

Genus *Afrogegenes* De Jong & Coutsis, 2017 Dodgers

De Jong & Coutsis, 2017. *Tijdschrift voor Entomologie* **160**: 41-60. Type-species: *Hesperia hottentota* Latreille, 1823, by original designation).

The genus *Afrogegenes* belongs to the Family HesperIIDae Latreille, 1809; Subfamily HesperIIDae Latreille, 1809; Tribe Baorini Doherty, 1886. Other genera in the Tribe Baorini are *Gegenes*, *Brusa*, *Zenonia*, *Parnara*, *Borbo*, *Larsenia* and *Pelopidas*.

Afrogegenes (**Dodgers**) is a genus of three Afrotropical species (De Jong & Coutsis, 2017).

**Afrogegenes hottentota* (Latreille, [1824])# Masked Dodger

Hesperia hottentota Latreille, [1824] *in* Latreille & Godart, [1819], [1824]. *Encyclopédie Méthodique. Histoire Naturelle [Zoologie]* **9** Entomologie: 777 (1-328 [1819], 329-828 [1824]). Paris.

Pamphila hottentota (Latreille, 1823). Trimen & Bowker, 1889. [misidentification for *Gegenes niso*]

Gegenes hottentota Latreille, 1824. Swanepoel, 1953a. [misidentification for *Gegenes niso*]

Gegenes hottentota (Latreille, 1823). Dickson & Kroon, 1978.

Gegenes hottentota (Latreille, 1824). Pringle *et al.*, 1994: 336.

Afrogegenes hottentota (Latreille, 1824). De Jong & Coutsis, 2017.



Afrogegenes hottentota. Male (Wingspan 33 mm). Left – upperside; right – underside.
Rayton, Gauteng, South Africa. 15 March 1998. M. Williams.
Images M.C. Williams ex Williams Collection.



Afrogegenes hottentota. Female (Wingspan 34 mm). Left – upperside; right – underside.
Port St Johns, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. 23 March 2008. J. Dobson.
Images M.C. Williams ex Dobson Collection.

Alternative common name: Moeras-hotnot (Afrikaans).

Type locality: [South Africa]: “Cap de Bonne-Espérance”. [*Patria falsa*]. Holotype male in the Paris Museum.

Diagnosis: On the forewing upperside the black tornal patch is diagnostic (Pringle *et al.*, 1994).

Distribution: Sub-Saharan Africa, including Senegal, Gambia, Mali, Guinea-Bissau (Bivar-de-Sousa *et al.*, 2016), Guinea, Burkina Faso, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Benin (throughout), Nigeria, Gabon, Angola, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Botswana, South Africa (Limpopo Province, Mpumalanga, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape Province), Swaziland (Duke *et al.*, 1999). Also in Saudi Arabia (south-west), Yemen.

Specific localities:

Gambia – Basse (Jon Baker, pers. comm., May 2020).

Benin – Houeyogbe Forest (Coache & Rainon, 2016); see Coache *et al.*, 2017.

Nigeria – Ikoyi Island, Lagos (Larsen, 2005a); Ekonganaku, Oban Hills (Larsen, 2005a).

Gabon – Iguela (Vande weghe, 2010); Ekouyi, Bateke Plateau (Vande weghe, 2010).

Angola – Benguela Province; Bie Province; Huambo Province; Kuando-Kubango Province; Moxico Province (Mendes *et al.*, 2013).

Democratic Republic of Congo – Ituri Forest (Ducarme, 2018); Semuliki Valley (Ducarme, 2018); Mt Mitumba (Ducarme, 2018).

Tanzania – Pemba Island (Kielland, 1990d); Kimboza Forest (Kielland, 1990d); Uluguru Mountains (Kielland, 1990d); Uzungwa Range (Kielland, 1990d); Njombe Highlands (Kielland, 1990d); Mikumi National Park (Kielland, 1990d); Ufipa (Kielland, 1990d); Mpanda (Kielland, 1990d); Kigoma (Kielland, 1990d); Ngara District (Kielland, 1990d); Northern Highlands (Kielland, 1990d); Katavi National Park (Fitzherbert *et al.*, 2006).

Malawi – Mt Mulanje (Congdon *et al.*, 2010).

