

## Re: Philippines Blog

by Tony Moore, 03-Jan-14 01:46 AM GMT

Christmas on Mactan Is., Cebu. The dearth of butterflies was explained by a friendly gardener: "Sir, they are always bugging – no paro-paro (butterflies) here – every day, bugging". The resort had a draconian spraying regime, lest any guest be offended by the sight of a mosquito, with the result that the place was an entomological wasteland. I did manage to find one new species on the last day:



Brown Awl *Badamia exclamatoris*.

Two or three were fighting for position on a desultory bit of creeper, growing up a metal fence.

West coast, tomorrow – hope for more interest.

Tony M.

## December 28th – January 2nd.

by Tony Moore, 03-Jan-14 10:50 AM GMT

Six nights on Zaragosa Island off the west coast of Cebu. A small resort and a fishing village – no 'bugging'!

First butt was a Plain Tiger (*Danaus chrysippus*) in the vegetable garden.



Out on the island proper the next morning, I found an area with a few local 'Sailors'. This is one of my favourite butterflies – they float around at approaching stall speed, but somehow remain airborne. The courting flight is a delight as the pair float about, alternating superior position. I think this is *Pantoporia dama commixta*, but would be happy to be corrected.



On the way back, I saw a tiny 'Blue' ovipositing. I assumed it was Lesser Grass Blue, but on closer examination it turned out to be Black Spot Grass Blue *Famegana alsulus*. The eggs were barely visible – no more than .25 mm diameter.



More tomorrow...

Tony M.

## Re: Philippines Blog

by NickMorgan, 03-Jan-14 01:53 PM GMT

Good to hear from you again, Tony. It seems that "bugging" is common practice in the tropics. I noticed in St Lucia that plenty of butterflies would fly through the resort, but they rarely settled, even on good nectar sources. As soon as we left the resort gates I saw butterflies settled on plants and basking in the sun. It seems such a shame for us enthusiasts, but I can understand them not wanting to have mosquitos and cockroaches infesting the resorts.

## Zaragosa Is. 2.

by Tony Moore, 05-Jan-14 03:16 PM GMT

Quite a number of 'Pansies' around this morning – always a welcome sight. Peacock and Blue ( also saw Grey, but they were too jumpy 😞).



There was a beautiful, fresh Great Eggfly (I hope it's not EF mimic!) floating around the veg patch. The iridescent purple is wonderful to behold when they are flying round in the sun – the photo does not do it justice.

*Hypolimnas bolina philippensis*



A couple of 'Blues' to finish:

A Forget-me-not *Catochrysops strabo*, which could not be persuaded to leave its flower, until it got fed up with being prodded, and whizzed off. Also a Pea Blue ( or Long-tailed Blue to us ) *Lampedes boeticus*. Sorry about the grass 😞.

Tony M.



### Re: Philippines Blog

by Padfield, 05-Jan-14 07:49 PM GMT

More brilliant pictures, Tony! I envy you!

By now you undoubtedly know far more than I do, but the ID I am most interested in here is the *Pantoporia*. Have you had that confirmed? It does look very like *Neptis* sp. – perhaps *Neptis mindorana*, which flies on Luzon. I'm definitely out of my depth here, but I do find these *Neptis*/*Athyma*/*Pantoporia* species fascinating and would be interested if you had had feedback from the Singapore people. There are dozens of very similar butterflies strung out over several genera and I'd like to get my head around them!

Guy

### Re: Zaragosa Is. 2.

by David M, 05-Jan-14 07:56 PM GMT

#### "Tony Moore" wrote:

Quite a number of 'Pansies' around this morning – always a welcome sight. Peacock and Blue ( also saw Grey, but they were too jumpy 😞).

Both of those are beautiful, Tony, but that second species is one of the finest butterflies I've ever seen!

### Re: Philippines Blog

by Chris Jackson, 05-Jan-14 08:29 PM GMT

A lovely set of photos Tony – incredible colours!  
Chris

### Ateneo again

by Tony Moore, 06-Jan-14 04:51 AM GMT

After two weeks away, there is a definite suggestion of seasonal variation today. Relatively few Psyches and Golden Skippers and a positive explosion of Club Silverlines. Saw my first Chocolate Albatross and a couple of what I think are Common Caeruleans *Jamedes celeno*



They were both females and looked almost pure white in flight. I nearly fell down a small ravine trying to photograph this one after following it for a couple of hundred metres. Hope for some males soon...

