



<http://dx.doi.org/10.11646/zootaxa.4018.1.3>

<http://zoobank.org/urn:lsid:zoobank.org:pub:1D7114C5-225C-403E-9F08-F28B5E1E6571>

Revision of the *Bicyclus ignobilis* species-group (Lepidoptera: Nymphalidae: Satyrinae) with descriptions of two new species

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Abstract

The *ignobilis*-group of the genus *Bicyclus* Kirby 1871 is revised. The species-group contains six species with a distinct wing pattern, but limited intraspecific variation, distributed across tropical African rainforest. We investigate a set of more than 1000 specimens from a range of museum collections, including some type material, and thoroughly update the biogeographical knowledge for the group. We also describe two new species as members of the group. The included species are: *Bicyclus ignobilis* (Butler 1870) **stat. rev.**, *B. rileyi* Condamin 1961, *B. maesseni* Condamin 1971, *B. brakefieldi* Brattström 2012, *B. ottossoni* **sp. nov.** and *B. vandeweghei* **sp. nov.** Due to observing a gradual morphological cline within *B. ignobilis* without any sharp transitions we suppress the previously identified subspecies *B. ignobilis eurini* Condamin & Fox 1963 **syn. nov.** and *B. ignobilis acutus* Condamin 1965 **syn. nov.**

Key words: Nymphalidae, *Bicyclus ignobilis*-group, *Bicyclus ottossoni* **sp. nov.**, *Bicyclus vandeweghei* **sp. nov.**

Introduction

The genus *Bicyclus* Kirby 1871 includes more than 85 described species distributed across sub-Saharan Africa (Condamin 1973). A single taxon, *Bicyclus anynana socotrana* (Butler), is endemic on the island of Socotra which is part of Asia (Yemen), but biogeographically lies inside the Afrotropical Region. *Bicyclus* is by far the most species-rich African genus of Satyrinae, but because of their often cryptic colour patterns they are frequently misidentified in nature as well as in collections. The marked intraspecific variation within the genus has also led to a high number of invalid names given to seasonal morphs of many species. As part of a larger project studying evolutionary patterns across the whole subtribe Mycalesina Reuter 1896 we are now gradually revising all of *Bicyclus*, and this paper forms a part of the systematic contributions from that work.

The *ignobilis*-group was designated as a species-group by Condamin (1973) when revising the genus *Bicyclus*. He grouped the then three included species together due to their highly irregular disposition of the ventral hindwing eyespots and discal band, and because of shared characters in the male genitalia. Before Condamin's early work on *Bicyclus* only a single taxon was known from this group, namely *B. ignobilis* (Butler 1870). This species was initially described from female material (most likely a single specimen) collected in Ghana. It was not until almost a century later that additional species were described within the current *ignobilis*-group. Condamin described *B. rileyi* Condamin 1961 and *B. maesseni* Condamin 1971. He was also responsible for the designation of two subspecies *B. ignobilis eurini* Condamin & Fox 1963 **syn. nov.** and *B. ignobilis acutus* Condamin 1965b **syn. nov.** The latest species to be described within the *ignobilis*-group was *B. brakefieldi* Brattström 2012.

During our work in the field and across a range of museum collections—with the aim of cataloguing various traits across the whole genus *Bicyclus* for use in comparative studies of evolutionary patterns—we came across two morphologically distinct and undescribed species in the *ignobilis*-group. We also found a range of new geographical records for the species-group. This paper, therefore, aims to summarise the current taxonomic status and known distribution of the complete *ignobilis*-group, as well as to describe two new species: *B. ottossoni* **sp. nov.** and *B. vandeweghei* **sp. nov.**