

Project Update: May 2016

Achievements

1. Descriptions of 3 Prime Butterfly Areas (PBAs) have been compiled and submitted for the approval by Butterfly Conservation Europe (BCE). Initially planned 9 to 12 PBAs have been merged into three units; the total area of PBAs is increased in comparison to the proposed one.
 - a. Gnishik area makes 29.2 sq km instead of proposed 20 sq km. Description is presented online at: <http://www.butterfly-conservation-armenia.org/gnisheek.html>
 - b. Ourtsadzor location makes 61.2 sq km instead of proposed 15 sq km. Description for the website is being finalized.
 - c. Ardanish-Shorzha location makes 56.1 sq km instead of proposed 40 sq km. Description for the website is being finalized
2. The justifications for inclusion of the PBAs into Emerald Network were prepared; discussed during last Biogeography Seminar dedicated to Emerald Network (Tbilisi, Nov 2015) and are submitted to the focal point of Bern Convention. The areas are considered within the current boundaries of the Emerald sites by National Authority and are planned to be submitted for final revision by Secretariat of the Bern Convention by the end of 2016.
3. A report about the state of IUCN listed species in PBA is submitted to IUCN SSC. The distribution range and population trends on three IUCN species: *Parnassius apollo*, *Phengaris (Maculinea) arion*, *Phengaris (Maculinea) nausithous*, were calculated not only for the PBAs as it was proposed, but also for entire country. The information is compiled in a form of species accounts, and is published online, see at: <http://www.butterfly-conservation-armenia.org/parnassius-apollo.html>
<http://www.butterfly-conservation-armenia.org/maculinea-arion.html>
<http://www.butterfly-conservation-armenia.org/maculinea-nausithous.html>
4. The road signs aimed at informing tourists about butterfly species diversity of the area, and meanwhile warning local inhabitants about necessity of careful treating of the habitat are designed and prepared. Four road-signs are installed at the borders of PBAs. The other two are planned to be installed in June.
5. The trail guiding brochures for each of the province have been designed and will be printed during at the beginning of July.
6. The butterfly-watching trails have been identified and charted. The trainings in guiding of butterfly-watchers over the developed trails have been designed, the employees of protected areas who can act as trail guides have been selected; the training will take place in June.

Pictures

Fig 1. Gnishik PBA



Fig 2. Ourtsadzor PBA



Fig 3. Shorzha PBA



Fig 4a. Information/warning sign at Gnishik PBA



Fig 4b. The signs are installed with the help of local community members



Fig 5. *Thaleropsis ionia*. The species with stable population trend is very interesting for butterfly watchers

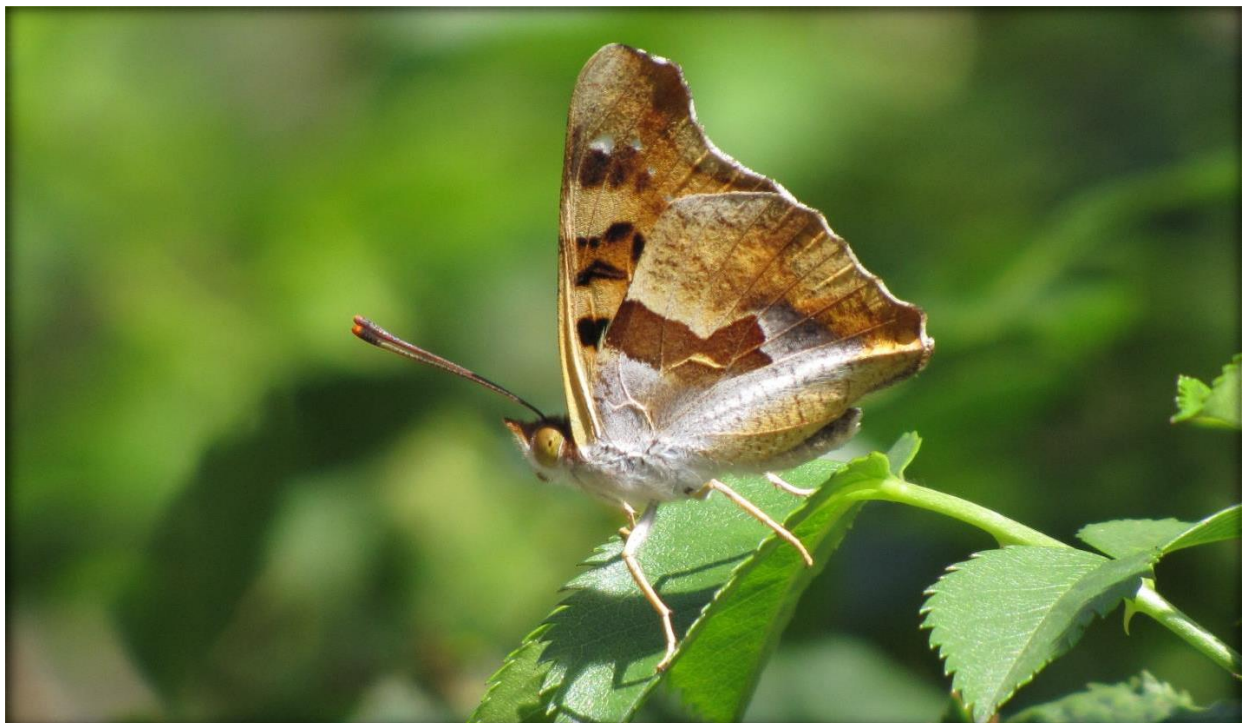


Fig 6. *Polyommatus ninae*. Another interesting species which shows declining population trend though