I also managed to catch a Lesser Grass Blue on an infrequent excursion above ground level.



Thanks, all, for your kind comments. Guy, I'll put the 'Sailor' past the Singapore chaps and report back. Whatever it was, it's a most delightful, delicate butterfly.

Tony M.

### Re: Philippines Blog

by Tony Moore, 06-Jan-14 01:18 PM GMT

Spot on again, Guy. De boss man him say: *Neptis mindorana nosba*. I took the ID from a vanity Philippine Butterfly site – looks like this ID was wrong.

Tony.

### Re: Philippines Blog

by Padfield, 06-Jan-14 06:11 PM GMT

Thanks for the confirmation, Tony!

Guy

### Re: Philippines Blog

by NickMorgan, 06-Jan-14 11:08 PM GMT

Fantastic pictures again Tony. The *Junonia* are fantastic butterflies, so variable and beautiful. That is the best picture I have ever seen of a Great Eggfly, a butterfly I have always wanted to see. It must be very difficult to get the exposure right and your picture is spot on.

### Re: Philippines Blo

by Tony Moore, 07-Jan-14 10:24 AM GMT

Thanks, Nick,

I was lucky to have a very accommodating butterfly, which posed beautifully in the afternoon sunshine, showing off its purple iridescence.

Cloudy today and the first day without a new species! 😞 . Just waiting for confirmation of an ID from Singapore, when I 'll post a couple more pix.

T.

## 10th January

by Tony Moore, 10-Jan-14 05:01 AM GMT

After a couple of comparatively thin days (although neither bereft of new species 😊 ), I had better luck this morning. Finally managed a better shot of Common Caerulean *J. celeno* – a frustrating butterfly, which flaps about in waist-high grass, and always seems to land where a clear shot is impossible. This one was more reasonable:



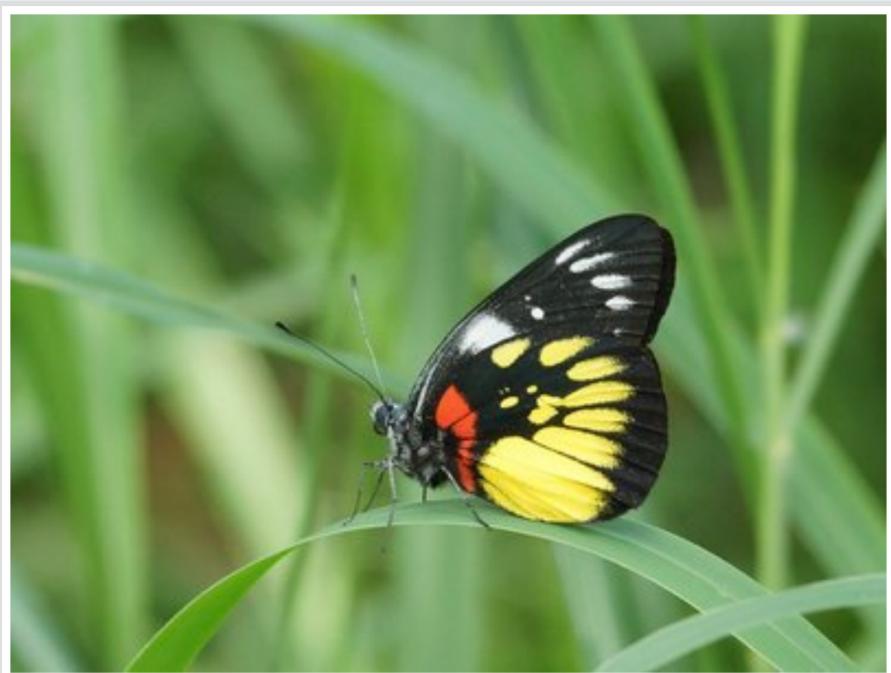
Next up was a very tiny all brown Skipper:



I think this may be *Aeromachus musca*, but I can't find a reasonable photo anywhere. Guy??

Saw several Straight Pierrots – did make me wonder if there is a Gay Pierrot 🐣 ....

