

Genus *Melphinyet* Larsen, 2012 Forest Swifts

Tropical Lepidoptera Research **22** (1): 20 (16-23).

Type-species: *Melphina flavina* Evans, 1937, by original designation.

The genus *Melphinyet* belongs to the Family Hesperidae Latreille, 1809; Subfamily Hesperinae Latreille, 1809; Tribe Astictopterini Swinhoe, 1912; Subtribe Cupithina Grishin, 2023.

Melphinyet (**Forest Swifts**) is an Afrotropical genus of five species.

Melphinyet tarace (Mabille, 1891) Scarce Forest Swift

Pamphila tarace Mabille, 1891. *Bulletin de la Société Entomologique de Belgique* **35**: 179 (59-88, 106-121, 168-187).

Melphina tarace (Mabille, 1891). Evans, 1937 **comb. nov.**

Melphinyet tarace (Mabille, 1891). Larsen, 2012: 18 **comb. nov.**



Melphinyet tarace. Male. Left – upperside; right – underside.
Ankasa, western Ghana. November 2003. RV, SY. ABRI-2019-2686.
Images M.C. Williams ex ABRI.



Melphinyet tarace. Female. Left – upperside; right – underside.
Lukeolela, Democratic Republic of Congo. June 2013. BL. ABRI-2019-2687.
Images M.C. Williams ex ABRI.

Type locality: Sierra Leone: [Guma Valley]. Place of deposition of type unknown.

Distribution: Guinea, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Nigeria, Cameroon, Gabon, Congo, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania (north-west).

Specific localities:

Guinea – Ziama (Safian *et al.*, 2020).

Sierra Leone – Guma Valley (TL).

Ivory Coast – Alepe (Larsen, 2005a).

Ghana – Atewa (Larsen, 2005a); Tano Ofin (Larsen, 2005a); Likpe (Larsen, 2005a); Bobiri Butterfly Sanctuary (Larsen *et al.*, 2007).

Nigeria – Agege (Larsen, 2005a); Uwet (Larsen, 2005a); Ikom (Larsen, 2005a).

Gabon – Nouna (Vande Weghe, 2010); Waka (Vande Weghe, 2010).

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

Tanzania – Minziro Forest (Congdon & Collins, 1998); Munene Forest (rare) (Congdon & Collins, 1998).

Habitat: Forest of good quality.

Habits: This is the rarest member of the *tarace*-group, apparently being least scarce in the Central African Republic (Larsen, 2005a).

Early stages:

Cock & Congdon, 2013: 54. [larva & pupa; Ivory Coast]

Larval food:

Manniophyton fulvum Müll. Arg. (Euphorbiaceae) [Cock & Congdon, 2013; Ivory Coast].

***Melphinyet unistriga* (Holland, 1893)**

Common Forest Swift

Parnara unistriga Holland, 1893. *Entomological News* 5: 30 (26-31).

Melphina tarace f. *unistriga* (Holland, 1893). Evans, 1937 **stat. nov.**, **comb. nov.**

Melphina unistriga (Holland, 1893). Lindsey & Miller, 1965 **stat. rev.**

Melphinyet unistriga (Holland, 1893). Larsen, 2012: 18 **comb. nov.**



Melphinyet unistriga. Male. Left – upperside; right – underside.
Nyong River, Ebogo, Cameroon. April 2006. ABRI Coll. ABRI-2019-2682.
Images M.C. Williams ex ABRI.



Melphinyet unistriga. Female. Left – upperside; right – underside.
Lukeolela, Democratic Republic of Congo. May 2012. ABRI Leg. ABRI-2019-2683.
Images M.C. Williams ex ABRI.

Type locality: Gabon: “Valley of the Ogové”. Place of deposition of holotype (male) unknown.

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

Specific localities:

Guinea – Ziama (Safian *et al.*, 2020).

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

Gabon – Ogove Valley (TL); Waka (Vande Weghe, 2010); Evengue (Vande Weghe, 2010).

Democratic Republic of Congo – Ituri Forest (Ducarme, 2018).

Habitat: Forest, including disturbed forest (Larsen, 2005a).

Habits: A reasonably common skipper that is usually found sitting on leaves inside forest that has a closed canopy (Larsen, 2005a).

Early stages: Nothing published.

Larval food: Nothing published.

Melphinyet statirides (Holland, 1896)

Brown-margin Forest Swift

Baoris statirides Holland, 1896. *Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London* **1896**: 69 (2-107).

Melphina tarace f. *statirides* (Holland, 1896). Evans, 1937 **stat. nov.**, **comb. nov.**

Melphina statirides (Holland, 1896). Lindsey & Miller, 1965 **stat. rev.**

Melphinyet statirides (Holland, 1896). Larsen, 2012: 18 **comb. nov.**



Melphinyet statirides. Male. Left – upperside; right – underside.