Zambia – Mwinilunga (Heath *et al.*, 2002); Solwezi (Heath *et al.*, 2002); Mufulira (Heath *et al.*, 2002); Ndola (Heath *et al.*, 2002); Chalimbana (Heath *et al.*, 2002); Lusaka (Heath *et al.*, 2002); Victoria Falls (Heath *et al.*, 2002); Chibembe (Heath *et al.*, 2002); Chambeshi Valley (Heath *et al.*, 2002).

Mozambique – Njesi Plateau (Congdon *et al.*, 2010).

Zimbabwe – Harare district (Pringle *et al.*, 1994).

Botswana – Okavango Delta (Pinhey); Kasane (Larsen, 1991); Kazungula (Larsen, 1991); 50 km south of Kasane (Larsen, 1991); Mpandama-Tenga (Larsen, 1991); Moremi (Larsen, 1991); Maun (Larsen, 1991); Etsha 6 (Larsen, 1991).

Limpopo Province – Nylstroom (P. Kruger).

Mpumalanga – Louw’s Creek (Pringle *et al.*, 1994); Nelspruit (Pringle *et al.*, 1994); Lydenburg (Pringle *et al.*, 1994); Makande (Wood).

Gauteng – Honeydew (Pringle *et al.*, 1994); Rayton district (Williams); near Pretoria (the Hennings); Johannesburg (R. Steele).

KwaZulu-Natal – Margate (G. Henning); Emanguzi (Woodhall); Nagle Dam (Pringle *et al.*, 1994); Winklespruit (Pringle *et al.*, 1994); Ladysmith (Nagle); Vryheid (O’Conner); Hammarsdale (Fortman); Tembe Nature Reserve (Pringle & Kyle, 2002); Ndumo Nature Reserve (Pringle & Kyle, 2002).

Eastern Cape Province – Port St Johns (Lunderstedt).

Habitat: Marshy areas with thick grass, especially in valleys (Pringle *et al.*, 1994). A savanna butterfly (Larsen, 2005a). Also in forest clearings (Larsen, 1991c). In Tanzania from sea-level to 1 800 m (Kielland, 1990d).

Habits: Common in some parts of its range, e.g. Kenya (Larsen, 1991c) but not very common in West Africa (Larsen, 2005a). Very rare in South Africa. Flies low and fast but settles often, on blades of grass. Males establish territories in their marshy habitat, and defend them aggressively (Larsen, 1991c; Pringle *et al.*, 1994).

Flight period: All year, with peak emergence in April and May (Pringle *et al.*, 1994).

Early stages: Nothing published.

Larval food:

Cenchrus clandestinus (Hochst. ex Chiov.) Morrone (= *Pennisetum clandestinum* Hochst. ex Chiov.) (Poaceae) (kikuyu grass) [Pinhey, 1949].

Cenchrus purpureus (Schumach) Morrone (= *Pennisetum purpureum* Schumach.) (Poaceae) (napier

fodder) [Pinhey, 1949].
Ehrharta erecta Lam. (Poaceae) [Pinhey, 1949].
 Poaceae [Van Someren, 1974: 325].
Oldenlandia corymbosa L. (Rubiaceae) [Vuattoux, 1999 (Ivory Coast); very unlikely (Larsen, 2005a)].
 [Note: The host-plants given by Dickson & Kroon (1978: 201) and Larsen (1991c) are actually those of *Afrogegenes letterstedti* (= *niso*) – see Pringle *et al.*, 1994: 336 for comments. Cock & Congdon, 2012 state that confirmation of the food plants of *G. hottentota* would be desirable].

Relevant literature:

Kroon, 1973 [genitalia of *hottentota* vs *niso*].

obumbrata Trimen, 1891 (as sp. of *Pamphila*). *Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London* **1891**: 103 (59-107). “Ehanda”.

