

FURTHER DISTRIBUTION RECORDS AND TAXONOMIC  
NOTES ON *PHILOTES RITA* (LYCAENIDAE)

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The recent revision of the little known species, *Philotes rita* (Barnes & McDunnough), by Mattoni (1966) makes it desirable to publish the following new records.

*PHILOTES RITA RITA* (Barnes & McDunnough)

NEW MEXICO: Silver City [Grant Co.], 13.viii.1913, *leg.* J. B. Wallis, 1 ♂, Carnegie Mus., *ex Acad. Nat. Sci.*, Philadelphia (♂ gen., slide C-1025).

This is the first record of the species for New Mexico. The single specimen agrees with nominate *rita* except that the macules of the post-median row of the hindwing below from M<sub>1</sub> to 2A are very small. It is possibly only an individual variant.

Mattoni (1966: 86) cited the locality, "Rio Verde Mountains," from the original description of *rita* and added that he was unable to locate the mountains but believed the name to be an older one for the Huachucas. Two specimens of *rita* in Carnegie Museum are from this locality (probably the same lot as the *rita* paratype mentioned by Mattoni), and their labels shed light on the question. They read: "Rio Verde Mts., Phoenix, Arizona, Aug. 1893, W. Barnes." The mountains, presumably, are northeast of Phoenix, near the Verde River, a locality about halfway between the two pairs of Arizona stations shown on Mattoni's map.

*PHILOTES RITA* subspecies

NEVADA: "Montello Wells" [at or near Montello, Elko Co. ?], 8.viii.1948, *leg.* E. R. Tinkham, 1 ♂, Carnegie Mus. (♂ gen., slide C-1023).

This specimen appears to represent an undescribed subspecies. In the sum of its characters it is closest to *palleszens*, not surprising considering geographic proximity; but it differs from *palleszens* in the darker blue, the heavier fuscous borders, and the presence of an aurora on the hind wing. All three characters give the upperside a striking resemblance to the figure of *r. rita* in Tilden & Downey (1955: 28, fig. 1). It also differs from *palleszens* in the larger, distinctly quadrate discal and post-median spots of the fore wing underside. The latter character suggests a relationship to *elvirae* Mattoni from California. The male genitalia are very similar to those of *palleszens* (Tilden & Downey, 1955: 27, fig. 1).

Mattoni's view that all four forms (*rita*, *pallescentis*, *coloradensis* and *elvira*) are conspecific has much to recommend it: mutual allopatry, similar ecology, similar flight period. He mentions, but does not emphasize that the differentiation among these forms is not equal. They can be grouped in two assemblages: (1) the *rita* group of subspecies, including *rita* and *coloradensis*; and (2) the *pallescentis* group of subspecies, including *pallescentis*, the unnamed subspecies above and *elvira*. These two groups are well defined by multiple genitalic characters (Tilden & Downey, 1955; Mattoni, 1966) and alar characters (especially the aurora on the hindwing underside which is large and thick in the *rita* group, smaller and quite thin in the *pallescentis* group). Although there is no point in taking such a step now, I believe that future discoveries may make advisable an elevation of *pallescentis* to specific rank, with its own coterie of races distinct from those of *rita*. This does not imply that I think *rita* and *pallescentis* necessarily will be found to occur sympatrically.

#### LITERATURE CITED

- MATTONI, R. H. T., 1966. Distribution and pattern of variation in *Philotes rita*. Jour. Res. Lepid., 4(2): 81-102 ["1965"].
- TILDEN, J. W. & J. C. DOWNEY, 1955. A new species of *Philotes* from Utah. Bull. So. Calif. Acad. Sci., 54: 25-29.