Hohoe, Ghana. January 2000. R. Morty. ABRI-2019-2684.

Images M.C. Williams ex ABRI.



Melphinyet statirides. Female. Left – upperside; right – underside.

Hohoe, Ghana. January 2000. R. Morty. ABRI-2019-2684.

Images M.C. Williams ex ABRI.

Type locality: Gabon: “Valley of the Ogové”. Place of deposition of holotype (female) unknown).

Distribution: Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Nigeria, Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo.

Specific localities:

Sierra Leone – Guma Valley (Larsen, 2005a).

Liberia – Harbel (Larsen, 2005a).

Ivory Coast – Banco (Larsen, 2005a); Mount Peko (Larsen, 2005a); Lamto (Larsen, 2005a).

Ghana – Atewa Range (Larsen, 2005a).

Nigeria – Agege (Larsen, 2005a); Aba (Larsen, 2005a); Port Harcourt (Larsen, 2005a); Oban Hills (Larsen, 2005a).

Cameroon – Bitje (Druce, 1909).

Gabon – Ogove Valley (TL); Waka (Vande Weghe, 2010); Mikongo (Vande Weghe, 2010); Nouna (Vande Weghe, 2010).

Democratic Republic of Congo – Ituri Forest (Ducarme, 2018).

Habitat: Forest.

Habits: This appears to be yet another rare member of the genus (Larsen, 2005a).

Early stages: Nothing published.

Larval food:

Alchornea cordifolia (Schumach. & Thonn.) Müll.Arg. (Euphorbiaceae) [Vuattoux, 1999; Lamto, Ivory Coast; possibly in error for *M. flavina* according to Cock & Congdon, 2013].

flavifasciola Druce, 1909 (as sp. of *Parnara*). *Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London* **1909**: 412 (406-413). Cameroon: “Bitje, Ja River, Cameroons, 2000 feet”. Holotype (male) in the NHM, London.

Melphinyet flavina (Evans, 1937) Yellow Forest Swift

Melphina tarace f. *flavina* Evans, 1937. *A catalogue of the African Hesperidae indicating the classification and nomenclature adopted in the British Museum*: 164 (212 pp.).

Melphina flavina Evans, 1937. Lindsey & Miller, 1965: 133 **stat. rev.**

Melphinyet flavina (Evans, 1937). Larsen, 2012: 18 **comb. nov.**



Melphinyet flavina. Male. Left – upperside; right – underside.
Yakoli, Central African Republic. April 1994. SCC. ABRI-2019-2688.
Images M.C. Williams ex ABRI.



Melphinyet flavina. Female. Left – upperside; right – underside.
Bimon, Central African Republic. August 1995. SCC. ABRI-2019-2689.
Images M.C. Williams ex ABRI.

Type locality: Uganda: “Budongo Forest, Unyoro, 3,400 ft”. Holotype (male) in NHM, London.

Distribution: Sierra Leone (Cock & Congdon, 2013), Ivory Coast, Ghana, Togo, Nigeria, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda.

Ackery *et al.* (1995) record it from Sierra Leone but this is not repeated by Larsen (2005a).

Specific localities:

Ivory Coast – Mount Peko (Larsen, 2005a); Banco (Larsen, 2005a).

Ghana – Aburi (Larsen, 2005a).

Nigeria – Agege (Larsen, 2005a); Okomu (Larsen, 2005a); Aba (Larsen, 2005a); Oban Hills (Larsen, 2005a).

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

Uganda – Budonga Forest (TL).

Habitat: Forest of good quality (Larsen, 2005a).

Early stages:

Cock & Congdon, 2013: 50. [larva & pupa]

Larval food:

Macaranga hurifolia Beille (Euphorbiaceae) [Cock & Congdon, 2013; Ivory Coast].

Macaranga spinosa Müll. Arg. (Euphorbiaceae) [Cock & Congdon, 2013; Ivory Coast].

Alchornea cordifolia (Schumach. & Thonn. Müll. Arg. (Euphorbiaceae) [Cock & Congdon, 2013; Ivory Coast; requires confirmation].

Melphinyet eala (Evans, 1956)

Eala Forest Swift

Melphina melphis f. *eala* Evans, 1956 [1955]. *Annals and Magazine of Natural History* (12) **8**: 885 (881-885).

Synonym of *Melphina malthina* (Hewitson, 1876). Ackery *et al.* 1995.

Melphinyet eala (Evans, 1937). Larsen, 2012: 18 **stat. rev., comb. nov.**

Type locality: [Democratic Republic of Congo]: “Eala, Belgian Congo”. Holotype (female) in the MRAC, Tervuren.

Distribution: Democratic Republic of Congo.

Specific localities: Eala (TL).

Habitat: Nothing published.

Early stages: Nothing published.

Larval food: Nothing published.