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A new taxon of the *Pterourus menatius* complex from West Ecuador (Lepidoptera: Papilionidae)

MAURIZIO BOLLINO (1, *) & TOMMASO RACHELI (2)

(1) Museo di Storia naturale del Salento, 73021 Calimera (Lecce), Italy.

- E-mail: phalaeus@gmail.com - Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4982-8453> - ZooBank: <https://zoobank.org/4DB00E79-70AE-423A-AAA3-06E32279C174>

(2) Via Giuseppe Valmarana, 66, I-00139 Rome, Italy.

- E-mail: rachelitommaso@gmail.com - ZooBank: <https://zoobank.org/FFCC0FB9-2EC9-49A6-81CB-EC8DA842B232>

* Corresponding author

Keywords:

Lepidoptera; taxonomy;
Papilionidae; new subspecies;
Pterourus; description;
menatius; Pichincha;
pichincha; Ecuador.

Abstract. – *Pterourus menatius pichincha* ssp. nov. is described from West Ecuador. The relationships with other Colombian populations as well as with other taxa of the *Pterourus menatius* complex are discussed in the light of recent molecular results. The Colombian subspecies *levis* and *timana* both described by Winhard (2012) fall within the variability of the populations belonging to ssp. *syndemis* Tyler, K. S. Brown & Wilson, 1994, and are hereby synonymized.

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Introduction

The systematics and nomenclature of *Pterourus menatius* is still fluid. The argumentations on systematics are difficult and unstable especially due to the wide range of the supposed populations related to this species. If we agree that *P. victorinus* from Mexico and *P. cleotas* from SE Brazil belong to *P. menatius* then the range spans between these two countries. Otherwise, several subspecies are scattered among the Andes and Amazonia down to Bolivia. The distribution of *P. menatius* in Ecuador was previously restricted to the Amazonian side. Some specimens collected and observed on the north-western side appeared to be different from the Colombian populations and the following subspecies is described herein.

Taxonomic treatment

Pterourus menatius pichincha ssp. nov.

(Fig. 1A-1D, 2)

ZooBank: <https://zoobank.org/A6E2677A-F8E3-4F67-9D84-63CAECC484F5>

Holotype, ♂ (Fig. 1A-1B), Ecuador – Pichincha / Nanegalito / mt. 800 October 1998 / currently housed in the private collection of Maurizio Bollino (Lecce, Italy), and will be deposited in Museo di Storia naturale del Salento (Calimera, Italy).

Paratypes (2 ♂)

- 1 ♂, Ecuador – Esmeraldas / cantón San Lorenzo / sector San Francisco / m 200, Lgt. E. Aldas, in coll. Euclides Aldaz (Ambato, Ecuador);

- 1 ♂, Ecuador – Pichincha / La Esperanza - 800 m / VIII-03 / *P. menatius* ssp?, in coll. Mark Simon (Gainesville, USA).

Diagnosis. – The new subspecies differs from other nearby subspecies for its smaller size, the discal band of the hindwings (HWs) entering into the cell both dorsally and ventrally, and for the conspicuous HWs red submarginal spots. *Pterourus menatius elvirae* Séraphin, 2015, the taxon most similar to the new subspecies, has the discal band of the HWs occasionally entering into the cell but only ventrally, and the submarginal spots on the HWs are yellow, except for the anal spot and that in space 1b.

Description

FW length: 47,5 mm.

Upperside FWs. – Dark brown ground colour; cell with yellowish transverse band with its inner edge in line with CuA₁ and outer edge in line with M₂, slightly suffused with black scales along inner edge; one elongated yellow spot occupies inner half of space 3, and another occupies inner quarter of space 4; submarginal yellowish spots from space 1b to space 8, that in space 1b slightly suffused with red scales, spots gradually changing from rounded to elongated shape, and becoming progressively more suffused with dark scales.

Underside FWs. – Ground colour chocolate-brown; spots as on upperside, except for small oblong postdiscal areas suffused with white scales in spaces 1b and 2, and submarginal spots in spaces 1b, 2 and 3 yellow and more conspicuous.

