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Karoo BioGaps project – butterfly survey results and their interpretation

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Abstract:

The Karoo BioGaps project (KBGP) data acquisition phase was executed between March 2016 and December 2018. Butterfly surveyors made 82 visits to 46 survey sites, selected statistically to represent the types of habitats found in the Karoo. 600 species records were made of 101 species and 262 DNA samples were collected. The data have been analysed to compare expected butterfly occurrence with the actual observations; identify new quarter degree grid square species records and new species records for the entire KBGP study region; assess the impact of the new data on the Red List status of selected butterfly taxa; identify the butterfly functional types found in the Karoo; determine the average species richness in the Karoo vegetation types and biomes; and assess the impact of rainfall and veld condition on species richness. Recommendations are made to improve the efficiency of data acquisition in future surveys in the Karoo

Key words: Karoo, butterfly occurrence, functional types, vegetation types, species richness, Red List assessments.

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INTRODUCTION

In early 2016 the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) assembled a consortium of academic institutions and non-government organisations to secure funding from the National Research Foundation's (NRF) Foundational Biodiversity Information Programme (FBIP) for a three-year project entitled "BioGaps: Filling biodiversity information gaps to support development decision making in the Karoo" (hereinafter referred to as the "Karoo BioGaps Project = KBGP"). The study region for the KGBP was the shale gas exploration area in the Karoo basin, South Africa, extending across the Western, Northern and Eastern Cape provinces (Fig. 1). Twelve representative taxonomic groups of flora and fauna (taxon groups) were identified, for which a substantial body of expertise and distribution data existed in South Africa: vascular plants, vertebrates (mammals, fish, amphibians, reptiles and birds) and six arthropod groups (bees, dragonflies, grasshoppers, scorpions, butterflies and spiders).

The Lepidopterists' Society of Africa (LSA) was contracted by SANBI in March 2016 to carry out the butterfly surveys for the KGBP, and the project deliverables required by December 2018 were to:

- Survey at least 30 sites and submit records to SANBI in a prescribed format
- Provide at least 500 species records (excluding duplicates at the same site)

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- Provide at least 240 DNA samples
- Conduct 10 Red List assessments
- Complete 20 species pages for the SANBI website

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Data acquisition

The LSA surveying team complied with SANBI's "Compendium of fieldwork instructions", which laid down disciplined and orderly codes of conduct for interacting with the landowners and carrying out the fieldwork. Permits for collecting biological samples were obtained from the Northern, Eastern and Western Cape provincial authorities. The LSA surveyors used the "Rapid Assessment Protocol" (Terblanche & Edge, 2011) for butterflies, adapted to suit the aims of the KGBP. The surveying, sampling and recording processes for butterflies are described below.

Selection of survey sites

- Fifty 1x1 km survey sites were selected for all taxon groups to survey thirty "compulsory" and twenty "optional" (Fig. 1). Twenty additional sites were allocated for supplementary plant surveys.
- All sites were to be broadly representative of the Karoo landscape and contained a diversity of habitat types such as flat areas, slopes, ridge or hilltops, and (ephemeral) watercourses.
- Each butterfly surveyor was allocated several "compulsory" sites and some "optional" sites by the LSA project manager.

Planning surveys and site familiarisation

 Surveyors contacted landowner(s) and arranged which dates were most convenient to visit. On the day of the survey permission to enter the property was reaffirmed before commencement of the survey.

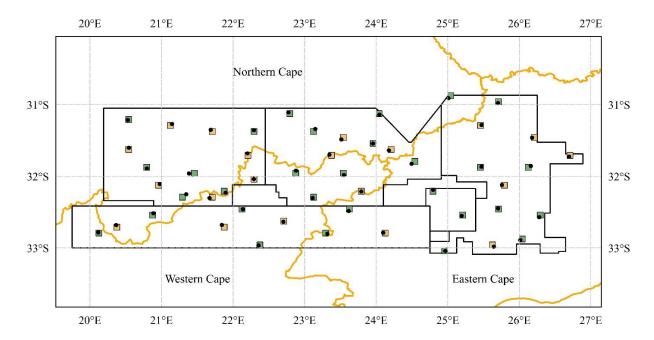


Figure 1 – Map of the KBGP study region, showing the 30 compulsory (green) and 20 optional (brown) pentads. The black dots represent the 1x1 km sites that were surveyed.

- The boundaries of the survey sites were found by GPS.
- Surveys were from 9.00 to 15.00, weather permitting.
- Areas most promising for butterflies were searched (higher ground such as hilltops and ridges around midday; north or west facing slopes; or water courses – especially in arid areas).

Data recorded

- Table 1 shows a typical datasheet with all the site metadata and survey data fields that were recorded.
- Site metadata included weather and veld condition.
- Records were made by visual observations (commoner species), photographs (showing diagnostic features), or physical specimens (rarer, difficult to identify species).
- A record included identity, time, basis of record, count, life stage, habitat, GPS coordinates, accuracy and altitude (optional) of each observation.
- Multiple sightings of the same taxon were recorded so that an overall count was made. Only one line entry was necessary, unless the sightings were a significant distance apart.
- The "specimen processing" section of Table 1 was completed at the end of the day's surveying, after specimens had been set, DNA samples prepared and identifications made from specimens or photographs.

