



NOTE

An unusual specimen of the genus *Iolaus* (*Epamera*) Druce (Lepidoptera: Lycaenidae) from Yakoli, Central African Republic

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INTRODUCTION

During recent years, revisions and descriptions of butterfly faunas from tropical Africa have mostly been based on material collected in Cameroon, Zaïre, Kenya or Ghana. However, material from the Central African Republic (CAR) has occasionally been included in these publications and during the last decade several new species have been described or recorded from there.

The localities in the CAR that have been most intensively collected are close to Bangui (such as Yakoli, Botambi, Moloukou, Ngbo or Yambi), and most of the knowledge of the CAR fauna in general is based on these recent collections. Important faunal data are included in numerous smaller notes or publications and currently check-lists are only available for some National Parks in the northern CAR (Noss, 1998, Hecq, 2000, Hecq & Peeters, 1992). One reason for this limited information availability is certainly the rather difficult travel conditions in the CAR, which is among the least developed countries in the world. Nonetheless, during the last decade several Lycaenidae new to science have been described from Central Africa e.g. by Libert (1999, 2010) or Collins & Larsen 1998, but our knowledge of the fauna remains little more than fragmentary and not surprisingly new country records or even new species are still being recognised. The butterfly discussed herein is so far only known from one specimen and its status remains unresolved.

DESCRIPTION

Genus *Iolaus* Hübner, 1819Type species: *Papilio eurisus* Cramer, 1779 by subsequent designationSub Genus *Epamera* Druce, 1891

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Type-species: *Iolaus sidus* Trimen, 1864 by original designation.

***Iolaus* (*Epamera*) spec. indeterminate** (Figs 1 & 2)

Material examined: 1♂ – Yakoli, CAR, vi.2007, local collector, Schroder Collection.

Iolaus maesa: 1♂ – Mate, Volta Region, E. Ghana ix.2003, ABRI leg, ABRI Collection (Figs 3 & 4).

Description (male) Forewing length (from tip to base of wing where it attaches to thorax) 19 mm. Head, thorax and abdomen black dorsally, white ventrally, frons white; legs white. Antennae black, tips slightly brownish, inner margin lobed slightly. Upperside metallic, deep blue, narrow black costal border. Outer half of forewing black, from about mid costa across the cell to the lower end of space 1b, turning inwards into space 1a. Cilia brown. Broad black subbasal, slightly curved band extending from vein 12 through the cell, just entering space 1b. Pair of greenish-grey patches on forewing, beyond the black band (caused by water staining). Hindwing blue, with large, almost rectangular black costal area with dark androconial patch, and specialised scales turning from black to golden-brown in side view, surrounded by shiny area. Blue extends from vein 1b to vein 6, just entering space 7. Black border very narrow, cilia white. Anal fold grey. Space 1b densely covered with long grey hairs. Ternal lobe with white ternal spot, and a few red and black scales. Long tail (8 mm) present at vein 1b. Shorter tail at vein 2 (5 mm) and tooth-like tail at vein 3.

Underside ground colour white. Forewing margin chocolate-brown, 5 mm at the apex, narrowing towards tornus, subdivided by faint white line. White in spaces 1a and 1b with reflective mother-of-pearl lustre. Androconial brushes consisting of long black hairs at the dorsum of the forewing underside. Hindwing margin narrowly brown (2 mm), subdivided into two separate bands. Small black spot in space 2, crowned by reddish-brown scales and a second, black ternal spot crowned with dark red subdivided by fine line of pink scales. Fine black, vestigial, submarginal line present from space 1b to space 3. Spaces 2 and 3 with some grey scales close to the wing margin. Cilia brown at spaces 5–7, otherwise white.



Figure 1: *Iolaus (Epamera)* spec. indeterminate – male recto



Figure 3: *Iolaus (Epamera) maesa* – male recto

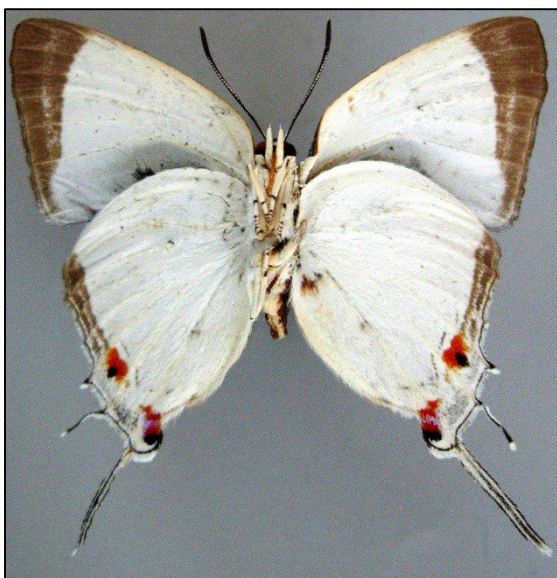


Figure 2: *Iolaus (Epamera)* spec. indeterminate – male verso



Figure 4: *Iolaus (Epamera) maesa* – male verso

Male genitalia: Typical of the *Epamera* group, without unusual characteristics. Vinculum and tegumen ring oval, dorsal margin of uncus slightly convex, subunci stout and sturdy. Valvae subrectangular, asymmetric, but with each having a long finger-like process, the left valve having an additional short rounded apical projection. Aedeagus simple, slightly curved.

DISCUSSION

At first sight, this specimen closely resembles *Epamera maesa* Hewitson, 1862 (Figs 3 & 4). The most obvious difference lies in the presence of the black subbasal band on the forewings, which is not known from any other species in the whole *Iolaus*-complex. However, genitalia are similar to that of *E. maesa* (Stempffer 1967: 144, Fig. 132) and are not helpful in resolving the status of this specimen.

Two further species with a superficial resemblance to this specimen are *Iolaus (Argiolaus) poecilaon*

Riley and *I. (A.) laonides* Aurivillius, but both differ strongly in genitalia structures (see Stempffer & Bennett, 1958: 1327–1328).

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