

# Butterflies recorded at King Abdullah University of Science and Technology, Thuwal, Saudi Arabia.





# Butterflies of KAUST

- So far 15 butterflies have been identified at KAUST. Larsen's 'Butterflies of Saudi Arabia' indicates that 35 species occur in the Hejaz region which includes KAUST. A species will only be found if the plant species, consumed by the larvae, grows locally. As many of the region's plant species are not found at KAUST, it follows that some butterflies will also not be found here.





**Name- African Lime Butterfly**

**Scientific name-  
Papilio demodocus**

**Family- Papilionidae**

**Wingspan - 80 - 100 mm**

A member of the swallowtail family and the largest butterfly found at KAUST. This species is found across southern Asia with a number of sub species identified. This species will visit mud pools if available. Larvae feed on citrus fruits.

First recorded - Island Park 4,  
February 2017



male  
photo- Shutterstock



caterpillar  
photo- Shutterstock



**Name- Caper White**

**Scientific name-  
*Anaphaeis aurora***

**Family- Pieridae**

**Wingspan- 55 mm**

A common species thought Arabia, Africa and India. An accomplished migrant travelling northwards to Lebanon and Egypt. They can erupt and become very common. A sub species has developed in South-West Arabia which no longer migrates. First recorded - Golf Course 10, February 2016.



male  
photos- B James





**Name- Blue Spotted Arab**

**Scientific name-  
Colotis phisadia**

**Family- Pieridae**

A member of the colotis group of Pieridae butterflies. Apparently common where the larval food plant *Salvadora persica* occurs, a species of plant that has not been recorded at KAUST.  
First recorded- Golf Course  
August 10, 2018

male  
photo- B. James



male  
photo- B James



**Name - Yellow Patch White**

**Scientific name-  
Colitis halide**

**Family- Pieridae**



male  
photo- B James

A member of the colotis group of Pieridae butterflies. Distribution- limited to the Sahel region and southern Arabia. First recorded- South Beach, February 5, 2018



male  
photo- Trude Peterson



**Name- Scarlet Tip or Crimson Tip**

**Scientific name- *Colotis danae***

**Family- Pieridae**

**Wingspan - males 45 - 50 mm,  
females 48 - 52 mm.**



male  
photo- B James

Found throughout Africa and Arabia.  
The scarlet wingtip of the male is  
much brighter than on the female.  
The undersides are much duller still.  
First recorded- South Beach, February  
5, 2018



female  
photo- Shutterstock



**Name - Desert Orange Tip**

**Scientific name - Colotis liagore**

**Family - Pieridae**

**Wingspan - 28 - 38 mm**

A limited distribution across Sahel Africa, southern Arabia and to the very south of Pakistan. The habitat is described as moist savannah. First recorded- Golf Course, February 10, 2016



male underside  
photo- Shutterstock



male underside  
photo- B James



**Name- African Emigrant**

**Scientific name- *Catospilia florella***

**Family- Pieridae**

**Wingspan - males 54 - 60 mm,  
females 56 - 66 mm.**

Found across Africa and Arabia.  
As the name implies a migrant  
species which may occur in  
huge numbers but also be  
scarce. Larva feed on *cassia*  
plants.

First recorded- Golf Course April  
9, 2017



male underside  
photo- B James





**Name- Leaden Ciliate Blue or  
Black-striped Hairtail**

**Scientific name-  
*Anthene amarah***

**Family - Lycaenidae**

**Wingspan - males 21 - 26 mm,  
females 23 - 29 mm.**

Found throughout tropical Africa  
and Arabia. The larvae feed on  
various acacia species of plant.  
The *anthene* species often have  
3 small tufts of hair on the  
margin of the hindwing.  
First recorded- Golf Course April  
4, 2017

male underside  
photo- B James



photo- Shutterstock





**Name - Mediterranean  
Pierrot or Mediterranean  
Tiger (Blue)**

**Scientific name- *Tarucus  
rosaceus***

**Family- *Lycaenidae***

An eremic (desert) species found throughout the Sahara, Arabia and parts of the Subcontinent. The larvae are associated with plants of the *ziziphus* genus commonly called jujube. The larvae live inside ant colonies.