Preparing specimens and DNA samples

- Butterfly specimens were stunned in the field by squeezing the thorax and insertion into labelled collecting envelopes.
- There were two types of DNA samples. If the sample was being set to become a cabinet specimen several legs were removed and placed in a 2 ml sealed vial, filled to within 10mm of the brim with propylene glycol preservative. If the sample was not being set the wings were cut off close to the thorax and the thorax was placed in a similar vial. The wings were placed in a small paper envelope, also marked with the record number.

- DNA samples were stored in a freezer until they were couriered in two batches of c. 130 samples to the University of Johannesburg (UJ), with accompanying spreadsheet fully describing the samples.
- The wings of the specimens that yielded the DNA samples were photographed on both surfaces, and the images sent to UJ.

List of taxa previously recorded in KBGP study region

- Using data from the SABCA project (Mecenero et al., 2013), including records published on the Virtual Museum (VM http://vmus.adu.org.za/) up to project commencement, a list of the taxa previously recorded in the KBGP study region was developed.
- The same SABCA and VM butterfly species records as above were allocated into calendar months, for all taxa and for priority (endemic and threatened) taxa. This helped identify which months contained the main butterfly flight periods to inform field trip planning.

New species records

The project commencement species records from SABCA and the VM as defined above had been placed into quarter degree grid squares (QDGSs). Each KBGP survey site was also allocated into a QDGS, so a comparison could be made to identify new species records for each QDGS.

Species pages and Red Listing reassessments

Species pages for 20 taxa (including information on taxonomy, descriptions, ecology, habitat, distribution and Red List status) were compiled by SANBI and reviewed by LSA experts. Ten of these taxa were selected for Red Listing; three of which were Red Listed during the Southern African Lepidoptera Conservation Assessment (SALCA) project (Mecenero et al., 2015): Crudaria wykehami, Aloeides clarki and Chrysoritis turneri wykehami. The Red Listings of seven other taxa were also reasessed for the KBGP (Aloeides pringlei, Cigaritis

namaquus, Iolaus aphnaeoides, Durbania amakosa penningtoni, Pseudonympha trimenii nieuwveldensis, Chrysoritis pan lysander and Lepidochrysops patricia). New data obtained during the KBGP for these 10 taxa were uploaded into the assessment database of the SALCA tool – purpose designed software developed during the SALCA project. The Red Listings followed the IUCN guidelines (IUCN, 2017), a global standard for assessing the threat status of species.

Functional types

The butterfly taxa recorded during the KBGP were allocated to functional types as follows:

Ant associated (facultative or obligate) = AA; "Acacia" dependent (*Senegalia caffra* or *Vachellia karoo*) = AC; Aphytophagous (not feeding on plant material) = AP; Grass feeders (as larvae) = GF; Hill toppers (come to hill tops) = HT; Lichen feeders (as larvae) = LF; Migrants = MG; Mimics (of distasteful models) = MM; Mud puddlers (extract moisture from moist soil) = MP; Parasitic plant feeders (e.g. mistletoes) = PA; Poisonous plant feeders (and hence unpalatable to predators) = PO; Riverine habitats = RI; Succulent plant feeders = SU.

Biomes and vegetation types

Vegetation types (Mucina & Rutherford, 2006) (VTs) in the KBGP study region were tabulated with the biome, no. of survey sites, total km² per VT, and average species records per site, and this enabled comparisons to be made between VTs and biomes.

Rainfall and veld condition

Monthly rainfall maps for South Africa during the KBGP fieldwork were downloaded from the South African Weather Bureau (SAWB) website:

http://www.weathersa.co.za/home/historicalrain.

Using these maps estimates were made of the rainfall during the preceding month at each of the sites visited. Veld condition was extracted from the datasheets and tabulated with the site identity, dates visited, the rainfall estimates, and the species records obtained.

DNA sequencing and analysis

After allocating reference numbers the DNA samples were submitted via UJ to the Barcode of Life Database (BOLD) for sequencing and analysis (Ratnasingham & Hebert, 2007). The software programme FigTree version 1.4.3 was used to produce a phylogenetic tree to illustrate the relationships between the taxa sampled.

Butterfly occupancy models

The completed datasheets (Table 1) were made available to SANBI researcher Dominic Henry and the methods he used to for modelling are described in Henry (2018). The modelling aimed to determine the occupancy and detection probabilities for the butterfly community as a whole within the study region, as well as for each species observed in the study region, taking into account certain variables or covariates. These estimates were then used to determine species richness as well as species occurrence maps across the study region.

RESULTS

Site visits

82 site visits were made to 46 separate sites; all of the 30 compulsory sites, and 16 of the 20 optional sites were visited at least once (Table 2). The four sites not visited had uncooperative landowners. Five sites were visited three times, which was the most. Many of the sites were relatively flat and featureless (Fig. 2), which is not ideal habitat to obtain a high diversity of butterfly species, that tend to favour landscape features such as slopes, hillsides, ridges and hilltops. More biodiversity was encountered at sites which had variable topography (Figs 3–4).



Figure 2 – Typical featureless sampling site at Tulpleegte south of Beaufort West.



Figure 3 – Mountainous terrain at Taaiboschfontein north of Nelspoort.



Figure 4 – Variable terrain with a river valley, rocky outcrops, and a ridge at Doornberg near Nieu Bethesda.

Species previously recorded in the KBGP region

The 212 species previously recorded in the KBGP study region are detailed in Table 3, and summarised in Table 5.