****Afrogegenes letterstedti* (Wallengren, 1857)#**
Brown Dodger



Yellow Hottentot Skippers (*Afrogegenes letterstedti*)
 Images courtesy Steve Woodhall

Papilio niso Linnaeus, 1764. *Museum Ludovicae Ulricae Reginae* 339 (720 pp.). Holmiae.
Hesperia letterstedti Wallengren, 1857. *Öfversigt af Kongl. Vetenskaps-Akademiens Förhandlingar. Stockholm annis 1838-1845. Collecta (n.s.)* **2** (4): 49 (55 pp.). [South Africa]: “Caffraria”. Holotype in the Swedish Natural History Museum (images available at www2.nrm.se/en/lep_nrm/1).
Pamphila letterstedti Wallengren, 1857. Trimen, 1866a.
Pamphila hottentota (Latreille, 1823). Trimen & Bowker, 1889. [misidentification for *Afrogegenes letterstedti*]
Gegegenes letterstedti (Wallengren, 1857). Evans, 1937.
Gegegenes niso (Linnaeus, 1764). Evans, 1947.
Gegegenes hottentota Latreille, 1824. Swanepoel, 1953a. [misidentification for *Afrogegenes letterstedti*]
Gegegenes niso niso (Linnaeus, 1764). Dickson & Kroon, 1978.
Gegegenes niso niso (Linnaeus, 1764). Pringle *et al.*, 1994: 336.
Afrogegenes letterstedti (Wallengren, 1857). De Jong & Coutsis, 2017. **Comb. n.**



Afrogegenes letterstedti. Male (Wingspan 31 mm). Left – upperside; right – underside.
 Rayton, Gauteng, South Africa. 4 April 1998. M. Williams.
 Images M.C. Williams ex Williams Collection.



Afrogegenes letterstedti. Female (Wingspan 33 mm). Left – upperside; right – underside. Cintsas East, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. 20-31 December, 2001. M. Williams. Images M.C. Williams ex Williams Collection.

Alternative common name: Common Hottentot Skipper; Geel hotnot (Afrikaans).

Type locality: [South Africa]: “Cap b. Spei”. Lectotype designated by Honey & Scoble, 2001: 355. De Jong & Coutsis (2017) argue that this lectotype is invalid as they regard *niso* to be a *nomen dubium*.

Distribution: Sub-Saharan Africa, including Senegal, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau (Bivar-de-Sousa & Passos-de-Carvalho, 1987), Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Benin (throughout), Nigeria, Gabon, Angola, Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Botswana (north), Namibia, South Africa (Limpopo Province, Mpumalanga, North West Province, Gauteng, Free State Province, KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape Province, Western Cape Province), Swaziland, Lesotho. Also in the Arabian Peninsula (Saudi Arabia, Yemen) (De Jong & Coutsis, 2017).

Specific localities:

Gambia – Abuko, Walikunda, Saruja, Kajakat Island, Niani, Basse (Jon Baker, pers. comm., May 2020).

Ghana – Boabeng-Fiema Monkey Sanctuary (Larsen *et al.*, 2009).

Benin – see Coache *et al.*, 2017 (as *niso brevicornis*).

Gabon – Pongara (Vande weghe, 2010); Tchimbele (Vande weghe, 2010); Iguela (Vande weghe, 2010); Bateke Plateau (Vande weghe, 2010); Leconi (Vande weghe, 2010); Ekouyi-Mbouma (Vande weghe, 2010).

Angola – Bie Province; Huambo Province; Huila Province; Kwanza Sul Province; Malanje Province; Moxico Province (Mendes *et al.*, 2013).

Democratic Republic of Congo – Ituri Forest (Ducarme, 2018); Semuliki Valley (Ducarme, 2018); Mt Mitumba (Ducarme, 2018); Mt Blue (Ducarme, 2018).

Kenya – Chyulu Hills (van Someren, 1939).

Tanzania – Throughout (Kielland, 1990d); Lukwangule Plateau (Kielland, 1990d); Katavi National Park (Fitzherbert *et al.*, 2006).

Malawi – Mt Mulanje (Congdon *et al.*, 2010); Zomba Mountain (Congdon *et al.*, 2010); Nyika N.P. (J. Timberlake, pers. comm., 2019).

