

SCIENTIFIC NOTE

New Localities for *Heliconius besckei* Ménétriés and *Heliconius sara* (Fabricius) (Lepidoptera: Nymphalidae) in Bahia, Brazil

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Neotropical Entomology 34(6):1007-1008 (2005)

Novas Localidades Para *Heliconius besckei* Ménétriés e *Heliconius sara* (Fabricius) (Lepidoptera: Nymphalidae) na Bahia

RESUMO - Novas ocorrências para duas espécies de *Heliconius* Kluk são registradas para áreas no interior da Bahia. Novas áreas interioranas para *Heliconius sara* (Fabricius), uma espécie encontrada na costa, são apresentadas. Este é, provavelmente, o primeiro relato de *Heliconius besckei* Ménétriés para o Nordeste brasileiro.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Heliconiinae, distribuição geográfica, Nordeste, Mata Atlântica, dispersão

ABSTRACT - New occurrences for two *Heliconius* Kluk species are reported for sites in inland Bahia, Brazil. New inland sites are reported for *Heliconius sara* (Fabricius), a species normally found at coastal regions. To our knowledge, *Heliconius besckei* Ménétriés, a species restricted to cool mountain habitats, is reported for Northeastern Brazil for the first time.

KEY WORDS: Heliconiinae, geographical distribution, Brazilian Northeast, Atlantic Rainforest, dispersal

Atlantic rainforests harbor one of the richest butterfly faunas in the world (Brown & Freitas 2000). Despite intensive collecting, major gaps in knowledge are still apparent (Brown & Freitas 2000, 2003). I here report on new occurrences for two species of *Heliconius* Kluk - *H. besckei* Ménétriés, 1857 and *H. sara* (Fabricius, 1793).

Voucher specimens are deposited in the Lepidoptera collection of the Terrestrial Ecology Laboratory at the Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Norte.

***Heliconius besckei* Ménétriés**

New Record in Bahia. One female was collected in a mountain pass road at 1020 m a.s.l. (13°26'26" S, 41°14'48" W; 23.III.2002) near the town of Ibicoara, 350 km WSW of Salvador. The landscape consists of a mixture of forest remnants and rural properties with manioc, coffee and other crops.

***Heliconius sara* (Fabricius)**

New Records in Bahia. One male and one female were taken in the same Ibicoara site and date as *H. besckei*, in forest fragments nearby. Larvae were observed on an unidentified

Passiflora L. Three individuals (2 males and 1 female) were also collected in a privately owned area near Lençóis (Fazenda Araruna, 12°17'12" S, 41°16'59" W; 11.X.2003), located on a dirty road that links Tanquinho to Wagner, 30 km north of BR-242 highway, 300 km WNW of Salvador. The dominant vegetation form is semi-deciduous, but the terrain slopes to a more humid area with a small creek.

The collection of *H. besckei* in central Bahia represents the first record in the Northeastern region. This was confirmed by consulting available range maps (Brown 1979), by checking the *H. besckei* collections at the Museu Nacional (RJ), Museu de Zoologia-USP, Department of Zoology-UFPR, Natural History Museum (UK), the National Museum of Natural History (Smithsonian, USA) and inquiring with Dr. K. S. Brown Jr, specialist on the group. This extends the range to the mountain areas of the Southern portion of the Diamantina Range. The collection of *H. sara* both in Ibicoara and Lençóis extends its range to the interior forests of Bahia. Data from available range map (Brown 1979) and personal communication by K. S. Brown Jr. confirm the lack of records for *H. sara* in the interior forests of Bahia.

The discovery of new localities for such a well-collected group as *Heliconius* shows how little the biodiversity of the Northeast portion of the country is known. Although recent

efforts have been made to fill this large gap in the knowledge of diversity and distribution, current conservation units are few and remnants are being depleted. It is fundamental that the entire Northeastern region encourages more conservation efforts to preserve its yet little known biodiversity.

Acknowledgments

The Grupo Ambientalista da Bahia (Ibicoara) and a grant from the Ministry of the Environment (“Biodiversidade da Chapada Diamantina”; Lençóis) made field work possible. Thanks to the keepers of Fazenda Araruna for allowing collection in their property. I am very grateful to J. Becker (MN), M. Duarte (USP), O. H. H. Mielke (UFPR), J. Reynolds (BM) and R. Robbins (NMNH) for providing information on *H. besckei* collections. Many thanks to K. S. Brown Jr. for information on *Heliconius* distribution and to F. Bravo, A.V.L. Freitas and K.S. Brown Jr. for comments on the manuscript. This paper is dedicated to the memory

of Prof. Johann Becker (Museu Nacional – UFRJ).

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Received 07/XII/04. Accepted 08/IV/05.
