also buy additional copies of *Tropical Lepidoptera* issues for \$10.00 each.

### TRAVEL NOTICES

**1992 Holbrook Travel Lepidoptera Expeditions:**

Apr 1992:	Rondonia, Brazil (two weeks)
May 1-8, 1992:	Tinalandia, Ecuador
Aug 1-15, 1992:	Taiwan, Republic of China
Sep 1992:	Rondonia, Brazil
Nov 1992:	Rondonia, Brazil

### TO OUR READERS

The membership list for 1990-91, including members to December 1991 is included herein. The December 1991 issue of *Tropical Lepidoptera* is in press, with a publication date set for December 30, and should be arriving to all members sometime in January (please check your dues payment to verify payment for 1991). Remember, a life membership provides first class domestic mailing of your copy and free airmail to members outside of North America.

Members will note there is a new ATL Annual Photo Contest, set to begin in 1992. Information on the contest is included in your 1992 dues notice. I hope many of you will enter the contest. Not only will you possibly be a winner, but all the many excellent photos will be displayed at the April annual meeting and winning photos will also be published in the May *Tropical Lepidoptera* issue, so all our members and readers can enjoy viewing them. Perhaps in the future the prizes will be larger.

The annual meeting, set for 1992 for April 10-11, will be a yearly Gainesville symposium on the tropical diversity of Lepidoptera worldwide. We hope more of you will be able to attend. The April meeting date continues to be the most useful in allowing many members to attend the meeting, but please let us know if other dates would be more convenient.

J. B. Heppner  
Executive Director

### NOTES

1. Some of the specialized publications planned for 1991 have been shifted to 1992 due to lack of prepaid orders to date.

### DUES IN FOREIGN CURRENCY

Members outside of the U.S. often have excessive bank charges for transfer of dues and other payments in U.S. Dollars. To help alleviate this problem, payment for membership can be sent as US\$25 in cash or in the following currencies and amounts (NOTE: this is for cash sent as paper money only):

**FRANCE:** F. 150.00, **GERMANY:** DM 45.00, **JAPAN:** ¥ 4,000, **UNITED KINGDOM:** £ 15.00, **TAIWAN:** NT\$ 750.

### ASSOCIATION P. O. BOX CHANGE

Our Post Office box number has changed again to the following: **P. O. Box 141210, Gainesville, FL 32614-1210.**

We decided to open our own ATL box, however your mail will not go astray for at least a year if you still use the old addresses.

### ANNUAL MEETING 1992

The 1992 Annual Meeting will be held April 10-11, in Gainesville, Florida. The main meeting day will be Saturday, April 11. We hope many of you will attend. Please send in your form to request further information (on the 1992 dues notice).

# ASSOCIATION FOR TROPICAL LEPIDOPTERA

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December 30, 1991