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No. 9 The Yellow-shouldered Ladybird, *Apolinus lividigaster*
This one eats only aphids and is one of the few that can feed on the yellow aphids (*Aphis nerii*), that are found on oleander and milkweed, without being poisoned.

No. 10 28-spot and 26-spot Ladybird, *Epilachna vigintioctopunctata* and *E. vigintisexpunctata*

These ladybirds are plant feeders. The adults and larvae attack potatoes and a range of Curcubits such as pumpkins and cucumbers. Adults feed on the top surface of the leaf and the spikey larvae feed on the bottom.

I am sometimes asked how to tell if you have pest ladybirds or good ones. My reply is that if they have more than 25 spots then they are pests.

Harmonia axyridis Harlequin ladybird or Multicoloured Asian ladybird

We haven't got this one yet, but it has been intercepted in Quarantine.

Is it a good or bad one? It is a very voracious aphid-feeder and apparently provides significant control of aphids in many crop situations, in a number of countries. But because of some of its attributes, it can be a threat to indigenous ladybirds and biodiversity. The general opinion among experts is that is "bad". Let's hope we don't see any of these in our yards.

Images, except where already credited, Adam Slipinski. We thank Adam for supplying these.

Life history notes on the Saltbush Blue, *Theclinesstes serpentata serpentata* (Herrich-Schaffer, 1869) Lepidoptera: Lycaenidae - Wesley Jenkinson



The Saltbush Blue previously known as the Chequered Blue is known from much of the eastern districts from central coastal Queensland including the inland areas southward into northern Tasmania and sporadically across all the other Australian states. This species is locally common where the host plants occur including the drier inland regions.

The species is encountered in a wide variety of open habitats where saltbushes are established. Adults



occasionally visit my garden in Beaudesert in south-east Queensland.

This species utilises a large range of host plants within the *Chenopodiaceae* and *Sapindaceae* families which are listed by several authors in Braby 2000.

The adults are occasionally attended by few small black ants (Grund, 1996a in Braby 2000).

The adults fly quickly close to the ground amongst low growing herbs and the host plants frequently basking in the sun with their wings opened revealing the upper-side colours. During hot conditions they often settle with the head slightly orientated downwards with the wings closed alternating the hind wings slightly up and down. The males also defend small territories around the saltbushes chasing rival males and also hilltop during sunny conditions. Both sexes feed from a variety of small native and introduced flowers including *Lavender* spp..

The adults can be very easily confused with the Sapphire Blue (*T. sulphitius*), however *T. serpentata* generally has more extensive blue scaling on the upperside, white suffused markings on the underside of the hindwing and the subternal spot is reduced in comparison. The two species often differ in habit requirements with the first species being restricted to coastal estuarine environments.

The sexes can be difficult to separate. In comparison to the males, the females have the forewing slightly more rounded and the white underside markings more intense. The abdomen is also slightly shorter and wider.

Wingspans for the pictured adult specimens are: males 19mm and females 20mm.



Theclinesthes serpentata serpentata (Saltbush Blue)
Images left to right: male, female, male underside, female underside

In October 2007 a female was observed ovipositing near Leyburn in south-eastern Queensland. She slowly fluttered around the host plant and settled, then walked a short distance and curled the abdomen onto the host plant and laid a single egg. This egg was kept for life history studies. Subsequently the larva was successfully raised on an unidentified *Atriplex* species growing as a weed near my residence in Beaudesert.



This very tiny egg approximately 0.5 mm wide x 0.3mm high was pale green, mandarin shaped with a pattern of small pits.

Freshly laid egg



The small larva consumed the eggshell soon after emergence and sheltered below a host plant leaf. The early larval instar consumed small sections of the leaf centre tissue leaving the outer epidermis to dry. The larger larva chewed sections out of the leaf. It was observed feeding during daylight hours and they have also been recorded feeding during the night.



2nd instar larva

3rd instar larva

4th instar larva



5th instar larva



Pupa

In captivity the pupa, measuring 7mm in length, was located below a stem of the host plant. It was attached with silk by the cremaster and a central girdle.

The total time from egg to adult was about one month, with egg duration of 6 days, larval duration 18 days and pupal duration of 5 days.

Within the new boundary of the Scenic Rim Regional Shire south of Brisbane, I have records of adults from most months of the year, being more numerous during the spring and summer months.

References:

Braby, M.F., 2000. *Butterflies of Australia – Their Identification, Biology and Distribution*. vol 2. CSIRO Publishing, Melbourne.

New Distribution Records for Thecline Butterflies (Lepidoptera: Lycaenidae) in Australia.

Part I. – *Jalmenus*, *Hypochrysops*, *Hypolycaena* and *Rapala* –

Kelvyn L. Dunn

Summary

This paper, which involves two sections (Parts I & II), lists 19 new locations in Australia for 14 species of butterfly from the lycaenid subfamily Theclinae. The first

