

# TWO NEW RECORDS OF *AGRIAS CLAUDINA INTERMEDIA* FROM EASTERN COLOMBIA (LEPIDOPTERA: NYMPHALIDAE: CHARAXINAE)

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**ABSTRACT.**— New and recent records of *Agrias claudina intermedia* Fassl are noted from Villavicencio (Meta) and the "bota caucana" zone (Cauca Oriental) in the eastern slope of the Eastern Cordillera of Colombia.

**KEY WORDS:** Amazon, Bolivia, distribution, Neotropical, Peru, South America.

*Agrias claudina intermedia* Fassl (1912) (Fig. 1) is an exquisite butterfly, originally described from Colombia, from the upper Río Negro, near Villavicencio (Meta), on the eastern slope of the Eastern Cordillera. According to Stichel (1939), Rebillard (1961), Barselou (1983) and D'Abrera (1987), its distribution is recorded from the eastern mountains of the Colombian Andes south to the northern affluents of the Amazon: Río Caquetá, Río Putumayo and Río Negro.

The systematics of the genus *Agrias* Doubleday, 1844, are very complicated. D'Abrera (1987) for example, indicates that *A. claudina intermedia* is a poorly defined race, resembling *Agrias aedon* Hewitson, 1848. Other workers, like Stichel (1939), Rebillard (1961), and Barselou (1983), retain *A. c. intermedia* in the *sardanapalus* species-group. Descimon (1976) summarized the systematic history and treated *Agrias sardanapalus* Bates as a subspecies of *Agrias claudina* Godart, 1824, because the latter has priority.

In the last five years, butterfly collectors working on the eastern slope of the Eastern Cordillera of Colombia have found two male specimens of *A. claudina intermedia* that closely resemble the Andean species, *A. aedon*, and *Agrias claudina lugens* Staudinger, 1888, from the western Amazon (eastern Peru and Bolivia). One adult male was captured with Van Someren-Rydon traps, on the "bota caucana" zone (Río Villalobos, 800m) in July 1993, and a second male, perched high on the subcanopy vegetation, was caught with a tropical net in a forest near the city of Villavicencio, delimited by the Guaitiaua River (November 1993). Here in the tropical rain forest, I also captured two males of *Agrias amydon larseni* Fassl, 1911, over dung of a horse; with *A. claudina intermedia* I have never seen this behavior and the species is comparatively more rare than *A. m. larseni*. In the Villavicencio zone, we have records only of two species of *Agrias*, but toward southern Colombia, in the Putumayo-Cauca border ("bota caucana"), we have recorded 3-4 species (Salazar, 1991), restricted to tropical wet forest (800-1200m elev.) and



Fig. 1. *Agrias claudina intermedia* Fassl ♂ (photo by J. H. Vélez).

associated with lowland wet forest species from the Amazon basin such as *Agrias beatifica stuarti* Godman & Salvin, 1882.

According to Fassl (1912), *A. claudina intermedia* is a transitional taxon between *A. aedon* on the recto side and to *A. claudina lugens* on the verso side, but *A. aedon* is Andean in origin, while *A. c. lugens* and *A. c. intermedia* are Amazonian subspecies (Descimon, 1977). Barselou (1983) illustrated a male of *A. claudina intermedia*, similar to our specimen from Cauca. The male from Villavicencio has a small blue patch on the hind wings, but in general the taxon is variable in size and color (Lichy, 1972). The habitat of this butterfly in the Cauca zone, is





Fig. 2. View of the "bota caucana" zone near Río Villalobos, Cauca, Colombia (photo by J. A. Salazar).

very humid and very diverse in biotic composition (Fig. 2). In contrast, Villavicencio is a disturbed area, but with very large patches of forest remaining that belong to Río Negro and Río Guaitiquia influences. Those habitats, characterized by Holdridge (1971) as tropical rain forest and wet humid premontane forest, have been taken over by guerrillas and for now are too dangerous for exploration.

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