



Article

Observations on the biology of Afrotropical Hesperiiidae (Lepidoptera) principally from Kenya. Part 4. Hesperinae: Aeromachini and Baorini

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Abstract

Partial life histories for two Afrotropical Aeromachini and seven Afrotropical Baorini (Hesperiiidae: Hesperinae) are described and illustrated: *Ampittia capenas* (Hewitson), *A. kilombero* Larsen & Congdon, *Zenonia zeno* (Trimen), *Pelopidas mathias mathias* (Fabricius), *P. thrax* (Hübner), *Borbo borbonica borbonica* (Boisduval), *B. fatuellus fatuellus* (Hopffer), *B. lugens* (Hopffer) and *Gegenes niso brevicornis* (Plötz). Distinctive features of the pupa of *Ampittia* spp. (Aeromachini) are noted. Amongst Baorini, the pupae of *Pelopidas* spp., *Borbo* spp., *Gegenes* spp. and *Zenonia* spp. are all similar, being elongate, green, with a frontal spike, while the pupae of *Parnara* spp. are brown, rounded, and have no frontal spike. We hypothesise that the pupae of the first four genera reflect a common need for camouflage in an open or partially open shelter made from a single leaf of grass, while the pupa of *Parnara* spp. are formed in a closed shelter using several leaves as needed. This may also explain the similarity of the camouflaged pupae to those of many other genera in other tribes, which also feed on grasses, palms etc., and pupate in partially or completely open situations.

Key words: *Ampittia*, *Zenonia*, *Pelopidas*, *Borbo*, *Parnara*, *Gegenes*, food plant, life history, leaf shelter, parasitoid.