
EDITORIAL

Volume 31 of *Metamorphosis*, for the year 2020, has received a bumper crop of articles and publications, to the extent that we have had to split it into four Parts this year:

Part 1	26 “normal” articles (more details on the rear cover)	160 pages
Part 2	Tribute to Martin Krüger (Obituary and Checklist of South African Lepidoptera)	228 pages
Part 3	Latest results of the Caterpillar Rearing Group with new Master Lists	380 pages
Part 4	Southern African Lepidoptera Conservation Assessments (SALCA)	160 pages

All of the above has been published on the website of the Lepidopterists' Society of Africa, <http://www.lepsocafrika.org/>.

Following the great shock of losing Dr. Martin Krüger last year, we decided to dedicate Part 2 of Volume 31 to Martin, with a comprehensive obituary and his final monumental publication – a Checklist of the Lepidoptera of South Africa. This year we have also lost one of Martin's most esteemed colleagues, Dr. Douglas Kroon, who did so much to encourage LepSoc Africa members to study the entire order of Lepidoptera, and not just concentrate on the super family Papilionoidea (butterflies). It is therefore appropriate that the third Part of Volume 31 is the publication of the third set of results from the Caterpillar Rearing Group, which Douglas was partially instrumental in initiating and encouraging.

The fourth Part of Volume 31 is the culmination of the Southern Africa Lepidoptera Conservation Assessment (SALCA) begun in 2015, accomplished by a dedicated team from LepSoc Africa and the South African National Biodiversity Institute. It provides us with an up to date platform of knowledge from which to intensify our efforts to conserve the Lepidoptera of southern Africa.

My latest term as Editor of *Metamorphosis* will be coming to an end during 2021. I am very grateful to my Sub Editor Dr. Silvia Kirkman, who has played a very large role in enabling *Metamorphosis* to rise to the challenge of the enormous volume of publications we have had to process during 2020.

We also strive to keep improving the quality of our articles and other publications, and to this end we extend particular appreciation to our team of peer reviewers, who have given of their precious time and expertise to improve and perfect manuscripts.

Metamorphosis would not exist but for the efforts of our authors, who have supplied an unprecedented volume of manuscripts covering every aspect of the study of lepidopterology, for which we are deeply appreciative.

Finally, I would like to wish all those who have an interest in *Metamorphosis* a prosperous, productive and joyous 2021, and encourage you to send in your contributions for publication during 2021 to either myself at orachrysops@gmail.com, or Silvia at skirkman@gmail.com. Our team of editors and reviewers are keen to help you share your work on Afrotropical Lepidoptera with the wider community of lepidopterists.

Yours sincerely



Dave Edge
orachrysops@gmail.com
31st December 2020

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

I'm sure everyone will agree that 2020 was an extraordinary year. While many of our activities were disrupted by coronavirus restrictions, there were several positive developments and I'd like to focus on these as far as possible.

Administration

As you are all aware, for the first time in LepSoc Africa's history, we had to cancel our Annual Conference, which had been scheduled for Walter Sisulu Botanical Gardens over the weekend of 12–13 September (we had booked the Nestlé Centre, which had been made available to us free of charge by BotSoc / SANBI). Despite this setback, we were able to hold our Annual General Meeting via Zoom networking. The elected council members, Justin Bode (Secretary), Peter Ward (Treasurer) and myself were re-elected for a further two-year term.

An international conference planned for Gabon last November was cancelled; we still hope that the conference can be held later this year, although this is looking increasingly doubtful at present.

LepSoc Africa (LSA) have complied with all statutory corporate governance obligations and, thanks to Peter Ward, Dave Edge and Graham Henning, have up to date and certified financial statements. Hanna Edge, our Membership Secretary, maintains detailed membership lists and our membership, in terms of numbers, remains at, or near, record levels. LSA council have prepared Membership Cards for all paid-up members of the Society. The cards are produced on 01 July each year; we intend that the Member Cards will become a form of identification, linked to the permits. Members can apply, via the website, to be included on provincial collecting permits. Applications will be coordinated by the Permit Administrator (Reinier Terblanche), who will liaise with Provincial Chairmen and monitor submission of research-proposals to their respective Provinces. A reminder that annual subscriptions are due on 01 January – LSA Council resolved that subscriptions will remain unchanged for 2021. LepSoc Africa is already registered as a Public Benefit Organisation and exempt from income tax. We submitted an application earlier in 2020 to the SARS Tax Exemption Unit to be approved to issue Section 18 tax exemption certificates to our donors for any donations made. Possibly because of disruptions caused by the coronavirus pandemic, we have not yet received a response.

There is an urgent need for LepSoc Africa to find a storage facility for African Lepidoptera collections. We are currently looking at a possible development near Magaliesburg, but I appeal to all members of LSA to consider this pressing issue and to get back to me with any ideas or suggestions.

Interaction among our members

Our bimonthly newsletter, African Butterfly News, continues to go from strength to strength. These are exciting times in the world of African butterflies and there is plenty of news to report on. Active provincial WhatsApp groups have been established in Highveld (Gauteng, North West and Free State), Limpopo and Eastern Cape. There are active Zimbabwe and East Africa groups and we hope to initiate a West Africa group shortly.

Research and Conservation

The society is actively engaged in various projects, focused on Lepidoptera conservation and research, such as COREL, CRG, BED, *Aloeides* Project, *Kedestes* Conservation and the Butterfly Index. New projects include *Lepidochrysops* (Marianne Espeland) and Edible Insects (Dr Barbara van Asch). In addition, there are other initiatives that LSA members can contribute to, such as the English Names and Transcribing projects.