Butterfly records obtained during KBGP

600 species records were obtained (defined as a species record for a site – with no duplicates) and 262 DNA samples were collected. All specimens taken or observed in the field were identified. 101 taxa were recorded (Tables 4 & 5), of which 9 taxa were new records for the KBGP study region (last column of Table 5). 43% of the taxa previously known in the KBGP study region were recorded (92 out of 212 taxa – Table 5), but very few of the localised and rare endemics were encountered. Fig. 5 on page 68 shows images of 16 taxa recorded during the KBGP.

New species records

During the KBGP species records were obtained for 21 QDGS that previously did not have a single record. Prior to the KBGP there were 383 existing species records for the QDGSs containing the 46 sites visited (Table 5). At the end of the KBGP there were 847 species records for these QDGSs – an increase of 464 or 183%. The KBGP records included 9 records of species never previously recorded in the study region (Table 5), and these are listed and annotated in Table 6.

Species pages

Species pages were prepared for the 20 selected taxa in Table 7. The species pages are now available on SANBI's Species website (http://species.sanbi.org.za).

Red listings

Red List assessments were re-evaluated for 10 of the taxa listed in Table 7. One was assessed as Endangered, four as Least Concern but Rare, and five as Least Concern. The Red Lists will be made accessible on SANBI's Species Status website (http://speciesstatus.sanbi.org.za).

Functional types

An analysis of the most prevalent butterfly functional types recorded during the KBGP is given in Table 8, with comments on the adaptive value of such life strategies in arid environments. Ant association was the predominant functional type encountered.

Vegetation types

The KBGP study region covered four biomes and 15 vegetation types (VTs – Mucina & Rutherford, 2005) over an area of c. 155000 km² (Table 9). The survey sites were unevenly representative of the VTs and the biomes, with the km² of VTs per survey site varying from 4707 (for AZi5) to 1179 (for SKv6), with higher values meaning the VT was less represented. The same applied for biomes, with e.g. Nama-Karoo (3482) being much less represented than the Succulent Karoo (1297). The yield of species records per site for different vegetation types varied from 4.0 (AZi5) to 22.0 (Gd1) (Table 9).

Rainfall and veld condition

In Table 10 the survey sites are grouped by veld condition assessments made by the surveyors and compared with the average rainfall recorded during the month before the survey at these sites and the average species records obtained per site. The latter statistic varied from 16.7 for sites in excellent condition after high rainfall to 4.9 for the worst sites which had received little rain and the veld condition was very poor. From the right hand side of Table 10 a more direct correlation between rainfall and species records obtained can also be calculated ($r^2 = 0.95$).

DNA sequencing and analysis

Table 11 shows the list of 62 species that were sampled and sent via UJ to the Barcode of life Database for sequencing and analysis.

The phylogenetic tree produced is generally consistent with current taxonomy, apart from some probably misidentified samples.

Butterfly occupancy models

Results of the modelling are detailed in Henry (2018). The detection probability after five hours of observations in was generally low, but it was highest under conditions of good veld condition, no cloud cover and higher recent rainfall, and lowest under conditions of higher wind and flat habitats. Occupancy and detection probabilities varied greatly between species. The predicted species richness was highest in the eastern, central and south-western parts of the study region.

DISCUSSION

Data acquisition

Practical problems were encountered with some of the sites selected:

- Site accessibility sometimes the route to the 1x1 km survey site was over roads in very poor condition, even necessitating 4x4 vehicles. This could have been avoided by more thorough site reconnaissance during the planning phase of the project.
- A number of the survey sites had one or more game fences across them, which could not be climbed, and therefore time was lost in driving round to the other side of the game fence.
- The survey sites were biased towards predominantly flat areas, a habitat type that does not host many butterflies – they prefer particular landscape features such as ridges, hilltops, and water courses.
- Some 1x1 km survey sites were changed during the project. Records taken at the old sites have been included in the statistics given in the results section.

Functional types

The butterflies which occur in the Karoo have had to adapt to erratic rainfall patterns and occasional droughts, as well as periodic overgrazing by livestock during such droughts.

Some 30 percent of the larvae of butterfly species encountered rely upon ant associations (which enable in some instances aphytophagy and the absence of reliance on plant material) to survive in very arid and harsh

environments. The larvae are able to shelter in ants' nests and either practice predation on the ant brood or are fed by the ants through trophallaxis.

Grass (Poaceae) feeding is practiced by 15 percent of the butterfly species recorded during the KBGP. Poaceae species occurring in the Karoo survive droughts better than many other plant families, and rapidly respond to ephemeral rains.

Other plants exploited by butterfly larvae in the Karoo are *Senegalia caffra* Thunb. and *Vachellia karroo* (Hayne) – hardy plants that can draw water from deep sources; succulents such as Aizoaceae and Crassulaceae – that store water inside their stems and leaves into which the larvae bore; and parasitic plants such as Loranthaceae which are sometimes the only green vegetation available, and host several butterfly species.

Butterfly populations in the Karoo are normally quite small and a strategy for mate location is very important. One way of achieving this is by "hilltopping", whereby males and females can find each other on hilltops, and some 12 percent of species encountered practice this behaviour.

The ephemeral nature of rainfall in the Karoo means that damp patches do not last long and they are exploited by "mud puddling" adult butterflies which obtain essential moisture and nutrients from these patches. Heavy rainfall, infrequent as it is, often leads to a localised butterfly population explosion and such species have strong migratory urges since the abundance of larvae will soon exhaust the supply of ephemeral plant material.

