

AMENDMENTS TO APPENDICES I AND II OF THE CONVENTION

A. PROPOSAL

Inclusion of Papilio homerus in Appendix I.

B. PROPONENT

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

C. SUPPORTING STATEMENT

1. Taxonomy

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|-------------------|---|
| 11. Class: | Insecta |
| 12. Order: | Lepidoptera |
| 13. Family: | Papilionidae |
| 14. Species: | <u>Papilio homerus</u> |
| 15. Common Names: | English: Homerus swallowtail
French:
Spanish: |
| 16. Code Numbers: | None available |

2. Biological Data

21. Distribution: The Homerus swallowtail is a species endemic to the Caribbean island of Jamaica. It is believed to be confined to two populations; an eastern population in St. Thomas and Portland parishes and a western population in Trelawny Parish (1, 8, 9). Both localities comprise only a few square kilometres of forest and records have established that both these remaining populations are declining (10). This is due primarily to destruction and alteration of the habitat caused firstly by logging and subsequently by clearances for tropical agricultural products, particularly coffee, and pine plantations (10).
22. Population: The total population is certainly small and the population range shrinking (2). The species is listed as endangered in the IUCN Red Data Book on Threatened Butterflies of the World (2).
23. Habitat: The species is restricted to primary forest developed at low or moderate altitudes (150-600 m, occasionally higher) on mountain slopes and gullies (10). The adults are active throughout the daytime and are slow but active fliers, feeding intermittently on the nectar of such species as Blechum, Bidens, Asclepias and Lantana, and basking on the foliage of trees and bushes. Larval foodplants are the endemic Hernandia catalpaefolia (eastern population) and H. troyiana (western population), and possibly also other species (2).

3. Trade Data

31. National Utilization: Adult butterflies are taken by collectors but national utilization is likely to be negligible.

32. Legal International Trade:

321. General: The trade in butterflies worldwide is very considerable running into tens of millions of dollars annually, although the precise figure is disputed (3, 4, 6). The number of commercial dealers has risen dramatically over the last 30 years (5). The bulk of this trade is in the use of butterflies for ornamental purposes but there is also a substantial low volume trade supplying high value dead specimens to scientists, museums and collectors. The price of these specimens tends to reflect their rarity, size, beauty, the difficulty of capture and general state.

322. Specific: The Homerus swallowtail is the largest American swallowtail and is a very attractive species. Trade is in papered and mounted specimens. The species is not protected in Jamaica, its only country of origin. It is highly prized by collectors and is among the most valuable of butterflies in trade; a female was advertised in the USA in 1984 for \$2,800 and a male for \$1,575 (2, 7).

33. Illegal Trade: Not applicable.

34. Potential Trade Threats: The Homerus swallowtail is a large butterfly, rivalling in size some of the birdwings of SE Asia, and the largest American swallowtail. It is an attractive species and in great demand by collectors throughout the world. This rare butterfly is now regarded as being endangered in the wild, primarily as a result of habitat destruction, but commercial collecting by expatriates is causing concern. The extent of collecting by Jamaicans is unknown. Losses through collection and trade are potentially serious for the survival of the species in the wild (2).

4. Protection Status

41. National: The Homerus swallowtail is not protected by law in Jamaica, its only country of origin. No conservation measures aimed specifically for this species have been taken.

42. International: Nothing known.

43. Additional Protection Needs: A detailed survey of the distribution of this species and its ecological requirements is needed. Measures to ensure effective habitat protection and the strict control of collecting appear essential. Particular attention needs to be given to the protection of breeding grounds, preferably within patrolled nature reserves (10).

5. Information on Similar Species

Papilio homerus is one of 10 species in the homerus species-group. Although the general colouring of some of the other nine species is similar to P. homerus it can be distinguished by its greater wing

size, being the largest species in the genus and the largest butterfly in the Americas. The wing pattern is very distinct and confusion will not occur with any other Caribbean species. Male illustrated in Collins and Morris (1985) (2).

6. Comments from Countries of Origin

None at present.

7. Additional Remarks

None.

8. References

- 1) Brown F.M. and B. Heinemann, 1972. Jamaica and its Butterflies. E.W. Classey Ltd., Faringdon, U.K. 478 pp.
- 2) Collins, N.M. & M.G. Morris, 1985. Threatened Swallowtail Butterflies of the World. The IUCN Red Data Book. IUCN, Gland, Switzerland and Cambridge, U.K. 375, 8 pl.
- 3) Inskipp, T. and S. Wells, 1979. International Trade in Wildlife. Earthscan. London 104 pp.
- 4) Jackman, B., 1976. Bye-bye birdwing. Sunday Times, 12 September.
- 5) Nagano, C.D., 1984. The International Trade in Butterflies. Unpublished manuscript. 27 pp.
- 6) National Research Council, 1983. Butterfly Farming in Papua New Guinea. Managing Tropical Animal Resources Series. National Academy Press, Washington D.C.
- 7) Richfield, W.B., 1983. Sale Catalogue. P.O. Box 1066, Goleta, California 93116, USA.
- 8) Riley, N.D., 1975. A Field Guide to the Butterflies of the West Indies. Collins, London.
- 9) Smart, P. 1975. The Illustrated Encyclopedia of the Butterfly World. Hamlyn, London. 275 pp.
- 10) Turner, T.W., 1983. The status of the Papilionidae, Lepidoptera of Jamaica with evidence to support the need for conservation of Papilio (Pterourus) homerus Fabricius and Eurytides marcellinus Doubleday. Unpublished report, 14 pp.

