SHORT COMMUNICATIONS

Recent records of uncommon butterflies from the Maltese Islands

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The lycaenid butterflies *Lycaena phlaeas phlaeas* (Linnaeus 1761), *Zezeeria knysna knysna* (Trimen 1861) and *Aricia agestis agestis* (Denis & Schiffermuller,1775) and the satyrid butterfly *Maniola jurtina hyperhispulla* (Thomson,1972) are recorded again after a long absence.

LYCAENIDAE

Lycaena phlaeas phlaeas (Linn. 1761) Eng. Small Copper; M. Farfett tas-Selq (Fig. 1).

MALTA: Wied Qirda l/0 Zebbug 2 ex., 10.x.2004. The butterflies were observed feeding on flowers on a sunny day (temperature 20°C). Dock (*Rumex* sp.), which is the larval food plant of this species (Valletta, 1973), was abundant in the vicinity. This species, which was rarely recorded in recent years, could be re-establishing itself in the Maltese Islands..
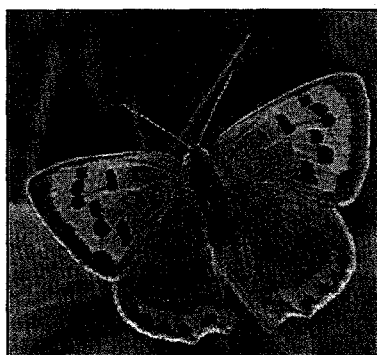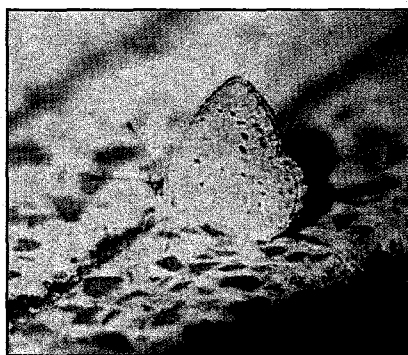

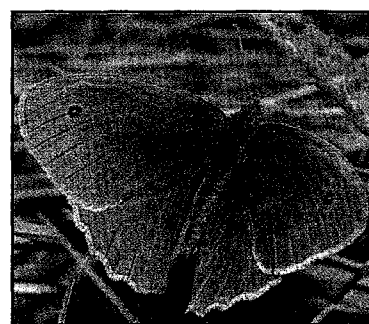Fig. 1 Lycaena phlaeas phlaeas   Fig. 2 Zizeeria knysna knysna   Fig. 3 Maniola jurtina

Zizeeria knysna knysna (Trimen, 1861) Eng. African Grass Blue; M. Ikhal ta' l-Afrika (Fig. 2).

MALTA: Wied Dalam l/o Birzebbuga, 1 m, 19.xi.2000, 3m, 1f, 3.x.2004; Wied Qirda l/o Zebbug, several ex., 4.xi.2000 and 10.x.2004. The 2000 Wied Dalam record is the first for this locality. At Wied Qirda in October, 2004, mating was observed. It appears that this species has now established itself quite well in the Maltese Islands.

Aricia agestis agestis (Denis & Schiffermuller,1775) Eng. Brown Argus; M. Kannelli ta' l-Anglu

MALTA: Wied Qirda l/o Zebbug, 1m, x.2005. The specimen was in perfect condition. Previously quite common, this species has now become very rare.

SATYRIDAE

Maniola jurtina hyperhispulla (Thomson, 1972) Eng. Meadow Brown; M. Kannella Kbir (Fig. 3) .

MALTA: Armier, 5m, 21.v.2003 GOZO: Wied Xlendi, 4m, 1 f; Dwejra l/o San Lawrenz 1m and 3 f; Hondoq ir-Rummien l/o Qala 1 f, 8.vi.2004. This species has declined drastically in recent years and is now quite rare.

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