Vegetation types

From Table 9 it appears that the Grassland and Albany Thicket biomes had higher yields of species records than the Nama-Karoo and Succulent Karoo. However, this may be influenced by the lesser amount of rain received by these two biomes, which mainly lie in the western part of the study region.

Rainfall and veld condition

The rainfall recorded in the central, northern and western Karoo (http://www.weathersa.co.za/home/historicalrain) was way below average and this reduced the number of records obtained compared to the eastern part of the study region, which received significantly more rainfall.

Many sites were not only drought stricken, but also severely overgrazed because herbivore stock cannot be rapidly adjusted during long dry spells. These factors had a significant effect on plant diversity and hence the butterfly diversity. Only the hardier, habitat generalist or functionally adapted butterfly species can survive such conditions, and there was little chance of finding habitat specialist species, which would be endemic, endangered or rare.

Recommendations

There are still many QDGSs in the Karoo, particularly to the north of the KBGP study region, which have no records. When more normal rainfall conditions return these areas need to be sampled over the next few years or in the next Biogaps project.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The KBGP was only made possible by the efforts of the SANBI project team, ably led by Domitilla Raimondo and Carol Poole. Other vital members of the team we often interacted with were Gigi Laidler (who arranged all the contacts with the farmers); Dewidine van der Colff who provided much technical assistance; Dominic Henry who made our efforts at detailed data acquisition worthwhile; and last but not least SANBI's statistical consultants Res Altwegg and Simon Todd who tackled the difficult challenges of site selection.

LSA's performance on this project relied on our expert team of surveyors (Table 2), who were able to rapidly locate nearly all the species at a site on a given day, often under arduous environmental conditions. Special mention should also be made of Mark Williams, who made sure that the taxonomy was correct, and André and Bennie Coetzer whose distributional database expertise was often put to good use. Another source of distributional data was the LepiMap citizen science platform (a virtual museum run by the Animal Demography Unit of the University of Cape Town) for receiving photographic records, with identifications mostly done by Fanie Rautenbach. The individuals who provided images for the Plate on page 68 are also thanked.

The University of Johannesburg is thanked for handling and forwarding our DNA samples to BOLD.

The other taxon groups provided valuable information about some of the sites, with Krystal Tolley and Corrie Basset deserving special mention.

Last, but certainly not least, to thank are the landowners of the 46 sites visited by the LSA team. They not only allowed access to the survey sites, and accommodation in several instances, but also displayed much friendliness, warmth and assistance with locating the sites.

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Table 1 – Field records: site metadata, survey data and specimen processing for the KBGP, populated with typical data.

SITE METADATA						Weather conditions			
Year	Month	Day	Province	Farm	Pentad	Sky	Temp.	Wind	Veld condition
EXAMPLE									
2016	09	21	W. Cape	Kalkdam	3245_2315	Sunny, clear	Hot	Slight breeze	Flowers present

SURVEY DATA (OBSERVATIONS)							Decimal de	egrees		
Record #	Time	Type*	Surveyor	Count	Life stage	Habitat	Latitude	Longtitude	+/- (m)	Altitude (m)
EXAMPLE	ES									
DE001	10.10	S	D A Edge	2	Adult	Watercourse	32.80437	23.31365	5	350
DE002	10.30	V	D A Edge	5	Adult	Ridge slope	32.80256	23.26827	5	375
DE003	10.45	P	D A Edge	1	Adult	Ridge crest	32.80145	23.24562	5	390
* Record ty	Record types: S = specimen; V = visible ID; P = photograph									

SPECIMEN PROCESSING

DI L'ENILITI ROCLEDINO								
DNA#	Collection #	Identified by	Family	Genus	Species	Subspecies		
EXAMPLE	ES							
DE001	8567	D A Edge	Lycaenidae	Chrysoritis	pan	lysander		
DE002		D A Edge	Nymphalidae	Stygionympha	robertsoni			
DE003		D A Edge	Papilionidae	Papilio	demodocus	demodocus		

Table 2 – Summary of the surveyors, number of site visits made and species records obtained.

C	No. of site visits made		Species	C	No. of site	Species	
Surveyor	Compulsory	Optional	records	Surveyor	Compulsory	Optional	records
J.B. Ball		1	3	A.S. Morton	2		12
J.C.H. Dobson	3	1	51	E.L. Pringle	6	3	123
D.A. Edge	23	17	258	H. Selb	3	2	17
R. Jones	2	1	14	P.F. Ward	12	2	97
S. Kirkman	3		18	TOTALS	55	27	600
A Kok	1		7		•		•

Table 3 – Butterfly taxa recorded in the entire BioGaps study region (n = 212) prior to project commencement, extracted from the SABCA database, and supplemented by records from the Virtual Museum (denoted $^{\rm V}$). Endemic or near-endemic taxa in the study region are marked with an asterisk (*; n = 19). Other taxa of special concern (not endemic or near-endemic) are marked with a † (n = 9).