The highlight was :



A lovely, fresh Red-base Jezebel, which flew slowly past, looking for all the world like an Arctuid moth, until it landed with wings upright, and almot

gave me a cardiac arrest! Managed one reasonable shot before it took off into the canopy. Not sure which ssp, perhaps Guy could help...

Tony M.

### Re: Philippines Blog

by Tony Moore, 10-Jan-14 05:07 AM GMT

Just had confirmation of *A. musca* for the Skipper.

T.M.

### Re: Philippines Blog

by Padfield, 10-Jan-14 01:22 PM GMT

Lovely *Delias*. If I were a betting man, I'd put my money on *henningia*. 😊

Guy

### Re: Zaragosa Is. 2.

by Lee Hurrell, 10-Jan-14 01:53 PM GMT

#### "Tony Moore" wrote:

Quite a number of 'Pansies' around this morning – always a welcome sight. Peacock and Blue...

Wow...The Blue Pansy. What an absolutely stunning butterfly!

Very much enjoying your diary, Tony.

Best wishes,

Lee

### Re: Philippines Blog

by Tony Moore, 10-Jan-14 02:42 PM GMT

#### "padfield" wrote:

If I were a betting man, I'd put my money on *henningia*. 😊

Guy

Not a betting man? Five gets you ten you know far more about this stuff than anyone else I can think of...

Tony.

### Re: Philippines Blog

by Chris Jackson, 10-Jan-14 03:06 PM GMT

Hi All,  
I think those 'Pansies' and that Red-base Jezebel are just great.  
Good work Tony.  
Chris

### DELIAS UPDATE

by Tony Moore, 11-Jan-14 01:07 PM GMT

*D.pasithoe* is not present on Luzon. So *henningia* it has to be. Guy is spot on, as usual 🇵🇭

No transect today 😞 – 'she who must be obeyed' wanted a shopping trip 🛒. Hope for more tomorrow.

Tony M.

### Re: Philippines Blog

by Tony Moore, 12-Jan-14 09:42 AM GMT

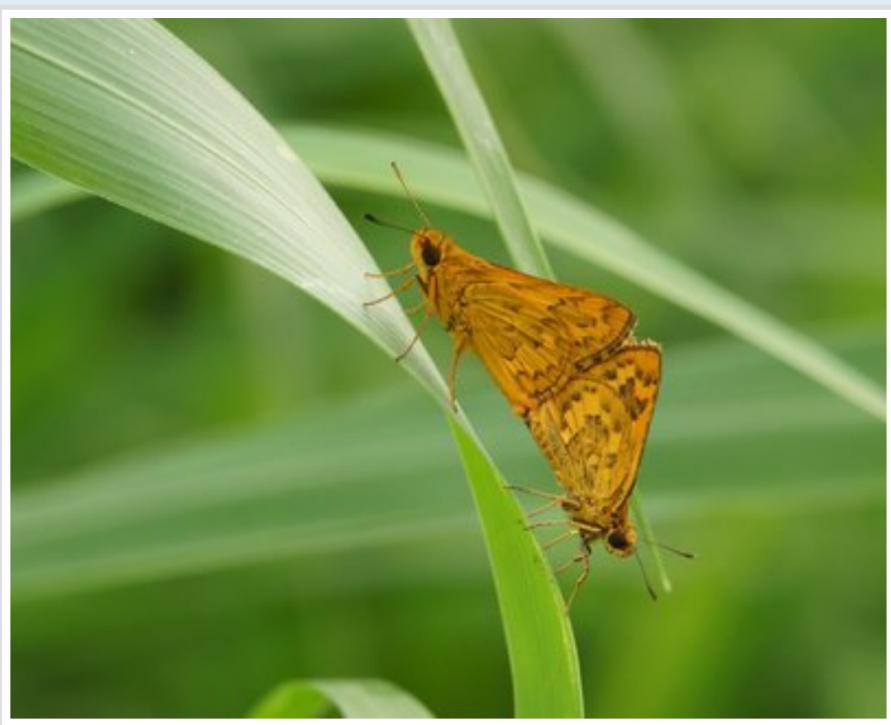
No new species today, but I did catch up with a female Chocolate Albatross, which was rather spoiled by the bright sunshine.



Also managed a open wing shot of a female Ancyra Blue. The males often sit with open wings, but the ladies very rarely:



I finish with a pair of Skips from a couple of days ago.