Zambia: Ikelenge (Heath *et al.*, 2002); 80 km south of Mwinilunga (Heath *et al.*, 2002); Kabompo River (Heath *et al.*, 2002); Solwezi (Heath *et al.*, 2002); Chingola (Heath *et al.*, 2002); Mufulira (Heath *et al.*, 2002); Ndola (Heath *et al.*, 2002); Luanshya (Heath *et al.*, 2002); Katambora (Heath *et al.*, 2002); Victoria Falls (Heath *et al.*, 2002); Livingstone (Heath *et al.*, 2002); Lusaka (Heath *et al.*, 2002); Kanona (Heath *et al.*, 2002); Kasama (Heath *et al.*, 2002); Nyika (Heath *et al.*, 2002).

Mozambique – Mt Namuli (Congdon *et al.*, 2010); Mt Mabu (Congdon *et al.*, 2010); Mt Mecula [-12.0772 37.6297] (Congdon & Bayliss, 2013).

Botswana – Kazungula (Larsen, 1991); Mpandama-Tenga (Larsen, 1991); Moremi (Larsen, 1991); Maun (Larsen, 1991); Okavango Delta (Larsen, 1991); Shakawe (Larsen, 1991).

Limpopo Province – Throughout (Swanepoel, 1953); Lekgalameetse Nature Reserve (“Malta Forest”); Highlands Wilderness (Bode & Bode, unpublished checklist); Soetdoring Farm [-24.561 28.233] (A. Mayer, pers comm. 2015); Bateleur Nature Reserve (Williams & Dobson, unpub., 2015).

Mpumalanga – Throughout (Swanepoel, 1953); Verloren Vallei Nature Reserve (Warren, 1990); Sterkspruit Nature Reserve (Williams); Buffelspoort Nature Reserve (Williams).

North West Province – Throughout (Swanepoel, 1953); Kgaswane Mountain Reserve (Williams); Utopia Resort (C. Dobson, 2006); Borakalalo Nature Reserve (J. Dobson, unpublished, 2009).

Gauteng – Throughout (Swanepoel, 1953); Witwatersrand Botanical Gardens (J. Dobson, unpublished checklist, 2001); Buffelsdrif Conservancy (Williams).

Free State Province – Ladybrand (Swanepoel, 1953); Harrismith (Swanepoel, 1953); Platberg, Harrismith (Dobson, Williams & Schutte, unpublished, 2010); Cyferfontein [-30.3736 25.8131] (R. Griesel, unpublished).

KwaZulu-Natal – Throughout (Swanepoel, 1953); Muden (male specimen illustrated above); Kokstad (Swanepoel, 1953); Kosi Bay Nature Reserve (Pringle & Kyle, 2002); Tembe Nature Reserve (Pringle & Kyle, 2002); Ndumo Nature Reserve (Pringle & Kyle, 2002).

Eastern Cape Province – Dordrecht (Evans, 1937); Port Elizabeth (Swanepoel, 1953); Grahamstown (Swanepoel, 1953); Cathcart (Swanepoel, 1953); Elliot (Swanepoel, 1953); Somerset East (Swanepoel, 1953); Burgersdorp (Swanepoel, 1953); Gaika's Kop (male specimen illustrated above); Cintsa East (female specimen illustrated above).

Western Cape Province – Cape Town (Swanepoel, 1953); Worcester (Swanepoel, 1953); Caledon (Swanepoel, 1953); Swellendam (Swanepoel, 1953); Knysna (Swanepoel, 1953).

Swaziland – Mlawula N. R. (www.sntc.org.sz); Malolotja N. R. (www.sntc.org.sz).

Habitat: Occupies a wide range of habitats, including savanna, grassland and open patches in forest (Pringle *et al.*, 1994). In the central highlands of Kenya it has been seen at altitudes of at least 3 000 m (Larsen, 1991c). In Tanzania at altitudes from sea-level to 2 600 m (Kielland, 1990d).

Habits: This is a locally very common butterfly (Kielland, 1990d; Larsen, 2005a). The flight is fast and specimens are difficult to follow when in flight. Frequently settles on grass stems. Both sexes feed from flowers and males mud-puddle. Males establish territories in grassy patches using grass stems or low bushes as perches. Territories may be contiguous and the resident males of adjacent territories may spend much time chasing each other out of one another's territories (Pringle *et al.*, 1994). Larsen (1991) noted males on civet scat and Cock (in Cock & Congdon, 2012) noted a male feeding on a bird dropping.