HESPERIIDAE (28 taxa)	Kedestes macomo	Spialia nanus
Afrogegenes letterstedti	Kedestes niveostriga niveostriga	Spialia paula
Alenia sandaster	Kobelana kobela	Spialia sataspes
Apallaga mokeezi ^V	Metisella malgacha malgacha	Spialia spio
Astictopterus inornatus ^V	Metisella metis paris	Tsitana uitenhaga
Coeliades forestan forestan	†Metisella syrinx	LYCAENIDAE (109 taxa)
Eretis umbra umbra	Pelopidas thrax	Actizera lucida
Gomalia elma elma	Sarangesa phidyle	Actizera stellata
*Kedestes barberae bonsa	Spialia agylla agylla	Aloeides apicalis
Kedestes chaka ^V	Spialia asterodia	Aloeides aranda
Kedestes lenis alba	Spialia ferax	Aloeides arida
Kedestes lepenula	Spialia mafa mafa	†Aloeides caledoni

Aloeides damarensis damarensis	Cupidopsis jobates jobates	*Trimenia wykehami
Aloeides depicta	Deudorix antalus	Tuxentius melaena melaena
*Aloeides dicksoni	Durbania amakosa penningtoni	Tylopaedia sardonyx sardonyx
Aloeides gowani	†Durbaniella clarki belladonna	Zintha hintza hintza
Aloeides juana	Durbaniella clarki clarki	Zizeeria knysna knysna
*Aloeides kaplani	Eicochrysops messapus messapus	Zizina otis antanossa
Aloeides macmasteri	Harpendyreus notoba	Zizula hylax
Aloeides oreas	Harpendyreus tsomo	NYMPHALIDAE (52 taxa)
Aloeides pallida pallida	Iolaus aphnaeoides	Acraea horta
Aloeides pierus	Iolaus mimosae mimosae	Aeropetes tulbaghia
*Aloeides pringlei	Iolaus sidus	Antanartia schaeneia schaeneia
Aloeides thyra thyra	Iolaus silas	Bicyclus safitza safitza
Aloeides trimeni trimeni	Lachnocnema durbani	*Cassionympha camdeboo
Aloeides vansoni	Lampides boeticus	Cassionympha cassius
Anthene amarah amarah	Lepidochrysops asteris	Catacroptera cloanthe cloanthe
Anthene definita definita	†Lepidochrysops bacchus	Charaxes jahlusa jahlusa
Anthene livida livida	Lepidochrysops grahami	Charaxes karkloof karkloof
Anthene millari	†Lepidochrysops jamesi jamesi	Charaxes varanes varanes ^V
Anthene talboti	Lepidochrysops ketsi ketsi	Charaxes xiphares thyestes
Argyraspodes argyraspis	Lepidochrysops letsea	Danaus chrysippus orientis
Axiocerses croesus	†Lepidochrysops mcgregori	Dira clytus eurina
Azanus jesous	Lepidochrysops ortygia	Dira oxylus ^V
Azanus moriqua	Lepidochrysops patricia	Eurytela hiarbas angustata
Azanus ubaldus	Lepidochrysops robertsoni	Hypolimnas misippus
Brephidium metophis	Lepidochrysops southeyae	Junonia hierta cebrene
Cacyreus dicksoni	Lepidochrysops variabilis	Junonia oenone oenone
Cacyreus fracta fracta	*Lepidochrysops victori	Junonia orithya madagascariensis
Cacyreus lingeus	Leptomyrina hirundo	Melampias huebneri huebneri
Cacyreus marshalli	Leptomyrina lara	Melanitis leda
Chilades trochylus	Leptotes brevidentatus	Neita durbani
Chrysoritis azurius	Leptotes pirithous pirithous	Paralethe dendrophilus dendrophilus
*Chrysoritis beaufortia beaufortia	Lycaena clarki	Pardopsis punctatissima
†Chrysoritis beaufortia charlesi	Orachrysops nasutus nasutus	Phalanta phalantha aethiopica
*Chrysoritis beaufortia sutherlandensis	Orachrysops subravus	Precis archesia archesia
Chrysoritis beulah	Oraidium barberae	Precis octavia sesamus
Chrysoritis braueri	Phasis braueri	Pseudonympha gaika
Chrysoritis chrysantas	Phasis clavum clavum	Pseudonympha magoides
Chrysoritis chrysaor	*Phasis clavum erythema	Pseudonympha paludis
Chrysoritis felthami dukei	*Phasis pringlei	Pseudonympha southeyi wykehami
*Chrysoritis midas	Stugeta bowkeri bowkeri	Pseudonympha trimenii namaquana
Chrysoritis pan lysander	Tarucus sybaris sybaris	Pseudonympha trimenii nieuwveldensis
Chrysoritis turneri amatola	Tarucus thespis	*Pseudonympha trimenii ruthae
Chrysoritis turneri turneri	*Thestor camdeboo	Pseudonympha varii
†Chrysoritis turneri wykehami	*Thestor compassbergae	Serradinga bowkeri bella
*Chrysoritis violescens	*Thestor pringlei	Serradinga clarki clarki
Crudaria capensis	Thestor protumnus aridus	Stygionympha irrorata
Crudaria leroma	Trimenia argyroplaga argyroplaga	Stygionympha robertsoni
†Crudaria wykehami	Trimenia macmasteri macmasteri	Stygionympha scotina scotina

ygionympha wichgrafi williami	Papilio dardanus cenea ^V	Colotis evagore antigone
Tarsocera dicksoni	Papilio demodocus demodocus	Colotis evenina evenina
Tarsocera fulvina	Papilio echerioides echerioides ^V	Dixeia charina charina
Tarsocera namaquensis	Papilio nireus lyaeus	Eurema brigitta brigitta
*Tarsocera southeyae	PIERIDAE (19 taxa)	Mylothris agathina agathina
Telchinia anacreon	Belenois aurota	Mylothris trimenia ^V
Torynesis hawequas	Belenois creona severina	Nepheronia buquetii buquetii
*Torynesis magna	Belenois gidica abyssinica	Pinacopteryx eriphia eriphia
Torynesis mintha mintha	Belenois zochalia zochalia	Pontia helice helice
Vanessa cardui	Catopsilia florella	Teracolus agoye bowkeri
Vanessa hippomene hippomene	Colias electo electo	Teracolus eris eris
Ypthima asterope hereroica	Colotis antevippe gavisa	
PAPILIONIDAE (4 taxa)	Colotis euippe omphale	