I've been waiting for a ID and thought the reply worth posting in full.

Dr Seow wrote:

It should be *Potanthus pava*.

The *Potanthus* found in Luzon are *P. mingo*, *niobe*, *fettingi*, *hetaerus* & *pava*.

*P. mingo*, *hetaerus*, & *niobe* can be discounted by various features.

*P. fettingi* is little known but somewhat resembles the common *P. omaha* here.

*P. pava* always have a large spot 6 on both sides of the HW.

(If you look at the male on the right, the HW has a band (comprising spots 1–5) joined to spot 6 & then spot 7.)

The upperside FW tends to have the spots joined continuously. (Hard to judge this on the underside.)

[http://old.hkbutterfly.org/images/Potanthus\\_pava.jpg](http://old.hkbutterfly.org/images/Potanthus_pava.jpg)

Other genera like *Taractrocera*, *Telicota*, & *Cephrenes* lack the HW spot 7 & often spot 6 as well.

Tony M.

## 13th January

by Tony Moore, 13-Jan-14 12:36 PM GMT

Good day, today. Started with a very obliging 'Gull' :



I then caught up – just – with White Albatross *Appias alba*.



Sorry about the pic, it was the best I could do – it was very jumpy. Persil should use these in their ads! The purity of the white is astonishing.

Then found a little Lycaenid, which I believe is *Petrelaea dana* the Dingy Line Blue.



Nothing riveting, although I did see a blackish Papilion disappear into the distance, but a good day.

Tony M.

Re: Philippines Blog

by NickMorgan, 13-Jan-14 12:59 PM GMT

Fantastic. What an amazing variety of butterflies you are seeing there. I really enjoy reading about them. 😊

## Re: Philippines Blog

by Tony Moore, 13-Jan-14 01:18 PM GMT

Thanks, Nick.

It really is an amazing place. I go out most mornings at about 08.30, for about two hours. Most of the bits of secondary forest are no more than five acres or so. I cannot believe how many species I am finding on a small hilltop surrounded by two cities and impossible pollution. I really hope the University will publish a paper of my efforts 🙏 .  
Four days on Palawan from Thursday, so maybe *Trogonoptera*....

Tony.

## 15th Jan.

by Tony Moore, 15-Jan-14 01:49 PM GMT

Perfect morning, broken cloud diffusing bright sunshine, and no wind. Plenty flying around, but it is becoming more difficult to find new species. There are plenty of Common Grass Yellows about, but on a couple of occasions, I've seen a very small (like 32/34mm ws) 'yellow'. I was lucky today to shoot this:



I thought it might have been the Tree Yellow *Gandaca harina*, on account of it flew stright up into a tree after this pic 😊 . However, current thinking is that it is a *Eurema* species. I'm now waiting to hear from Dr Seow for a final judgement.

Nearly home when I saw this:





It was absolutely fresh, and suffused with a wonderful greenish gold. It is the Formosan Swift *Borbo cinnara*.

So, two new ones today – can't be bad 😊 .

Palawan tomorrow,

Tony M.

### Re: Philippines Blog

by Padfield, 15-Jan-14 07:40 PM GMT

Hi Tony,

What a wonderful time you are having – and we are having by proxy!

I won't venture an opinion on the *Eurema*, as that's sub judice at the moment (😄), but I'd be interested to know why your *Petrelaea dana*, from the previous post, isn't *Prosotas dubiosa*. I'm not saying you're wrong – just that I'd like to know what the critical criteria were. My Indian book rather unhelpfully points to the position of the pd spots in s.2 on the underside of the forewing, which are hidden in all natural poses, as definitive for *dana*!

Guy

### Re: Philippines Blog

by Tony Moore, 15-Jan-14 09:48 PM GMT

Guy,

Just off to the airport – will look into *dana* when I'm back. Yellow is *Eurema alitha jalendra*..

Tony.

### Re: Philippines Blog

by Tony Moore, 20-Jan-14 03:26 PM GMT

Guy,

Of course it's *P. dubiosa* 😞 Not sure about the *Prosotas*, but the *dubiosa* certainly reflects my ID skills.

Thanks for your gentle help, once again.

Some from Palawan tomorrow...

Tony.