Flight period: All year but somewhat scarcer from May to September (Pringle *et al.*, 1994).

Early stages:

Clark, 1940: 42.

Descamps, 1956 [larva & pupa]

Clark, in Dickson & Kroon, 1978: p. 280; plate 38 [as *Gegenes niso*; Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape].

Henning, Henning, Joannou & Woodhall, 1997: 207 (photograph of final instar larva and pupa).

Cock & Congdon, 2012: 33 [ovum, larva & pupa; for subspecies *brevicornis*]



Final instar larva and pupa of *Afrogegenes letterstedti*. Images courtesy Allison Sharp.

Larval food:

Cenchrus clandestinus (Hochst. ex Chiov.) Morrone (= *Pennisetum clandestinum* Hochst. ex Chiov.) (Poaceae) (exotic) [Dickson & Kroon, 1978: 201; South Africa].

Cynodon species (Poaceae) [Woodhall, 2005a].

Ehrharta erecta Lam. (Poaceae) [Dickson & Kroon, 1978: 201; South Africa].

Hyparrhenia species (Poaceae) [Larsen, 1991c].

Imperata species (Poaceae) [Larsen, 1991c].

Leersia hexandra Sw. (Poaceae) [Cock & Congdon, 2012; Nairobi].

Megathyrus maximus (Jacq.) B.K. Simon & S.W.L. Jacobs (= *Panicum maximum* Jacq.) (Poaceae)

[Cock & Congdon, 2012; in captivity].
Oryza sativa L. (Poaceae) (rice) [Deschamps, 1956; Cameroon].
Setaria sp. (Poaceae) [Collins, *vide* Cock & Congdon, 2012; Kenya].
Themeda triandra Forssk. (Poaceae) [Pringle *et al.*, 1994: 336; South Africa].
Zea mays L. (Poaceae) [Cock & Congdon, 2012].

niso Linnaeus, 1764 (a sp. of *Papilio*). *Museum Ludovicae Ulricae Reginae* 339 (720 pp.). Holmiae.
Regarded to be a *nomen dubium* by De Jong & Coutsis, 2017.

indica Mabilie, 1883 (as sp. of *Pamphila*). *Bulletin de la Société Entomologique de Belgique* 27: 65 (51-78). [Africa]: “Inde”. [False locality.]

brevicornis Plötz, 1884 (as sp. of *Thymelicus*). *Stettiner Entomologische Zeitung* 45: 290 (284-290).
Type locality: Angola. Regarded to be a *nomen dubium* by De Jong & Coutsis, 2017.

Note: The population on the Lukwangule Plateau, Tanzania is darker and the female has faint spots only on the forewing (Kielland, 1990d: 255).

****Afrogegenes oca* (Evans, 1937)#**
Yellow Dodger

Gegenes hottentota oca Evans, 1937. *A catalogue of the African Hesperidae indicating the classification and nomenclature adopted in the British Museum*: 190 (212 pp.).

Synonym of *Gegenes hottentota* (Latreille, [1824]). Dickson & Kroon, 1978.

Synonym of *Gegenes niso* (Linnaeus, 1764). Pringle *et al.*, 1994.

Synonym of *Gegenes hottentota* (Latreille, [1824]). Ackery *et al.*, 1995.

Afrogegenes oca (Evans, 1937). De Jong & Coutsis, 2017. **Comb. n.**



Afrogegenes oca. Male (Wingspan 30 mm). Left – upperside; right – underside.
Gaika’s Kop, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. 1 January, 2002. M. Williams.
Images M.C. Williams ex Williams Collection.



Afrogegenes oca. Female. Left – upperside; right – underside.
Dordrecht, Eastern Cape, South Africa. December 2006. J. Dobson.
Images M.C. Williams ex Dobson Collection.

Type locality: South Africa: “Dordrecht, Cape of Good Hope”.

Distribution: Mozambique (south), South Africa (Western Cape Province, Eastern Cape Province,

KwaZulu-Natal).

Specific localities:

Mozambique – Delagoa Bay (Maputo) (De Jong & Coutsis, 2017).

Eastern Cape Province – Gaika’s Kop (male illustrated above).

Habitat: Nothing published.

Early stages: Nothing published.

Larval food: Nothing published.