Upperside HWs. – Ground colour as on FWs; yellow discal band entering into the cell with a small apical spot, and formed by elongated spots with rounded outer edge; bluish postdiscal spots in spaces 2-4, those in spaces 2 and 3 oval whereas that in space 4 is falciform with internal concavity; band of submarginal spots from space 1b to space 8 slightly falciform with external concavity: those in spaces 1b-5 reddish, and those in spaces 6-8 increasingly suffused with yellowish scales.

Reviewer:

Adam Cotton (*Chiang Mai, Thailand*) - Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4852-903X>

- ZooBank: <https://zoobank.org/B42847D1-2FD9-4C9D-8697-B6B2D14A6F67>



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Underside HWs. – Ground colour chocolate-brown. Discal band as on upperside, outer edge bordered with reddish crescents; conspicuous submarginal red spots from space 1b to space 8 plus a thin and minute reddish anal submarginal dot.

Female

The only available image of the female (fig. 2) of the new subspecies was taken on March 19, 2020, by a tourist in the Reserva Los Cedros, Imbabura, NW Ecuador, at an altitude of 1400 m, and sent to us by our friend and colleague Jean-Claude Petit. The specimen, very old and damaged, is visible only from the dorsal side and belongs to the blue-green form, a form also found in other subspecies of the *menatius* complex.

Derivatio nominis. – A noun in apposition referring to the Ecuadorian province Pichincha, the type-locality of the new subspecies.

Distribution. – To the best of our knowledge, the new subspecies is distributed in the extreme north-west of Ecuador (map 1) at altitudes between 200 and 1400 meters.

Discussion

Rothschild & Jordan (1906) included and considered as distinct species *victorinus*, *cleotas*, and *aristeus* (now *menatius*) among various species in their *homerus* group. Munroe (1961), under the *homerus* group among other taxa, listed the same species recognized by Rothschild & Jordan (1906) in his Section V. Hancock's (1983) *homerus* group differed with the ranking of some taxa and recognized in the *menatius* group *cleotas*, *menatius*, *phaeton* and *victorinus*. Tyler *et al.* (1994) under the single species *Pterourus* (*Pyrrhosticta*) *menatius* (Hübner, [1819]) included the following taxa: *victorinus* (Doubleday, 1844); *morelius* (Rothschild & Jordan, 1906); *vulneratus* (Butler, 1872); *laetitia* (Butler, 1872); *syndemis* (Jordan, 1907); *coroebus* (Felder & Felder, 1861); *lemoulti* (Rousseau-Decelle, 1933); *ctesiades* (Rothschild & Jordan 1906); *coelebs* (Rothschild & Jordan, 1906); *eurotas* (Felder & Felder, 1862); *vilcanotus* (Rothschild & Jordan, 1906); *lanaeus* (Doubleday, 1846); *cleotas* (Gray, 1832). Lamas (2004) also included in the