### Re: Philippines Blog

by NickMorgan, 20-Jan-14 11:17 PM GMT

*Eurema* are among my favourite butterflies, so I thought I would have a try at identifying yours. According to the web site I looked at there are 11 different species in the Philippines. I had a look at images of all of them and found it really difficult to differentiate between them. *Eurema alitha* wasn't one of my options! I am in awe of people who are able to identify all of the species you have shown on your blog! Sometimes it is good to live in a county where only 23 species of butterflies exist!

### Re: Philippines Blog

by Tony Moore, 21-Jan-14 12:36 AM GMT

Thanks, Nick – my sentiments entirely.

I thought you might be interested to see the reply from Dr Seow, concerning the *Eurema*:

"

*You have Eurema alitha jalendra.*

Note the inner margin of the FW black border.

It makes a gentler curve than the sharp right-angle of *H. hecabe* in the upper part.

The excavated portions in space 2 & 3 also tend to be more rounded.

*E. alitha* is closely related to *E. hecabe* & have similar markings on the underside. The upperside border varies widely in extent.

The FW usually have 2 cellspots as in *E. hecabe* but in poorly marked forms, one or both may be missing.

Compare the black border with *E. hecabe*. (Singapore) <http://www.butterflycircle.com/check...0KHEW%20SK.jpg>

*E. alitha* from Papua (similar to ssp. *jalendra* but excavated part sharper.) <http://www.papua-insects.nl/insect%2...Bm%5Dklein.jpg> <http://www.papua-insects.nl/insect%2...20verso%5D.jpg> "

Expertise or what?

Just off for my transect – Palawan later..

Tony.

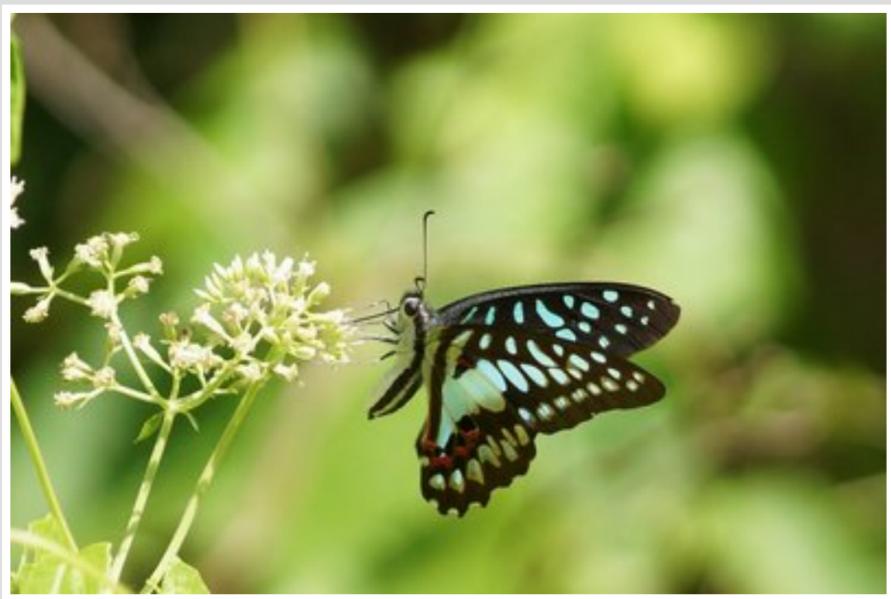
## Palawan

by Tony Moore, 21-Jan-14 09:17 AM GMT

I think that Palawan is the most beautiful place that I have ever visited. Spectacular mountains, primary rainforest, stunning beaches, clean air and few people. It is also a butterfly watcher's paradise. We were staying on the edge of a 22,000 hectare reserve and, on our first morning took the local transport up to the Ranger Station:



