



NOTE

Teniorhinus harona (Westwood, 1881): a new species record for South Africa.

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INTRODUCTION

South Africa is probably the best surveyed country in Africa when it comes to butterfly diversity. Although we have a reasonably good understanding of the species found within the borders of the country, occasionally species not known from the area are found. These are often vagrants, but in some cases, they may be the first specimens of a previously unknown colony of a particular species. This note covers the discovery of a new species record for South Africa, *Teniorhinus harona*.

OBSERVATIONS

On 25 April 2014 two specimens of *Teniorhinus harona* (Westwood, 1881), the Arrowhead orange, were found at Mphapuli Cycad Reserve outside Sibasa, north-east of Thohoyandou, Limpopo Province, South Africa. To the best of our knowledge, these two specimens are the first of this species to be found in South Africa.

The first specimen was found next to the reserve fence (22°48'49.8"S; 30°38'51.3"E), where it was photographed and then collected. (Figs 1 & 2). It was found while feeding on flowers of a *Vernonia* sp. The second specimen was found a couple of meters down the road where it darted into a path leading into the riverine forest.



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Figure 1 – *Teniorhinus harona* (sex indeterminate) from Gundani forest

On 27 April 2014, we visited Gundani forest (22°38'45.9"S; 30°33'44.0"E), the Miombo woodland outside the town of Gundani, Limpopo Province (Figs 3 & 4). *T. harona* is closely associated with

Miombo woodland where it is found further north in Africa. No *T. harona* were seen.

On 15 June 2014, while visiting the area again, another specimen of *T. harona* was photographed and also collected at Gundani forest. As it was found early in the morning, the specimen was flying slowly and settled often under some large *Brachystegia spiciformis* (Benth.) trees.



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Figure 2 – *Teniorhinus harona* (♂) from Gundani forest

T. harona is the third *Brachystegia*-associated butterfly species to be found in South Africa. Miombo woodland, SVcb 22 (Mucina & Rutherford 2006), also known as Msasa or *Brachystegia* woodland is a unique vegetation type that characterises large parts Africa south of the equator. It covers about 12% of the African continent (Gumbo and Pearce, 1992), dominating the landscapes in Zimbabwe, Zambia, the Democratic Republic of Congo and further to the east, but in South Africa it is restricted to the Gundani forest in the Vhembe district, north-east of Thohoyandou (Mucina & Rutherford 2006).

Members of the genus *Brachystegia* are the host plants of several species of Lepidoptera, including *Charaxes guderiana* (Dewitz, 1879), *Andronymus neander* (Plötz, 1884a) and *Neptis laeta* (Overlaet, 1955) (Kroon 1999). In addition to the species that

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are known to use *Brachystegia* spp. as a host-plant, several others are associated with the vegetation type (Pringle *et al.* 1993). These include *Acada biseriata* (Mabille, 1893), *Teniorhinus herilus* (Hopffer, 1855) and *T. harona*. Soon after the *Brachystegia* forest was discovered in South Africa in 2001 (Hurter & Van Wyk 2001), lepidopterists surveyed the area and found two of these species there, namely *Acada biseriata* and *Charaxes guderiana* (Mecenero *et al.* 2013).

Acada biseriata and *Charaxes guderiana* were discovered at Gundani in 2003, and since then several trips to the locality were made. No *Teniorhinus* were recorded during these surveys. *T. harona* is described as widespread and common in Zimbabwe, but few references state exact localities (Pringle *et al.* 1993). The closest known record traced came from Mbalabala in southern Zimbabwe, about 300 km from Thohoyandou, but it is suspected that they may be found further south (Gardiner pers. comm.). What makes this discovery more interesting is that Mphapuli Cycad Reserve is 20 km south-east of Gundani as the crow flies, and Gundani is currently the only known Miombo woodland in South Africa (Mucina & Rutherford 2006). Further investigations are required to determine whether the specimens may have originated at Gundani and dispersed to Mphapuli Cycad Reserve, whether they are not confined to Miombo woodland only, or whether there may in fact be other small patches of *Brachystegia* forest in the vicinity around Mphapuli Cycad Reserve?

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Figure 3 – Mphapuli Cycad Reserve



Figure 4 – Mphapuli Cycad Reserve