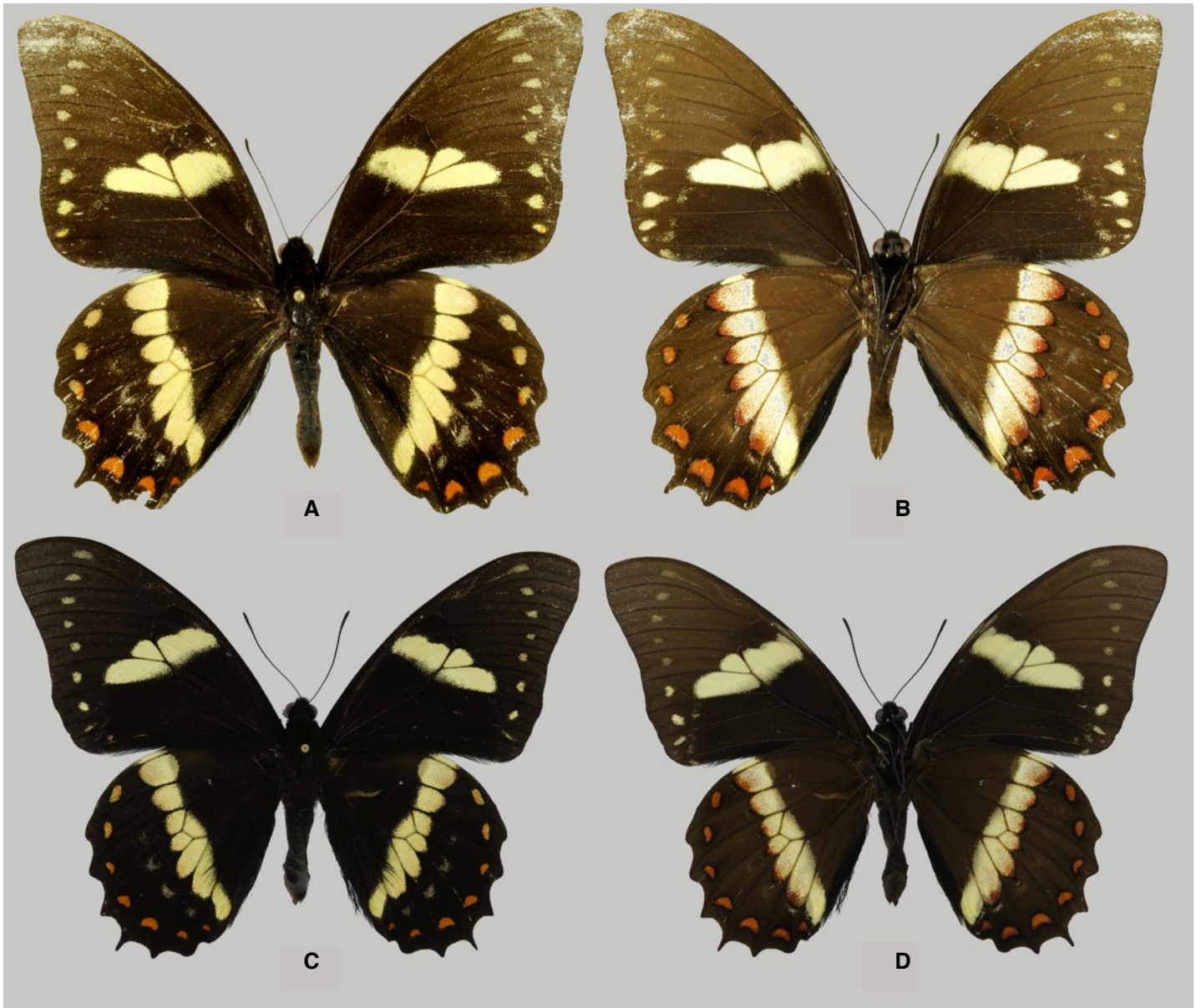


Fig. 1. A-B. Holotype ♂ *Pterourus menatius pichincha* ssp. nov. C-D. Paratype ♂ *Pterourus menatius pichincha* ssp. nov. (coll. Simon).