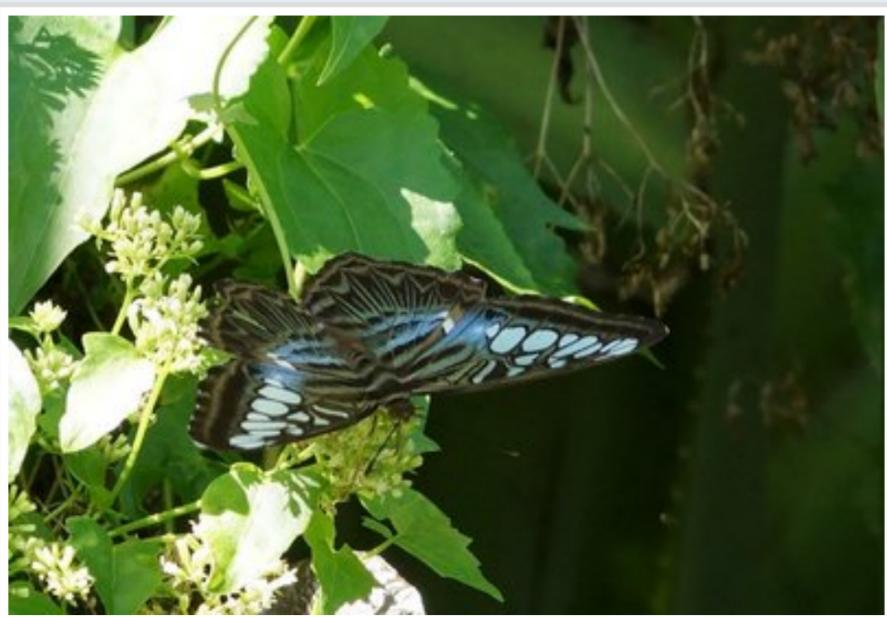
We trekked into the forest, with a guide, and were soon seeing large numbers of butts. Most gave no chance of a shot, but I was lucky with this Common Jay (I think)...



The scenery was absolutely stunning:



A little further on, my wife spotted this:



Absolutely no idea what it is 😬 . If no one has any ideas, I'll shoot it past the Singapore guys.

Sadly, no sign of *Trogonoptera*, although we did see several other 'birdwings'. Surprisingly, only one Lycaenid – a Common Caerulean and no Skippers. Because we failed with Rajah Brookes, the guide, in typical Filipino fashion, had to offer an excuse. "Wrong time of day sir! better before 8 am!! or after 3pm." Against my better judgement, I accepted this and, two days later was on my way into the forest shortly after dawn. Of course, we saw just about nothing – surprise, surprise! A couple of Bush Browns and a Grey Pansy or two. By 9am, when I had to return, stuff started to appear. An otherwise blank day was saved by this:



An Archduke *Lexias pardalis* ssp something or other. The orange tops to the antennae tips are clearly visible – the only sure way to separate it from the Black Tipped Archduke *L. dirtea*.

I returned to the hotel to join my wife for a late breakfast, when this flew past our table and landed not two metres away!



It seemed settled, so I tore back to the room for the camera, leaving my wife 'on guard'. By some miracle, it was still in situ. Pretty sure it is one of the incarnations of the Great Mormon *Papilio memnon*, but I have been unable to find a similar photograph.

Later in the day I found this:



Obviously a Danaid, but, so far, I've been unable to match the pattern exactly. Guy?? It was a pretty common species in our area.

Wonderful island – tough I didn't have about ten years there. 😞 .

Tony M.

### Re: Philippines Blog

by Padfield, 21-Jan-14 11:27 AM GMT

Every so often you wonder if taxonomists are having a bit of a joke! There should certainly be no difficulty remembering that *dirtea* has the dirtier antennae ...

I believe your Danaid is *Danaus melanippus* – a very striking butterfly I would love to see!

Your *Papilio* looks very like *lowi*, if that is a possibility on the island where you saw it. As you say, there is enormous variation within these species and appearances can be very misleading!

Guy

### Re: Philippines Blog

by Vince Massimo, 21-Jan-14 11:59 AM GMT

Great photos and stories, Tony 😊

Your blue butterfly looks like *Parthenos sylvia*. It comes in blue and brown forms and there are many sub-species [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parthenos\\_sylvia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parthenos_sylvia) . I only know it from encounters in butterfly houses and would love to see it in the wild.

Vince

### Re: Philippines Blog

by Chris Jackson, 21-Jan-14 12:04 PM GMT

Impressive photos Tony. Great butterflies and a stunning view – paradise on Earth.

Chris

P.S. The front tyre could do with a bit of air.

## Re: Philippines Blog

by Tony Moore, 21-Jan-14 02:17 PM GMT

Thanks Vince,

I didn't realise there was a blue form. I'd looked at the brown form, which appeared dead right for wing shape, pattern, etc. – obviously the beast!