Table 4 - Butterfly taxa recorded during the KBGP field surveys (n = 101). Nine taxa were new records for the KBGP region and are preceded by +. Endemics to the KBGP study region are preceded by * (n = 2). No threatened or rare taxa were recorded.

HESPERIIDAE (11 taxa)	Argyraspodes argyraspis	Phasis braueri
Afrogegenes letterstedti	Azanus jesous	Stugeta bowkeri bowkeri
Alenia sandaster	Azanus moriqua	Trimenia macmasteri macmasteri
Eretis umbra umbra	Azanus ubaldus	Tylopaedia sardonyx sardonyx
Gomalia elma elma	Brephidium metophis	Zizeeria knysna knysna
Kedestes macomo	Cacyreus dicksoni	NYMPHALIDAE (20 taxa, 2 new)
Metisella malgacha malgacha	Cacyreus fracta fracta	+Acraea neobule neobule
Spialia agylla agylla	Cacyreus marshalli	Aeropetes tulbaghia
Spialia ferax	Chilades trochylus	+Byblia ilithyia
Spialia nanus	Chrysoritis chrysantas	Cassionympha cassius
Spialia spio	Chrysoritis chrysaor	Catacroptera cloanthe cloanthe
Tsitana uitenhaga	Chrysoritis pan lysander	Charaxes jahlusa jahlusa
LYCAENIDAE (56 taxa, 7 new)	Chrysoritis turneri wykehami	Danaus chrysippus orientis
Aloeides arida	+Cigaritis namaquus	Dira clytus eurina
+Aloeides braueri	+Cigaritis phanes	Hypolimnas misippus
+Aloeides clarki	Crudaria capensis	Junonia hierta cebrene
Aloeides damarensis damarensis	Crudaria leroma	Neita durbani
Aloeides depicta	Crudaria wykehami	Pseudonympha magoides
Aloeides gowani	Deudorix antalus	Pseudonympha trimenii nieuwveldensi
Aloeides macmasteri	Durbania amakosa penningtoni	Pseudonympha trimenii ruthae
+Aloeides molomo molomo	Eicochrysops messapus messapus	Stygionympha irrorata
Aloeides pallida pallida	Iolaus aphnaeoides	Stygionympha robertsoni
Aloeides pierus	Iolaus mimosae mimosae	Tarsocera fulvina
*Aloeides pringlei	Iolaus sidus	*Torynesis magna
+Aloeides sp. nova	Lampides boeticus	Vanessa cardui
Aloeides thyra thyra	Lepidochrysops ortygia	Ypthima asterope hereroica
Aloeides trimeni trimeni	Lepidochrysops patricia	PAPILIONIDAE (1 taxon)
Aloeides vansoni	Leptomyrina hirundo	Papilio demodocus demodocus
Anthene amarah amarah	Leptomyrina lara	PIERIDAE (13 taxa)
Anthene definita definita	Leptotes brevidentatus	Belenois aurota
+Anthene otacilia otacilia	Leptotes pirithous pirithous	Belenois creona severina
Anthene talboti	Oraidium barberae	Belenois gidica abyssinica

Catopsilia florella	Dixeia charina charina	Pontia helice helice
Colias electo electo	Eurema brigitta brigitta	Teracolus eris eris
Colotis euippe omphale	Nepheronia buquetii buquetii	
Colotis evenina evenina	Pinacontervy erinhia erinhia	

Table 5 – Summary of butterfly species records for the 50 KBGP survey sites before the project commenced and obtained during the project (surveys conducted at 46 sites). An indication is given of how many of these taxa are endemic to the KGBP study region and how many are threatened or rare. "New records" refer to taxa that had not previously been recorded in the survey sites.

	Before project commenced					
Family	Total Taxa	Endemics	Threatened or Rare	No. of species records		
Hesperiidae	18			30		
Lycaenidae	82	9	6	212		
Nymphalidae	42	3		94		
Papilionidae	5			6		
Pieridae	15			41		
TOTALS	162	12	6	383		

	Obtained during the KBGP									
Total Taxa	Endemics	Threatened or Rare	No. of species records	New records						
11			30	0						
56	2	5	292	7						
20			151	2						
1			22	0						
13			105	0						
101	2	5	600	9						

Table 6 – New butterfly species records for KBGP study region obtained during the project.