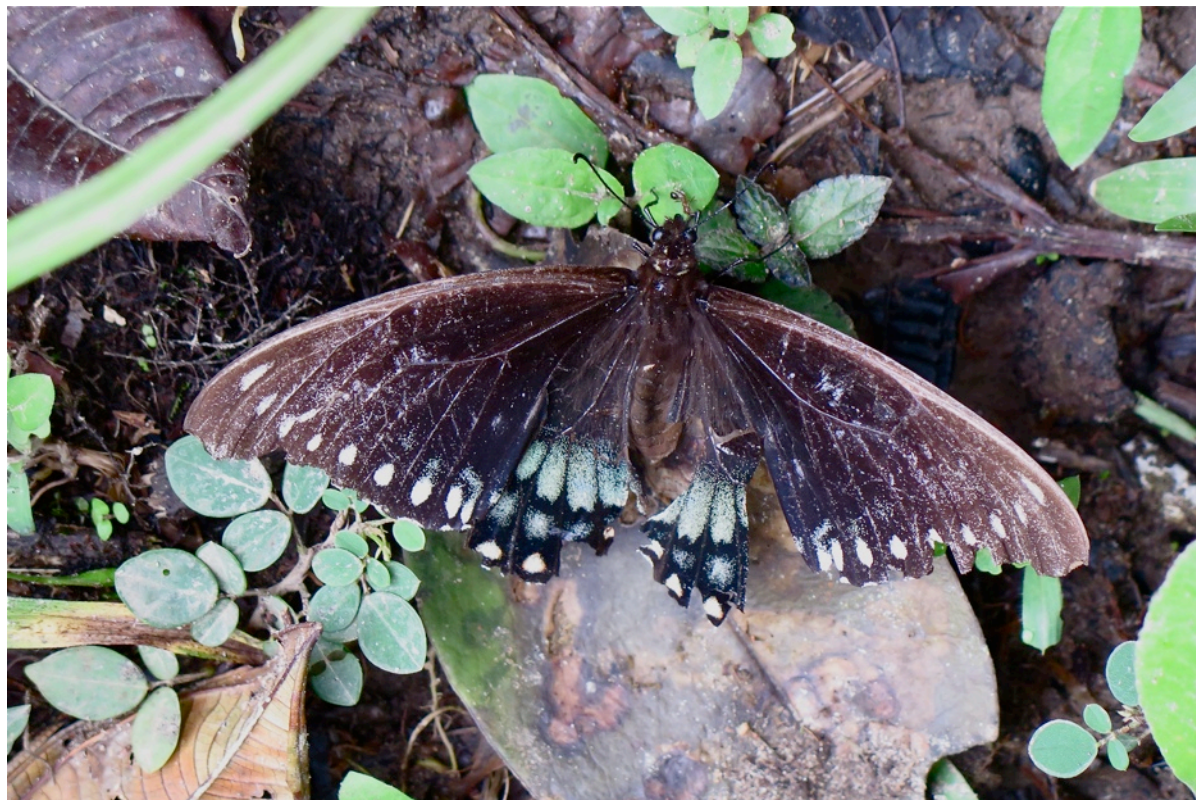


Fig. 2. Female of *Pterourus menatius pichincha* **ssp. nov.** basking in the field.

single species *Pterourus menatius* (Hübner, [1819]) the same 14 taxa considered by Tyler *et al.* (1994) with the exception of *vilcanotus*.

In recent years, three papers dealing with the *P. menatius* complex were published and are here critically examined and summarized.

Winhard (2012) under *Pterourus coroebus* (Felder & Felder, 1861), which he considered as a distinct species from *menatius*, described two new subspecies from Colombia, namely ssp. *levis* from Muzo Department and ssp. *timana* from Huila Department. The author compared the specimens of the two new subspecies with a specimen that he considered to be *Pterourus coroebus syndemis* (op. cit.: Abb. 4R), but which in reality belongs to the population that would be described three years later as ssp. *elvirae*. It is characterized by the premarginal band clearly angled and composed of spots that widen towards the costa; the median band does not describe a regular arc as in *syndemis*. Indeed, the specimens illustrated as *coroebus levis* (op. cit.: Abb. 1R-1V), *coroebus coroebus* (op. cit.: Abb. 2R-2V), and *coroebus timana* (op. cit.: Abb. 3) respectively, are all referable to ssp. *syndemis*. They are characterized by the median spots on the dorsal surface of regular size and they widen slightly, starting from the inner edge, forming a regular arc extended by the cellular spot. Furthermore, since the characters given for the two subspecies fall within the variability of the populations belonging to ssp. *syndemis*, both are hereby synonymized.

Séraphin (2015) presented a nomenclatural and systematic survey of part of the taxa of the *menatius* complex, discussing mainly the variability of the populations from Venezuela and Colombia, and underlining the complexity and difficulties in recognizing the type-localities of many nominal taxa. He described the new ssp. *elvirae* from the Cali and Popayán areas, and distinguished two subspecies clusters. The first, was formerly known as the *cleotas* group together with populations from Central America, the Orinoco basin, but also the Paraná

basin. The following eight subspecies constitute this cluster: *morelius*, *victorinus*, *vulneratus*, *laetitia*, *coroebus*, *syndemis*, *lemoulti* and *cleotas*. The second cluster, Pre Andean and Amazonian, is characterized in both sexes by the presence of a large pale-yellow FW discoidal spot. Séraphin (2015) suggested a classification into five distinct species: *victorinus*, *coroebus*, *lemoulti*, *menatius* and *cleotas* (*P. coelebs* was not treated), but he did not explain which taxa are included in this second cluster.

