

EDITORIAL PAGES

Published online: 31 December 2019

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.4314/met.v30i1.13>

EDITORIAL

The printed version of Volume 30 of *Metamorphosis*, for the year 2019, contains 12 articles and notes published on the website of the Lepidopterists' Society of Africa, <http://www.lepsocafrika.org/>. The *Metamorphosis* publications featured this year included four taxonomic articles in which descriptions of one new genus and seven new species of Afrotropical Lepidoptera were given. Mey erected the new genus *Filiramifera* for a new species in the family Eriocottidae from Madagascar, and Bayliss, Congdon & Collins described a new species of *Leptomyrina* (Theclinae) from Mozambique. Maes described four new species in the family Crambidae and Pringle a new *Thestor* species (Miletinae).

More papers on aspects of the morphology and biology of species of Lepidoptera were published. Grehan, Ralston & van Noort produced a fascinating article on the specialised wing scales of the Keurboom Moth, *Leto venus*, whilst van Noort & Moll reported their observations on feeding behaviour of adults of the Common Buff butterfly, *Baliochila aslanga* (Lycaenidae: Poritiinae) at extra-floral nectaries on *Adenopodia spicata* (Mimosaceae).

Tennent & Russell produced two more articles on the butterflies of the Cape Verde Islands, the second one concentrating on the enormous variation of phenotypes of *Leptotes pirithous* across the various islands of this volcanic archipelago.

There will also be a rather large Part 2 of Volume 30 (153 pages) on a revision of the genus *Neptis* – the first of a series of publications making up a monograph on this difficult genus. Dr. Ian Richardson has put in an enormous amount of work to produce this noteworthy tome.

Last year we lost two stalwarts of the Society, the warm, generous and funny Dave McDermott, and the all-round naturalist Cameron McMaster, describer of many butterflies and plants. This year we have lost most unexpectedly one of our most knowledgeable and likeable members, Dr. Martin Krüger, curator of the Lepidoptera collection of the Ditsong Natural History Museum. His huge volume of publications on the taxonomy of African Lepidoptera may never be surpassed in quality and quantity. LepSoc Council had decided earlier in the year to award Martin with Honorary Life membership to acknowledge his enormous contributions to lepidopteran science, but his untimely death meant that the award had to be made posthumously to his widow Dr. Kerstin Krüger. An obituary worthy of his life's work will be published early this year.

It has been my pleasure and honour to be reappointed as Editor of *Metamorphosis* for 2019 and 2020, and I have been fortunate indeed to have the assistance of Dr. Silvia Kirkman as my Sub Editor.

Finally, I would like to wish all our members a prosperous, productive and joyous 2020, and encourage you to send in your contributions for publication to me at orachrysops@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 2019

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

2019 was yet another busy year for LepSoc Africa (LSA).

On a positive note, I can say, with reasonable confidence, that we have more paid-up members than at any stage in our history and that the monetary value of membership subscriptions (in real terms) is at record levels. Much of the recent growth of the Society can be attributed to good old fashioned hard work: communication with existing members and attention to detail with regard to membership records.

Our annual Conference and AGM was held in Knysna, Western Cape, in November. Dave and Hanna Edge were responsible for the event, which was well attended and, I believe, as successful as any LSA conference in recent years.

The society is actively engaged in a wide range of projects, focused on Lepidoptera conservation and research, including COREL, CRG, BED, *Aloeides* Project, *Kedestes* Conservation and the Butterfly Index. There are a few new projects in the pipeline, such as *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. LepiMAP (the Lepidoptera component of the Virtual Museum) continues to collect valuable data; Fanie Rautenbach is LepSoc Africa's representative and identifies most of the Papilionoidea.

As result of the - now completed - SALCA project, the number of Critically Endangered butterfly species in South Africa has risen from 14 to 21, with a further 5 taxa listed as Possibly Extinct. There has been little positive news in 2019 and the status of two species, *Orachrysops niobe* and *Erikssonina edgei* is increasingly uncertain.

We are endeavouring to strengthen the various regional branches of the society and to increase the degree of provincial involvement in LSA affairs. KZN, Highveld, Southern Cape and Western Cape are to be congratulated on their efforts over the last season and Vaughan Jessnitz, the Chairman of the recently formed Limpopo Branch has been tireless in his efforts to attract new members and to communicate with provincial nature conservation officials.

International members form a large (and rapidly growing) component of LSA and we are delighted to have appointed a German Branch Chairman (Michael Ochse). Plans are in place to create similar UK and USA branches. While we don't expect the international branches to hold meetings or to organize events, the relevant chairmen will play a key role in promoting the Society, circulating LSA correspondence, as well as coordinating distribution of *Metamorphosis*.

