

## Genus *Argyraspodes* Tite & Dickson, 1973 Warrior Silver-spotted Copper

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Type-species: *Zeritis argyraspis* Trimen, 1873, by original designation.

The genus *Argyraspodes* belongs to the Family Lycaenidae Leach, 1815; Subfamily Aphnaeinae Distant, 1884; Subtribe Aloeidina Grishin, 2023a (Zhang *et al.* 2023a. Butterfly Classification and Species Discovery Using Genomics". *The Taxonomic Report of the International Lepidoptera Survey* **11** (3): 36). The other genera in the Subtribe Aloeidina in the Afrotropical Region are *Aloeides*, *Erikssonina* and *Trimenia*.

*Argyraspodes* (**Warrior Silver-spotted Copper**) is a purely Afrotropical genus containing a single species.

### *Argyraspodes argyraspis* (Trimen, 1873) Warrior Silver-spotted Copper



Warrior Silver-spotted copper underside. Springbok, 21 September 2013.  
Image courtesy Steve Woodhall.

*Zeritis argyraspis* Trimen, 1873. *Transactions of the Entomological Society of London* **1873**: 114 (101-124).

*Zeritis argyraspis* Trimen, 1873. Trimen & Bowker, 1887b.

*Phasis argyraspis* Trimen. Swanepoel, 1953a.

*Argyraspodes argyraspis* (Trimen, 1873). Tite & Dickson, 1973 **comb. nov.**

*Argyraspodes argyraspis* (Trimen, 1873). Dickson & Kroon, 1978.

*Argyraspodes argyraspis* (Trimen, 1873). Pringle *et al.*, 1994: 177.

*Argyraspodes argyraspis* Trimen, 1873. d'Abrera, 2009: 714.



*Argyraspodes argyraspis*. Male (Wingspan 36 mm). Left – upperside; right – underside.  
Near Koekenaap, Northern Cape Province, South Africa. 12 October 2008. M. Williams.  
Images M.C. Williams ex Williams Collection.



*Argyraspodes argyraspis*. Female (Wingspan 40 mm). Left – upperside; right – underside.  
Riemvasmaak, Northern Cape Province, South Africa. 22 March 2009. M. Williams.  
Images M.C. Williams ex Williams Collection.

**Type locality:** [South Africa]: “Beaufort, Burghersdorp, and Murraysburg, Cape Colony”.

**Distribution:** Botswana (south-west), Namibia (south and central?), South Africa (Free State Province – south-west, Eastern Cape Province, Western Cape Province, Northern Cape Province).

**Specific localities:**

Botswana – Tshabong (T. Liversidge); Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park (Larsen, 1991); Molopo Valley (Larsen, 1991); Aoub-Nosop rivers junction (Larsen, 1991).

Namibia – Aus (Van Son, 1959); Tiras Mountains (D. Plowes); Elizabeth Bay (D. Plowes); Gross Herzog peak, Auas Mtns, just south of Windhoek (Swart, 2004).

Free State Province – Bethulie (Swanepoel, 1953); Philippolis (Swanepoel, 1953); Springfontein (Pringle *et al.*, 1994); Cyferfontein [-30.3736 25.8131] (R. Giesel, unpublished).

Eastern Cape Province – Burghersdorp (Kannemeyer); Graaff-Reinet (Swanepoel, 1953); Klipplaat (Swanepoel, 1953); Somerset East (Swanepoel, 1953); Cradock (Swanepoel, 1953); Klaarstroom (Pringle *et al.*, 1994).

Western Cape Province – Murraysburg (Muskett); Beaufort West (Layard); Bitterfontein (Swanepoel, 1953); Piketberg (Pringle *et al.*, 1994); Het Kruis (Pringle *et al.*, 1994); Clanwilliam (Duke).

Northern Cape Province – Springbok (Swanepoel, 1953); Pofadder (Swanepoel, 1953); Fraserburg Road (Swanepoel, 1953); Carnarvon (Swanepoel, 1953); Noupoort (Swanepoel, 1953); Hanover (Swanepoel, 1953); Colesberg (Pringle *et al.*, 1994); Kagaligadi Transfrontier Park – 10 miles north of Twee Rivieren, in the bed of the Nossob River (van Son, 1959); south-west of Olifantshoek (Cottrell).

**Habitat:** Karoo and dry savanna.

**Habits:** The flight is very fast but specimens rest frequently, on rocks or the ground. On occasion it will alight on low vegetation (Pringle *et al.*, 1994). Males show hilltopping behaviour, arriving at the summits of hill tops only after 14h30 (Terblanche, 2015).

**Flight period:** August to April, but unlikely to be continuous in one particular locality (Pringle *et al.*, 1994).

**Early stages:**

Heath & Zielske, 2015

The egg and first instar larva of *Argyraspodes argyraspis* are described and illustrated in detail for the first time, together with observations on oviposition behaviour. Indications inferred from larval morphology and behaviour suggest that it has an aphytophagous life history and may be a predator of ant brood or Hemiptera during early instars. Strong, albeit circumstantial evidence is presented that it has an obligate association with the Brown Cocktail Ant (*Crematogaster melanogaster* Emery), but that this interaction is unlikely to be mutualistic initially.

**Larval food:** Nothing published.

**Associated ant:**

Suspected to be *Crematogaster melanogaster* Emery (Formicidae) [Heath & Zielske, 2015].

*labuschagnei* van Son, 1959 (as f. of *Phasis argyraspis*). *Koedoe* (2): 57 (52-59). South Africa: “Nossob River bed, 10 miles north of Twee Rivieren”. Described from one male and three females; all housed in the Transvaal Museum, Pretoria.