More recently the new ssp. *karljordani* from Gran Sabana, Venezuela was described by Costa *et al.* (2022). This taxon is morphologically and genetically closely related to ssp. *lemoulti* from Delta Orinoco but diverse from the nominotypical ssp. *menatius* from French Guyana, which perhaps constitutes its sister taxon.

Remarks

It is now generally assumed that the ancestor of the Papilionini lineages *elwesi* + *Chilasa* + *Pterourus* originated in the Paleotropics some 18-22my. Wu *et al.* (2015) argued that *Chilasa* separated from the ancestor of *Pterourus* and evolved in Asia about 5my before the ancestors of *Pterourus* and the *elwesi*-group diverged in N America, and the ancestor of the *elwesi*-group then crossed the Bering-land-bridge to Asia.

Condamine *et al.* (2023) in their clade 2 obtained a subclade where *P. homerus* is basal to a group of species where *menatius* is sister to *victorinus*.

As was reported above, other molecular approaches (Shiraiwa, Cong & Grishin, 2014, Condamine *et al.* 2023) only considered in their analysis *victorinus* and *menatius*, which result as sister taxa. The more refined cladogram (Fig 3) proposed by Costa *et al.* (2022) shows a topological distinction of *victorinus*, *syndemis* and *coroebus* from the other terminal taxa. This cladogram mirrors somewhat the linear classification proposed by Séraphin (2015), both classifications being preliminary

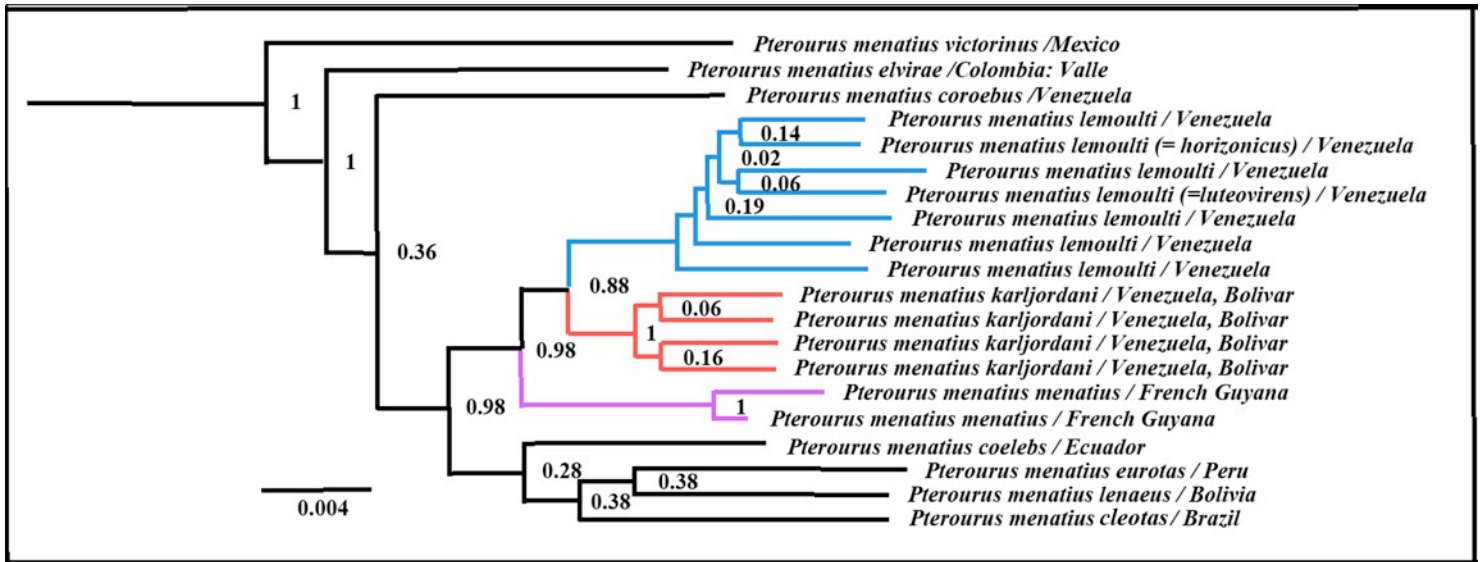


Fig. 3. A phylogenetic tree of the *Pterourus menatius* complex constructed from protein-coding regions of the nuclear genome. Numbers at nodes are bootstrap values normalized to 1. Redrawn from Costa et al. (2022).

given that not all the taxa of the *menatius* complex have been assayed.

