

Genus *Vanessula* Dewitz, 1887

Entomologische Nachrichten. Berlin **13**: 145 (145-146).

Type-species: *Vanessula buchneri* Dewitz, by monotypy.

The genus *Vanessula* belongs to the Family Nymphalidae Rafinesque, 1815; Subfamily Nymphalinae Rafinesque, 1815. The tribal placement in the subfamily is *incertae sedis*. There is one other genus that is also *incertae sedis* in the Afrotropical Region, namely *Kallimoides*.

Vanessula (Lady's Maid) is an Afrotropical genus containing a single species.

**Vanessula milca* (Hewitson, [1873])

Lady's Maid



Male (left) and female (right) of the Lady's Maid (*Vanessula milca latifasciata*).
Kibale Forest, Uganda. Image courtesy Raimund Schutte.

Liptena milca Hewitson, [1873] *in* Hewitson, [1872-7]. *Illustrations of new species of exotic butterflies* 5: 86 (127 pp.). London.



Vanessula milca latifasciata. Male (Wingspan 35 mm). Left – upperside; right – underside.
Mabira Forest, Uganda. 14 June 2008. J. Dobson.
Images M.C. Williams ex Dobson Collection.



Vanessula milca latifasciata. Female. Left – upperside; right – underside.
Semuliki National Park, Uganda. 5 June 2017. J. Dobson.
Images M.C. Williams ex Dobson Collection.

Alternative common name: Black and Orange.

Type locality: “West Africa”.

Distribution: Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Nigeria, Cameroon, Gabon, Congo, Angola, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia.

Habitat: Dense and riverine forest (Kielland, 1990d). In Tanzania subspecies *latifasciata* is found at altitudes from 800 to 1 500 m (Kielland, 1990d). Mostly in hilly country, above 800 m, at least in West Africa (Larsen, 2005a).

Habits: This species is patchily distributed but may be numerous where it occurs and is usually associated with streams (Larsen, 2005a). Mainly seen flying in clearings and along roads (Larsen, 1991c). The flight is feeble and close to the ground, specimens frequently settling on low vegetation (Kielland, 1990d). Larsen (2005a) states that the flight pattern is remarkably like that of *Acraea bonasia*, with which it invariably flies in Nigeria and Cameroon. Specimens are often noted feeding from flowers (Larsen, 1991c). Males were noted feeding from the carcass of a civet run over by a car (Larsen, 1991c).

Early stages: Nothing published.

Larval food: Nothing published.

Vanessula milca milca (Hewitson, [1873])

Liptena milca Hewitson, [1873] *in* Hewitson, [1872-7]. *Illustrations of new species of exotic butterflies* 5: 86 (127 pp.). London.

Type locality: “West Africa”.

Distribution: Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ghana.

Specific localities:

Guinea – Conakry area (Larsen, 2005a).

Sierra Leone – Loma Mountains (Larsen, 2005a); Gola Mountains (Larsen, 2005a).

Liberia – Yendamalahoun (Larsen, 2005a).

Ghana – Atewa Range (Larsen, 2005a).

Vanessula milca angustifascia Joicey & Talbot, 1928

Vanessula milca angustifascia Joicey & Talbot, 1928. *Bulletin of the Hill Museum, Witley* 2: 26 (19-27).

Type locality: Ivory Coast: “Côte d’Ivoire: Bofesso, 15 miles North of Man”.

Distribution: Ivory Coast (Nimba Mountains).

Specific localities:

Ivory Coast – Bofesso, 24 km north of Man (TL).

Vanessula milca buechneri Dewitz, 1887

Vanessula buechneri Dewitz, 1887. *Entomologische Nachrichten. Berlin* **13**: 146 (145-146).

Vanessula milca buechneri Dewitz, 1887. Larsen, 2005a, **stat. nov.**

Type locality: “Centralafrika”.

Distribution: Nigeria (east), Cameroon, Gabon, Congo, Angola, Central African Republic.

Specific localities:

Nigeria – Mambilla Plateau (Larsen, 2005a); Obudu Plateau (Larsen, 2005a); Okwangwo (Larsen, 2005a); Oban Hills (Larsen, 2005a).

Cameroon – Korup, at 1 100 m (Larsen, 2005a).

Gabon – Akaka (Vande weghe, 2010); Lope N.P. (Vande weghe, 2010); camp Nouna (Vande weghe, 2010).

Central African Republic – Dzanga (Noss, 1998).

Vanessula milca latifasciata Joicey & Talbot, 1928

Vanessula milca latifasciata Joicey & Talbot, 1928. *Bulletin of the Hill Museum, Witley* **2**: 26 (19-27).



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Vanessula milca latifasciata. Female. Left – upperside; right – underside.
Semuliki National Park, Uganda. 5 June 2017. J. Dobson.
Images M.C. Williams ex Dobson Collection.

Type locality: [Democratic Republic of Congo]: “Butahu River, Semliki Valley”.

Distribution: Democratic Republic of Congo (east, north and south), Uganda, Kenya (west), Tanzania (west), Zambia (north-west and Copperbelt).

Specific localities:

Democratic Republic of Congo – Butahu River, Semliki Valley (TL); Ituri Forest (Ducarme, 2018); Semuliki Valley (Ducarme, 2018); Mt Blue (Ducarme, 2018).

Uganda – Semuliki N.P. (Davenport & Howard, 1996); Kibale Forest (R. Schutte, unpublished).

Kenya – Mau (Larsen, 1991c); Nandi (Larsen, 1991c); Kakamega Forest (Larsen, 1991c; male and female illustrated above); Cherangani Hills (Larsen, 1991c); Kitale (Larsen, 1991c).

Tanzania – Mpanda and Kigoma Districts (Kielland, 1990d).

Zambia – Ikelenge (Heath *et al.*, 2002); Mwinilunga (Heath *et al.*, 2002); Solwezi (Heath *et al.*, 2002); Mufulira (Heath *et al.*, 2002).