First recorded- Golf Course  
April 9, 2017



male  
photo- B James



male- underside  
photo- B James



# Butterfly-Ant Mutualism

Many species of lycaenidae butterfly, particularly the blues, have a symbiotic relationship with ants called mutualism. The butterfly larvae feed on the plants of their host plants and secrete a sweet liquid which the ants feed on. In return the ants protect the butterfly larvae from predators.

[link](#)



Photo- Alexwild photography



**Name- Pea Blue or  
Long-tailed Pea Blue**

**Scientific name-  
*Lampides boeticus***

**Family- Lycaenidae**

**Size - 24 - 34 mm**

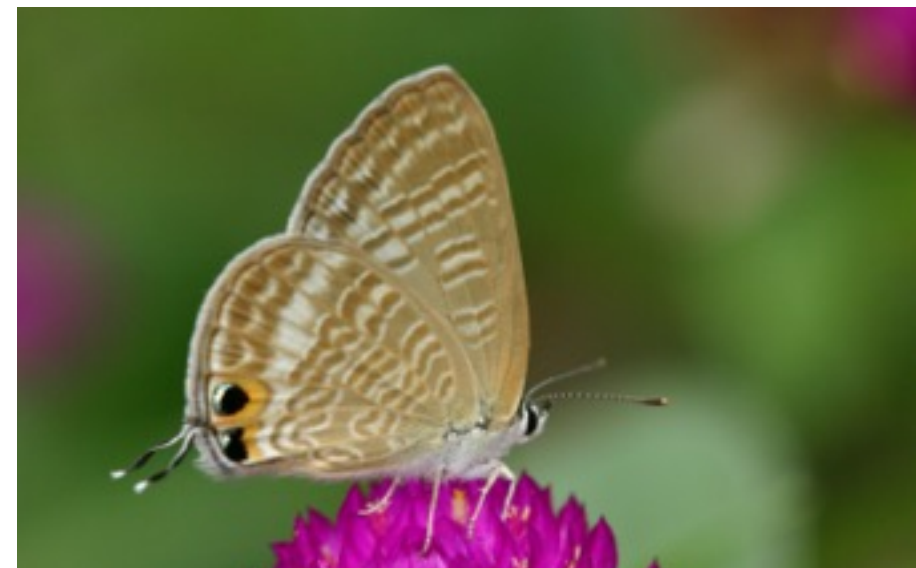
A species found across  
Europe, North Africa and  
southern Asia. Often has 3  
generations in a year.

Migratory.

First recorded- Golf Course  
October 30, 2017



male, underside  
photo- Shutterstock



male, underside  
photo- Shutterstock



**Name - African Grass Blue**

**Scientific name- *Zizeeria knysna***

**Family- Lycaenidae**

**Wingspan- male 18 - 23 mm  
female 21- 26 mm**

Found in west Mediterranean areas and Arabia. The species name knysna, refers to a place in South Africa but the species there has now been reclassified to an alternative name. Very small.