Interestingly, the topology of *cleotas* is in strict relationship with the Bolivian *lenaeus*. Here we treat *Papilio cleotas* as a distinct species following Séraphin (2015), despite its position in the Costa et al. (2022) tree (Fig 3). Speculatively, this cladogram suggests an early separation in a trans-Andean lineage (*victorinus*, *syndemis*, *coroebus*), and a cis-Andean lineage which shows all the N Atlantic taxa sister to the remaining pre-Andean and SE Brazilian taxa. The N Peruvian Andean *coelebs* is basal to the SE Brazil *cleotas* apparently vicariant to the whole *menatius* complex. The new subspecies *pichincha* is a natural continuation of Colombian populations.

Acknowledgments

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Authors contribution¹

Publisher Correspondence. – MB

Writing the article. – MB, TR

Description. – MB

Article proofreading. – MB, TR

Bibliographic work. – MB

Material study. – MB

Author of the figures. – MB

¹ MB = Maurizio Bollino – TR = Tommaso Racheli

Taxonomic working list of the *Pterourus menatius* complex

menatius (Hübner, [1819]) (*Calaides*)

- a)** *menatius menatius* (Hübner, [1819]) (*Calaides*)
 - *aristeus* (Stoll, 1781) (*Papilio*)
 - *coristheus* (Boisduval, 1836) (*Papilio*)
 - *ctesias* var. *bari* (Oberthür, 1879) (*Papilio*)
 - *felicis* (Strand, 1930) (*Papilio*)
- b)** *menatius coelebs* (Rothschild & Jordan, 1906) (*Papilio*)
- c)** *menatius ctesiades* (Rothschild & Jordan, 1906) (*Papilio*)
 - *aristeus dysmias* (Rothschild & Jordan, 1906)
- d)** *menatius coroebus* (C. Felder & R. Felder, 1861), (*Papilio*)
 - *clearchus* (C. Felder & R. Felder, 1864) (*Papilio*), nom. nud.
 - *philocleon* (C. Felder & R. Felder, 1864) (*Papilio*), nom. nud.
 - *clearchus* (C. Felder & R. Felder, [1865]) (*Papilio*)
 - *philocleon* (C. Felder & R. Felder, [1865]) (*Papilio*)
 - *cleotas coroebus* f. *dione* (Rothschild & Jordan, 1906) (*Papilio*)
- e)** *menatius elvirae* Séraphin, 2015 (*Pterourus*)
- f)** *menatius eurotas* (C. Felder & R. Felder, 1862) (*Papilio*)
 - *bitias* (Godart, 1819) (*Papilio*)
 - *ctesias* (C. Felder & R. Felder, 1864) (*Papilio*), nom. nud.
 - *ctesias* (C. Felder & R. Felder, [1865]) (*Papilio*)
 - *lacordairei* (Borre, 1884) (*Papilio*), nom. nud.
 - *aristeus bitias* f. *therapes* (Rothschild & Jordan, 1906) (*Papilio*)
 - *aristeus vilcanotus* (Rothschild & Jordan, 1906)
 - *bitias* var. *marcus* (Niepelt, 1916) (*Papilio*)
 - *aristeus huambiensis* (Prüffer, 1922) (*Papilio*)
 - *aristeus melini* (Bryk, 1953) (*Papilio*)
- g)** *menatius karljordani* Neild, Costa, Jost & Grishin, 2022 (*Pterourus*)
- h)** *menatius laetitia* (Butler, 1872) (*Papilio*)
 - *archytas* (Hopffer, 1865) (*Papilio*)
 - *cleotas archytas* f. *panthias* (Rothschild & Jordan, 1906) (*Papilio*)
- i)** *menatius lemoulti* (Rousseau-Decelle, 1933) (*Papilio*)
 - *cleotas lemoulti* f. *horizonicus* (Rousseau-Decelle, 1933) (*Papilio*)
 - *cleotas lemoulti* f. *luteovirens* (Rousseau-Decelle, 1933) (*Papilio*)
- l)** *menatius lenaeus* (Doubleday, 1846) (*Papilio*)
 - *lenaeus* f. *aymara* (Fassl, 1915) (*Papilio*)
 - *aristeus lenaeus* f. *interrupta* (Riley, 1921) (*Papilio*)
 - *lenaeus* f. *heteromorpha* (Niepelt, 1927) (*Papilio*)
 - *lenaeus* f. *recidivus* (Niepelt, 1927) (*Papilio*)
 - *lenaeus* f. *atavus* (Niepelt, 1927) (*Papilio*)
 - *lenaeus* ab. *rupestris* (R. Krüger, 1928) (*Papilio*)
 - *aristeus* var. *lenaeus* f. *monochroma* (Bryk, 1930)
 - *lenaeus* ab. *cellamaculosa* (R. Krüger, 1933)
 - *lenaeus* ab. *austerus* (R. Krüger, 1934) (*Papilio*)
- m)** *menatius pichincha* Bollino & Racheli, **n. ssp.** (*Pterourus*)
- n)** *menatius syndemis* Tyler, K.S. Brown & Wilson, 1994 (*Pterourus*)
 - *phaeton* [sic] (Doubleday, [1845]) (*Papilio*)
 - *phaeton* (Lucas, [1859]) (*Papilio*)
 - *cleotas phaeton* f. *syndemis* (Jordan, 1907) (*Papilio*)
 - *coroebus laevis* Winhard, 2021 (*Pterourus*) **syn. nov.**
 - *coroebus timana* Winhard, 2021 (*Pterourus*) **syn. nov.**

