

Melitaea aurelia new for Greece (Lepidoptera: Nymphalidae)

Dirk van der Poorten & Sylvain Cuvelier

Samenvatting. *Melitaea aurelia* nieuw voor Griekenland (Lepidoptera: Nymphalidae)

Résumé. *Melitaea aurelia* nouvelle espèce pour la Grèce (Lepidoptera: Nymphalidae)

Key words: *Melitaea aurelia* - *Melitaea athalia* - Greece - faunistics - genitalia.

Poorten, D. van der: Lanteemhofstraat 26, B-2140 Antwerpen.

Cuvelier, S.: Diamantstraat 4, B-8900 Ieper.

During a lepidopterological excursion to Greece in July 1991 the second author, accompanied by S. Spruytte, captured in the district Florina on 5.VII.1991, amongst a number of *Melitaea athalia* (Rottemburg, 1775) one smaller male specimen, the ground colour of which is less brown and the dark markings on the upperside of the wings are more regular than in *M. athalia*, which led us to the assumption that the specimen belonged in fact to *M. aurelia* Nickerl, 1850 (fig. 1). After examination of the abdominal end under the microscope, the wide posterior process of the valva confirmed its identity as *M. aurelia*. A complete dissection and drawing (fig. 2), establishing the determination, was made by Mr. J. G. Coutsis. Apart from the structure of the valva (as compared to *athalia*, see fig. 3) the nearly absent sub-unci and the elongate ostium-keel with upturned apex and the small cornuti of the aedeagus are obvious.

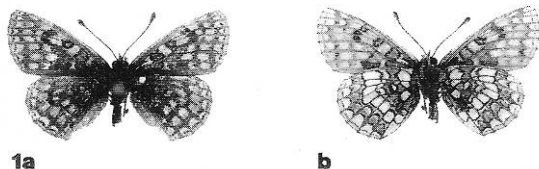


Fig. 1: *Melitaea aurelia* Nickerl, 1850, ♂, Greece, Florina, near Andartikón, 5.VII.1991, leg. et coll. S. Cuvelier, a. upperside; b. underside (Foto: W. De Prins).

As far as we know, it is the first time that this species is reported for the Greek fauna. The habitat where the specimen was taken, consists of east-facing calcareous flowery slopes, along the foothills of Mt Varnous. It is somewhat surprising that it turns up in this region of Greece, since it is not included in the work of Schaidler & Jaksić (1989), dealing with the butterfly fauna of ex-Yugoslav Macedonia. It is not known from Albania (Rebel & Zerny 1931). Abadjiev (1995) lists a number of localities in Bulgaria including among these "Rhodope Mts: Devin, Belovo". Therefore, its further presence in Greece in North-East Macedonia could be expected.

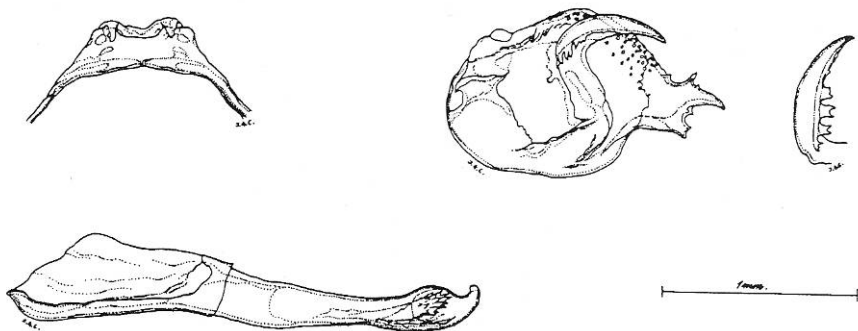


Fig. 2: *Melitaea aurelia* Nickerl, 1850, ♂ genitalia (same data as fig. 1) (Gen. prep. 2667 JGC).

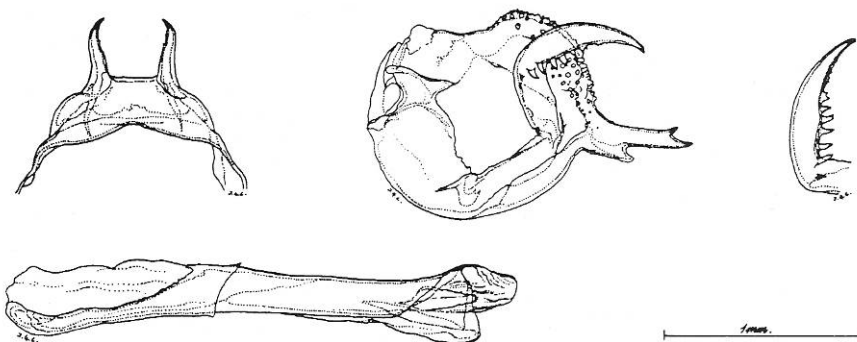


Fig. 3: *Melitaea athalia* (Rottemburg, 1775), ♂ genitalia, Greece, Makedonia, Ór. Ólimbos, 1000 m, 12.VI.1966, leg. et coll. J. G. Coutsis (Gen. prep. 2668 JGC).

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