Butterfly species	Pentad	Surveyor	Comments on the records	Specimen number
Aloeides braueri	3140_2320	P.F. Ward	Considerably out of range – poor specimen (needs confirmation)	PW125
Aloeides clarki	3145_2430	D.A. Edge	Many inland records of A. clarki – maybe a species complex	DE168
Aloeides m. molomo	3105_2245	P.F. Ward	Considerably out of range – possibly <i>Aloeides d. damarensis</i>	
Aloeides sp. nova	3115_2525	D.A. Edge	Specimen needed to confirm this is a new taxon	
Anthene otacilia	3150_2525	D.A. Edge	Very similar to Anthene talboti – specimen obtained	DE111
Cigaritis namaquus	3105_2245	P.F. Ward	Previously only recorded in Namaqualand – no specimen	
Cigaritis phanes	3105_2245	P.F. Ward	Southerly extension of its range – no specimen	
Acraea n. neobule	17 pentads	D.A. Edge	Previously overlooked and identified as Acraea horta	
Byblia ilithyia	3115_2525	D.A. Edge	Considerably out of range – but specimen obtained	DE133

Table 7 – The 20 butterfly taxa for which species pages were compiled. Re-assessed Red Listings were done for the ten asterisked taxa, (three were already re-assessed during the SALCA project. An indication is given as to whether or not they are habitat specialists and/or endemic to South Africa (SA). Reasons for selection of these taxa for Red Listing re-assessments and species pages are given.

Butterfly taxon	Red Listing	Habitat specialist	Endemic to SA	Reason for selection
*Aloeides clarki	EN	Yes	Yes	SALCA taxon.
*Aloeides pringlei	LC Rare(HS)	Yes	Yes	Endemic to Karoo.
*Chrysoritis pan lysander	LC	No	Yes	Widespread typical Karoo taxon that inhabits dry rocky gullies.
*Chrysoritis turneri wykehami	LC Rare(HS, LD)	No	Yes	SALCA taxon.
*Cigaritis namaquus	LC	No	No	Thought to be a South African endemic but also occurs in Namibia.
*Crudaria wykehami	LC	No	Yes	SALCA taxon.
*Durbania amakosa penningtoni	LC Rare(HS)	Yes	Yes	Endemic to South Africa.
*Iolaus aphnaeoides	LC Rare(HS)	Yes	Yes	Endemic to South Africa.
*Lepidochrysops patricia	LC	Yes	No	Variant found in the eastern Karoo may be a new subspecies
*Pseudonympha trimenii nieuwveldensis	LC	Yes	Yes	Restricted range habitat specialist endemic found in high altitude grasslands.
Aloeides gowani	n/a	Yes	Yes	Fairly rare widespread endemic probably a habitat specialist.
Aloeides pallida pallida	n/a	No	Yes	Populations show much variability – maybe more taxa present.
Anthene talboti	n/a	Yes	No	Rarest of the Karoo's <i>Anthene</i> species – habitat specialist.
Charaxes jahlusa jahlusa	n/a	Yes	Yes	Only <i>Charaxes</i> found in Karoo – habitat specialist (hilltops).
Iolaus mimosae mimosae	n/a	Yes	Yes	Widespread uncommon habitat specialist (parasitic host plants).
Lepidochrysops ortygia	n/a	No	Yes	Widespread variable species – may contain cryptic taxa.
Metisella malgacha malgacha	n/a	Yes	Yes	Habitat specialist, found in moist places at high altitudes.
Nepheronia buquetii buquetii	n/a	No	No	A rarer migrant pierid that crosses the Karoo later in the summer.
Teracolus eris eris	n/a	No	No	Typical but less common Karoo pierid – migratory tendencies.

Tsitana uitenhaga	n/a	Yes	Yes	Habitat specialist – host plants <i>Muerxmelleri</i> sp. occur at high altitudes.
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Table 8 - Analysis and interpretation of prevalent butterfly functional types (>3 occurrences) recorded during the KBGP.

Functional types	No.	Adaptive value for arid environments
Ant association	25	Larvae can shelter in ants nests during the day. Adults can delay emergence in drought conditions.
Grass feeders	15	Mainly some skippers and most browns (satyrines). Always some grass present even when dry.
Hill toppers	12	Good strategy for mate location when adults are scarce.
Mud puddlers	10	Can obtain moisture from any damp patches to avoid dehydration.
"Acacia" feeders	8	Very hardy trees able to survive droughts. Adult butterflies feed on flowers and larvae on leaves.
Migrants	7	Able to take advantage of ephemeral rains, breed rapidly and fly long distances to find more rain.
Succulent feeders	7	Larvae bore into succulent leaves and stems and be protected against aridity.
Aphytophagous	5	During dry conditions no host plant needed. Fed in ants nests on ant brood or by trophallaxis with ants.
Parasitic host plants	4	These plants provide the only green vegetation during droughts.

Table 9 – Summary of vegetation types (VTs = Mucina & Rutherford, 2006), biomes, number of sites surveyed and species records obtained during the KBGP. The km^2 in the KBGP study region was calculated for each VT and biome. The relative sampling density and yield of species records per site are calculated for each VT and biome.