cleotas (Gray, 1832) (*Papilio*)

- cleotas* (Gray, 1832) (*Papilio*)
 - *lycortas* (C. Felder & R. Felder, 1861) (*Papilio*)
 - *cleotas cleotas* f. *adaea* (Rothschild & Jordan, 1906) (*Papilio*)
 - *coroebus* f. *coroebusellus* (Strand, 1918) (*Papilio*)

victorinus (Doubleday, 1844) (*Papilio*)

- a)** *victorinus victorinus* (Doubleday, 1844) (*Papilio*)
 - *helleri* (C. Felder & R. Felder, 1864) (*Papilio*), nom. nud.
 - *helleri* (C. Felder & R. Felder, [1865]) (*Papilio*)
 - *amphissus* (Hopffer, 1865) (*Papilio*)
 - *victorinus* f. *eritromaculata* (Beutelspacher, 1976) (*Papilio*)
- b)** *victorinus morelius* (Rothschild & Jordan, 1906) (*Papilio*)
 - *victorinus morelius* f. *amphisinus* (Vázquez, 1957) (*Papilio*)
- c)** *victorinus vulneratus* (Butler, 1872) (*Papilio*)



Map 1. Distribution of *Pterourus menatius pichincha* ssp. nov. Type locality: blue dot.

Résumé

Bollino M. & Racheli T., 2025. – Une nouvelle sous-espèce d'Équateur dans le complexe de *Pterourus menatius* (Lepidoptera: Papilionidae). *Faunitaxys*, 13(01): 1 – 6.

Pterourus menatius pichincha ssp. nov. est décrit de l'ouest de l'Équateur. Les relations avec d'autres populations colombiennes ainsi qu'avec d'autres taxons du complexe *Pterourus menatius* sont discutées à la lumière des résultats moléculaires récents. Les sous-espèces colombiennes *levis* et *timana*, toutes deux décrites par Winhard (2012), s'inscrivent dans la variabilité des populations appartenant à la ssp. *syndemis* Tyler, K. S. Brown & Wilson, 1994, et sont ici synonymisées.

Mots clés. – Lepidoptera, Papilionidae, *Pterourus*, *menatius*, *pichincha*, taxonomie, nouvelle sous-espèce, description, Pichincha, Équateur.

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A new taxon of the *Pterourus menatius* complex from West Ecuador (Lepidoptera: Papilionidae).

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Illustration de la couverture :

Reserva Los Cedros, Imbabura, Ecuador, the locality where the female of the new subspecies was photographed.

Crédits:

Maurizio Bollino : Fig. 1.

Nicola Peel : Fig. 2.

Pierre Boyer : Couverture.