Guy, once again spot on with *lowi* and the Danainid – *Danaus melanippus edmondii*..

*P. lowi* is present on Palawan ( as this photo proves, sans question. 😊).

Back to UK next week 😞 – not a happy thought...

Tony M.

## Re: Philippines Blog

by Tony Moore, 25-Jan-14 03:14 AM GMT

Weather at night has become significantly cooler over the last week (like you can sleep at night covered in a sheet without the AC on!). This seems to have caused a big reduction in butterfly numbers – it's becoming increasingly difficult to find anything new. I thought I'd found new 'Albatross' a couple of days ago:



It turned out to be a small, non-stripey version of the Striped Albatross *Appias olferna peducea*. 😞 .

Spent most of the last two outings camped out by a small area of bush, where a few, unrecognised Lycaenids were whizzing around. I got half a shot, which narrowed it to *Catochrysops strabo* or *panormus*. Yesterday, I finally found a dozy one, which proved to be *strabo*.



The costal spot on the forewing underside is half way between the cell spot and the post-discal fascia. In *panormus* this spot is very close to, or touching the post-discal band. (not a lot of people know that 🤖 ).

Another shot:



Tony M.

### Re: Philippines Blog

by Tony Moore, 28-Jan-14 01:23 PM GMT

This will be my last post from the Philippines (Last Post??..... Cue bugler!), as I return to UK tomorrow 😞.

Thank you to everyone who has commented on my efforts, and a special thanks to Guy Padfield, whose gentle expertise has kept me on the straight and narrow, when flights of fancy were in danger of taking over.

It has been quite wonderful to be somewhere where there is almost always a butterfly in the air, where ever you look. My wife (the bread winner – I should be so lucky), is now actively looking for a position in South-East Asia, so we may well be out here again before long...

Hope that I've managed to brighten a few dull winter days – I'll post a species list in due course.

Happy hunting,

Tony M.

### Re: Philippines Blog

by Chris Jackson, 28-Jan-14 03:25 PM GMT

#### "Tony Moore" wrote:

Hope that I've managed to brighten a few dull winter days

You certainly have Tony. Thanks, it was very refreshing. Given the UK weather, I wouldn't bother rushing home if I was you.  
Chris

### Re: Philippines Blog

by Padfield, 28-Jan-14 04:01 PM GMT

I think I probably am gentle, but I'm no expert, Tony! I've really enjoyed this chance for a bit of tropical butterflying by proxy and look forward to your wife's full time job in South-East Asia!

It will be strange for you to come home, but nothing you might see in the tropics could possibly beat that first orange tip of spring, prospecting for females along a British country lane ...

Guy

### Re: Philippines Blog

by David M, 28-Jan-14 04:50 PM GMT

And thanks to you, Tony. They've certainly brightened MY winter up a little!

### Re: Philippines Blog

by NickMorgan, 28-Jan-14 10:12 PM GMT

You have certainly brightened up my winter as well Tony. It must have been a fantastic experience being able to spend so long in the country looking for butterflies. Thank you for sharing what you saw.

Good luck to your wife seeking a job in SE Asia. I look forward to seeing many more pictures of butterflies from the area!! 😊

## One last one...

by Tony Moore, 29-Jan-14 01:28 AM GMT



Didn't post this before as it was such an overcropped, crap photo. There were quite a few of these around earlier, but I failed to get near another one 😞

Here is Dr Seow's take on it:

"This is a tough one .

The way the HW band continues on to the FW indicates it is Neptis.

I presume this is from Luzon.

The likely species are *N. cymela*, *pampanga*, *cyra* & *mindorana*.

*N. cymela* & *pampanga* can be eliminated.

*N. cyra* is the philippine representative of *N. clinia* which have the FW lower spots rounded & so is unlikely.

So that leaves *Neptis mindorana ilocana*.

In the forms of *N. mindorana* shown below the HW submarginal spots are quadrate,(vs more triangular in this pic.), but may be just subspecific difference. <http://pbh-butterflies.yolasite.com/...utterflies.php>"

I thought it was worth posting in full 😊 .

Thanks for all your kind comments and, as Guy says, roll on the first Orange Tips...

Tony.