First recorded- Golf Course  
October 30, 2017



Male- upside  
Photo- Shutterstock



Male- upside  
Photo- Shutterstock

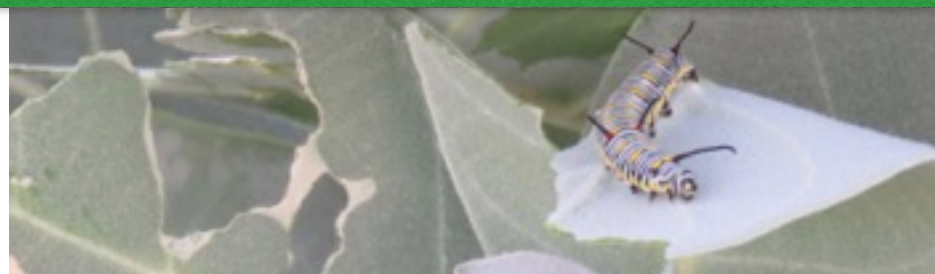


**Name- Plain Tiger or African Queen**

**Scientific name-  
*Danaus chrysippus***

**Family- Nymphalidae**

A widespread species found in Australia, Africa and Asia. The larvae consume milkweed plants which contains toxic compounds which in turn make the butterfly unpalatable to most predators. First recorded- Golf Course February 4, 2017



caterpillar  
photo- B James

male  
photo- B James



female  
photo- Shutterstock



**Name- Painted Lady**

**Scientific name- *Vanessa cardui***

**Family- Nymphalidae**

**Size- wingspan 50 - 90 mm**

A widespread species found throughout Africa, Europe and Asia. A migratory species which appears to navigate using the sun. The route is dependent on the climatic conditions at the time. First recorded- Island mangroves February 2, 2018

caterpillar  
photo-  
Shutterstock



male  
photo- B James



female  
photo- B James



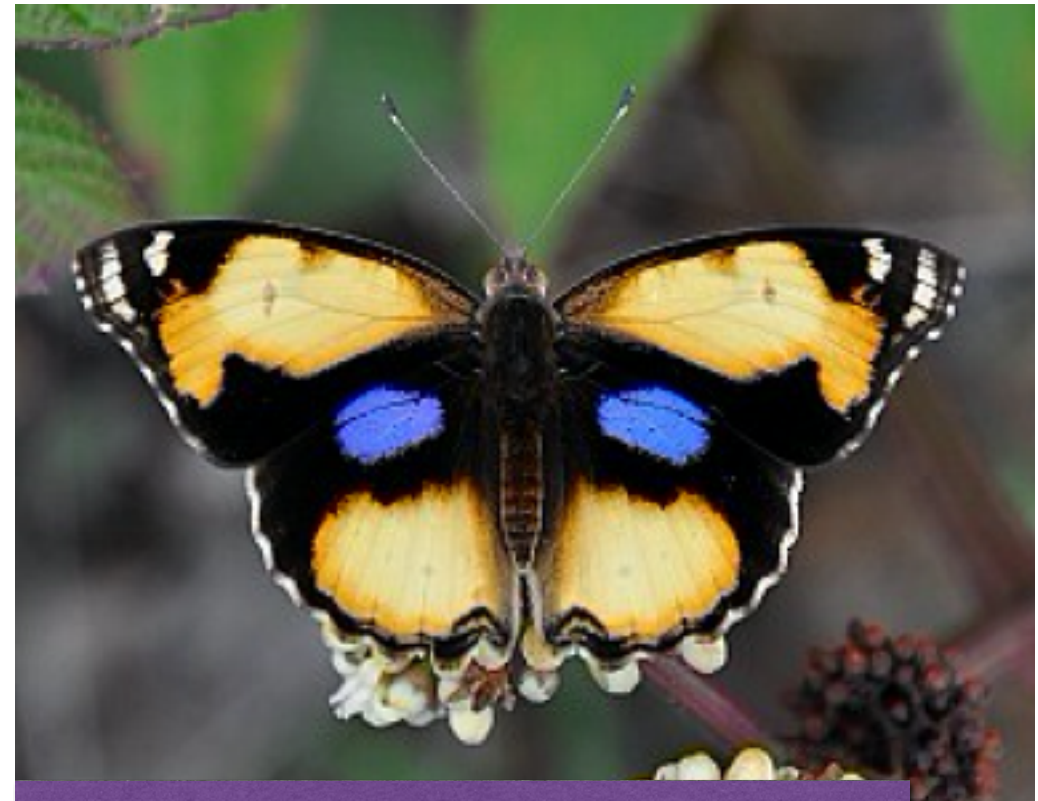
**Name- Yellow Pansy**

**Scientific name-  
Junonia hierta**

**Family- Nymphalidae**

**Size - 45 - 60 mm**

Found from Africa to South Eastern Asia. Usually found in grassland or scrub. The female is similar to the male only somewhat duller. First recorded- Golf Course May 9, 2018