Plans are well underway for the 4th Afrotropical Lepidoptera Workshop, which will be held in Gabon in November. LepSoc Africa are responsible for this event, following on from the successful Madagascar Workshop, held in April 2018. A full complement of delegates, including well-known Lepidopterists from all over the world, have already signed up: with eleven months to go, we are fully booked and have a waiting-list.

Steve Woodhall, our Marketing Officer, and Bennie Coetzer have jointly produced a blue-print for future marketing efforts. In my opinion, our traditional focus on "youth" has been largely unsuccessful and it may possibly be misguided in this modern age. Many, if not most of the people who attend butterfly talks and presentations are pensioners. These are people who have developed an interest in natural history and have the time (and financial resources) to make a significant contribution to LepSoc Africa. Why not focus on this sector? They have children and grandchildren: to my mind, it may be far more effective to let parents and grandparent indoctrinate their siblings with an interest in butterflies, than for LepSoc Africa to try and do this directly. Facebook certainly has a role to play and there are three groups in existence (our own, LepiMAP and CRG). We intend to look at this resource more closely and utilising it by for example advertising LepSoc Africa membership on the Facebook pages. Ultimately, I'd like all members of LepSoc Africa to try and market the Society at every available opportunity!

LepSoc Africa council have prepared Membership Cards for all paid-up members of the Society. The cards will be produced on 01 July each year and will be distributed to our members as quickly as possible. Although LSA subscriptions are due on 01 January, we have made the cards valid until 30 June the following year. The reasons for this are as follows:

- As it will take a month or two to circulate the cards, we considered it wasn't a great benefit to receive a card in say, October, which then expires on 31 December.
- We are trying to implement permit cycles with the various provinces, which run from 01 July to 30 June the following year; this is to coincide with the butterfly season. The Member Cards will become a form of identification, linked to the permits.

LepSoc Africa 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.

LepSoc Africa Council have resolved that subscriptions, for new members, will be discounted by 50% after 30 June each year. As you know, annual subs are due on 01 January. To encourage new members to enrol during the latter months of the year, membership is available at half-price between 1 July and 31 December; thereafter normal rates apply. From 01 Jan 2020 Family Membership will be an available option for LepSoc Africa members. For R450 a married couple (or life-partners) may join LSA as full members, or for R350 if they are pensioners. In addition, membership will in future be free to children under the age of 15.

There is an urgent need for LepSoc Africa to find a storage facility for Lepidoptera specimens. I am busy looking at various options, but I appeal to all members of LSA to consider this pressing issue and to get back to me with any ideas or suggestions.

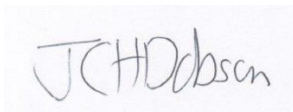
LepSoc Africa have applied to SARS to be registered as a Public Benefit Organisation (PBO). The application is still being reviewed, but if successful we will be able to furnish donors with tax exemption certificates for donations.

As noted at the LSA Conference in 2018, Council spent two years focusing on procedural, corporate governance issues. We considered this was essential, in order to construct a solid base for future growth; this growth relating to membership numbers as well as our commitment to research and conservation projects. I'm happy to say that our foundations are firmly in place and that the focus is now towards growing the society. I think it's important to add that I don't consider an increase in membership numbers to be our overriding objective. While this is undoubtedly important, we should be measured by our achievements, rather than by our size.

As you are aware, Dave Edge has taken back the reins as *Metamorphosis* editor from Mark Williams. Silvia Kirkman is the Subeditor, under Dave's mentorship, and I have no doubt that Silvia will grow into the role and become a formidable Editor in years to come.

Ultimately however, *Metamorphosis* will not thrive unless it has a steady flow of high quality, relevant and interesting material to publish.

I'm happy to say that Volume 30 maintains the usual high standard of the Journal and includes a wide range of articles that will be of interest to all our members!



Jeremy Dobson
jchdobson@gmail.com
Chairman – LepSoc Africa
31st December 2019

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
Dr. Douglas Kroon
Dr. Martin Krüger (posthumous)
Clive Quickelberge
Hermann S. Staude
Prof. Emeritus Mark C. Williams

SPONSOR MEMBERS

The members below, apart from their significant contributions to the Society as individuals, have chosen to be Sponsor Members for 2018 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
B. W. Breedlove
Anthony Cambitzis
Kevin Cockburn
Jeremy C. H. Dobson
John Douglass
Dr. Stewart Fisher
Stephen Georgiadis
Tim Gilbert
Dr. Richard Greene
David Horne
Dr. Timm Karisch
Dr. Jeremy Kuhn
Dietmar Ley
Dr. Michel Libert
Dr. Duncan MacFadyen

Dr. Dino Martins
Dr. Jacqueline Miller
Dr. Michael Ochse
Dr. Lorenzo Pizzetti
Jan Praet
Ernest L. Pringle
Dr. Ian Richardson
Hanna Roland
Wouter Schreuders
Harald Selb
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