Vegetation type (VT)	Biome	VT Code*	do* of		Biomes		No. of species	Average no. of species records per site		
		Coue	sites	km ²	Average km²/ site	km^2	Average km²/ site	records	(VTs)	(biomes)
Eastern Upper Karoo	Nama-Karoo	NKu4	12	45989	3832			190	15.8	
Gamka Karoo	Nama-Karoo	NKl1	7	20325	2903			80	11.4	
Western Upper Karoo	Nama-Karoo	NKu1	6	14700	2450	100979	3482	42	7.0	13.0
Upper Karoo Hardeveld	Nama-Karoo	NKu2	3	11734	3911			53	17.7	
Eastern Lower Karoo	Nama-Karoo	NKl2	1	8321	8321			11	11.0	
Karoo Escarpment Grassland	Grassland	Gh1	3	6283	2094			47	15.7	
Tarkastad Montane Shrubland	Grassland	Gs17	1	2120	2120	14874	2479	18	18.0	17.7
Amathole Montane Grassland	Grassland	Gd1	1	4420	4420	140/4	2419	23	23.0	17.7
Bedford Dry Grassland	Grassland	Gs18	1	2051	2051			19	19.0	
Great Fish Thicket	Albany Thicket	AT11	3	6736	2245			43	14.3	
Camdeboo Escarpment Thicket	Albany Thicket	AT14	1	1976	1976	12467	2078	19	19.0	14.3
Groot Thicket	Albany Thicket	AT3	1	2484	2484	12407	2078	12	12.0	14.5
Sundays Noorsveld	Albany Thicket	AT5	1	1271	1271			12	12.0	
Roggeveld Karoo	Succulent Karoo	SKt3	2	2828	1414	5186	1297	16	8.0	6.8
Koedoesberge-Moordenaars Karoo	Succulent Karoo	SKv6	2	2358	1179	3100	1297	11	5.5	0.0
Bushmanland Vloere	Azonal	AZi5	1	4707	4707	4707	4707	4	4.0	4.0
TOTAL (or AVERAGE*)			46	155169	3373*			600	13.0*	

Table 10 – The number of sites in each veld condition category, average rainfall during previous month and average species records obtained per site during the KBGP. The table section on the right gives the number of sites for each rainfall range, rainfall average per site and the species records obtained per site.

Veld condition	No. of sites	Average rainfall (mm)	Species records/ site
Excellent, green, lots of flowers	12	71.7	16.7
Good, lots of flowers	3	50.0	12.3
Fairly good, flowers	11	26.6	10.2
Fair, some flowers	16	21.9	8.8
Poor but a few flowers	7	14.9	5.6
Grassy but dry	4	27.3	5.3
Poor – dry and dusty	29	15.7	4.9
TOTAL (or AVERAGE/ SITE*)	82	28.3*	8.4*

Previous month rainfall range	No. of sites	Average rainfall (mm)	Species records/ site
75–140 mm	7	102.1	16.0
50–74 mm	7	59.3	12.3
30–49 mm	18	35.6	10.4
10-29 mm	24	17.1	6.9
0–9 mm	26	5.4	5.4

82	28.3*	8.4*

Table 11 - The number of DNA samples per taxon (alphabetically listed) submitted via UJ to the Barcode of Life Database.

Species	No.
Acraea n. neobule	6
Alenia sandaster	1
Aloeides arida	1
Aloeides braueri	1
Aloeides clarki	1
Aloeides d. damarensis	13
Aloeides depicta	2

Aloeides macmasteri	8
Aloeides pierus	16
Aloeides pringlei	1
Aloeides t. thyra	1
Aloeides t. trimeni	1
Aloeides vansoni	9
Anthene a. amarah	3
Anthene d. definita	1

Anthene o. otacilia	1
Anthene talboti	2
Argyraspodes argyraspis	12
Azanus j. jesous	8
Azanus ubaldus	12
Belenois aurota	1
Brephidium metophis	13
Byblia ilythia	1

Cacyreus dicksoni	1
Cacyreus f. fracta	1
Cacyreus marshalli	2
Catopsilia florella	3
Chilades trochylus	4
Chrysoritis chrysantas	6
Chrysoritis chrysaor	8
Chrysoritis pan lysander	4
Chrysoritis turneri wykehami	1
Colias e. electo	1
Colotis euippe omphale	5
Colotis e. evenina	1
Crudaria leroma	4
Crudaria wykehami	5
Danaus chrysippus orientis	2

Eicochrysops m. messapus	1
Eurema b. brigitta	3
Iolaus m. mimosae	1
Lampides boeticus	3
Lepidochrysops ortygia	1
Leptomyrina lara	13
Leptotes p. pirithous	8
Metisella m. malgacha	1
Neita durbani	1
Papilio d. demodocus	2
Phasis braueri	1
Pontia h. helice	9
Pseudonympha trimenii	1
nieuwveldensis	
Pseudonympha t. ruthae	1

Spialia a. agylla	6
Spialia ferax	2
Spialia nanus	7
Stugeta b. bowkeri	1
Stygionympha irrorata	4
Stygionympha robertsoni	9
Tarsocera fulvina	1
Tarsocera magna	4
Trimenia m. macmasteri	2
Tylopaedia s. sardonyx	7
Ypthima asterope hereroica	5
Zizeeria k. knysna	4
TOTAL	262



Figure 5 – Selected images of butterfly species recorded during the KBGP:

A Aloeides d. damarensis J. Dobson; B Aloeides juana J. Dobson; C Anthene talboti A. Sharp; D Argyraspodes argyraspis J. Dobson; E Brephidium metophis J. Dobson; F Chrysoritis chrysaor J. Dobson; G Crudaria wykehami A. Heath; H Gomalia elma elma R. Schutte; I Leptomyrina hirundo S. Woodhall; J Leptotes p. pirithous H. Edge; K Spialia ferax J. Dobson; L Spialia nanus J. Dobson; M Stugeta b. bowkeri S. Woodhall; N Stygionympha irrorata J Dobson; O Stygionympha robertsoni J. Dobson; P Tylopaedia s. sardonyx J. Dobson.