male  
photo- Shutterstock



female  
photo- Shutterstock



**Name - Diadem**

**Scientific name- *Hypolimnasia misippus***

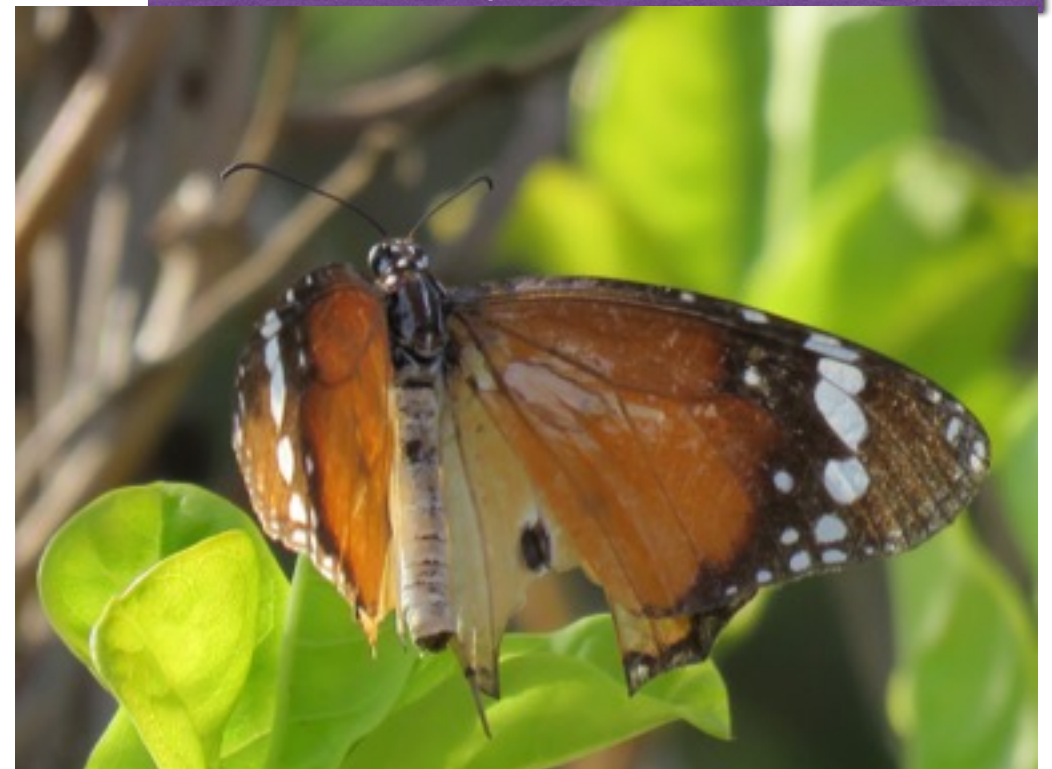
**Family- Nymphalidae**

A widespread species found across Africa, Asia and Australia. The females mimic similar toxic species, in our area the Plain Tiger. First recorded- Golf Course April 9, 2017



male  
photo- B James

female, photo- B James





Monthly records- from November 2017

[illegible]



The collection of butterfly records at KAUST only began in November 2017 and as such should be considered far from complete. Much of the information presented is based on Torben Larsen's 'Butterflies of Saudi Arabia and its Neighbours' which was published in 1984 and has not subsequently been up-dated. KAUST records are coordinated by the Biodiversity Conservation Coordinator of the Health Safety and Environment Department. Community members are encouraged to contribute records or photographs by contacting [environmentmatters@kaust.edu.sa](mailto:environmentmatters@kaust.edu.sa) .