LSA are engaged in a comprehensive review of one of the large African butterfly genera (the largest in terms of South African taxa), the *Aloeides* (Russets). Substantial progress has been made over the last two years and we hope to be able to publish an initial paper during the course of 2021. A portion of your membership subscriptions will be used to obtain DNA sequences for this project.

The Butterfly Index hopes to track trends of butterfly abundance within South Africa – in light of various “insect apocalypse” reports, worldwide, we have an obligation to record this to the best of our ability. The project is hampered by a shortage of contributors at present, but is at least keeping some track of butterfly abundance,

particularly in Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal. A new LSA undertaking, monitoring butterflies within our National Botanical Gardens has been initiated, and will add another source of reliable data to this monitoring effort.

LepiMAP (the Lepidoptera component of the Virtual Museum) has moved from the ADU and is being administered by the Biodiversity Institute (BDI). Fanie Rautenbach is LepSoc Africa's representative and identifies most of the Papilionoidea. We are still looking at instituting some kind of partnership between LepiMAP and our own Lepidoptera database, Lepibase, but nothing has been resolved as yet.

As result of the – now completed – SALCA project, the number of Critically Endangered butterfly species in South Africa has risen from 11 to 20, with a further 5 taxa listed as Possibly Extinct. There has been little positive news in 2020 and status of two Critically Endangered species, *Orachrysops niobe* and *Erikssonina edgei* is increasingly uncertain. On an encouraging note new localities were found for *Thestor dicksoni malagas* (Vulnerable) and *Durbaniana amakosa flavida* (Endangered).

Our principal conservation initiative COREL (Custodians of Rare and Endangered Lepidoptera) has been restructured: In addition to the individual custodians, provincial leaders have been appointed (the branch chairmen) who report to the National Coordinator, Mark Williams.

Publications

Our scientific journal, *Metamorphosis*, has experienced an unprecedented year, as described by the Editor. Volume 31, in both size and quality, represents a highpoint in the history of the Journal to date. Congratulations are extended to Dave Edge (editor of *Metamorphosis*) and Silvia Kirkman (subeditor) for the considerable amount of work they have contributed in this regard.

LSA council resolved that the printed version of Part 1 will continue to be free to Honorary Life and Sponsor members. The potential demand for the other three volumes will be assessed and costed early in 2021. If there is sufficient demand to justify print runs printed versions will be produced.

On a sad note, Douglas Kroon (Honorary Life member of LepSoc Africa and author of *Lepidoptera of Southern Africa - Host Plants and Other Associations*, among other publications) passed away in August.

To conclude, thank you all for your continued support of LepSoc Africa; our paid membership has declined slightly this year – possibly an indication of the troubled times that we live in – but remains at near record levels. As noted last year however, we should be measured by our achievements rather than by our size.



Jeremy Dobson
jchdobson@gmail.com
Chairman – LepSoc Africa
31st December 2020

HONORARY LIFE AND SPONSOR MEMBERS OF LEPSOC AFRICA

Below we list our honorary life members, who have been honoured by the Society for their outstanding contributions to the study and conservation of Lepidoptera.

HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS

Dr. Jonathan B. Ball
Dr. Bennie Coetzer
Stephen C. Collins
T. Colin E. Congdon
Dr. David A. Edge
Alan Heath

Graham A. Henning
Dr. Stephen G. Henning
Ernest L. Pringle
Clive Quickelberge
Hermann S. Staude
Prof. Emeritus Mark C. Williams

SPONSOR MEMBERS

The members below, apart from their significant contributions to the Society as ordinary members, have chosen to be Sponsor Members for 2020, and have through their generosity provided significant financial support, which is much appreciated by the Society. Any member of the Society can volunteer to become a sponsor member on an annual basis by making a contribution of R1 200 (Africa) or R 1 400 (International). Since the Society needs all the financial support it can get to provide services to members and to fund our projects more persons are encouraged to become Sponsor Members in the future.

Ian Bampton
Dr. Julian Bayliss
Anthony Cambitzis
Kevin Cockburn
Dr. Jeffrey Crocombe
Jeremy C.H. Dobson
John Douglass
Lourens Erasmus (new)
Dr. Stewart Fisher
Stephen Georgiadis
Tim Gilbert
Dr. Richard C. Greene
David Horne
Dr. Timm Karisch
Dietmar Ley
Dr. Michel Libert

Dr. Duncan MacFadyen
Dr. Dino Martins
Dr. Wolfram Mey
Dr. Jacqueline Miller
Dr. Michael Ochse
Dr. Lorenzo Pizzetti
Jan Praet
Dr. Ian Richardson
Hanna Roland
Peter Sharland
Harald Sulak-Wildenauer
Reinier F. Terblanche
Peter Ward
Ian Waters
Dr. Christian Widmann

DONATIONS TO THE SOCIETY WILL ASSIST BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION

Donations to LepSoc Africa are needed more than ever, since we have now committed ourselves to several conservation programmes and projects:

COREL – Custodians of Rare and Endangered Lepidoptera
CRG – Caterpillar Rearing Group
BED – Butterfly Evolutionary Diversity project
APP – *Aloeides* phylogeny project

These programmes are currently being funded through the Brenton Blue Trust (BBT), a registered Public Benefit Organisation, of which LepSoc Africa was a founder member. SARS has given permission for donations made through the BBT (website www.brentonbluetrust.co.za) for butterfly conservation to be eligible for issuing of section 18A tax certificates.

Donors are therefore encouraged to make their donations by accessing our website page www.lepsocafrika.org.za and clicking on the “donate” button, or by making an electronic funds transfer to LepSoc Africa’s or the BBT’s bank accounts, which are given below:

Lepidopterists’ Society of Africa
Brenton Blue Trust

Nedbank a/c no. 1905032617
Nedbank a/c no. 2089033681

Branch code 190541
Branch code 108914