

Butterflies Of Macedonia





Galichitsa plateau one of the most butterfly rich areas of the Balkans



Yellow-banded Skipper
one of the most beautiful species of the family

MACEDONIA

Macedonia (FYR) covers an area of appr. 26000km² with a ring of mountains all around the country. It borders Albania, Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia and Kosovo and contains alpine zones, Continental and Submediterranean areas and Pontic steppes. The diversity of plant and animal life is a result of its geographical position, diverse rocks and high altitudinal span (Vardar river, 50m to Mt. Titov Vrv, 2784m). Many species reach borders of their range here. Large areas are sparsely populated but still grazed although the number of sheep has dropped tenfold to 300000. Major habitats are grasslands, forests and rocks. 3 large lakes of old origin are Prespa, Ohrid and Dojran. Besides, there are also large rice fields and several artificial lakes scattered across the country. Macedonia is sometimes justly named as Land of Nature, Cradle of Culture.



Macedonia is an extremely rich butterfly destination. A landlocked country nestling amidst mountains, it has varied habitats and we explore the best samples. Low-lying areas will be already desiccated by the summer sun while mountains should look fresh and provide much nectar for the myriad of butterflies. Although we eventually circle around this small country we will spend most of the time in the southwest where the spectacularly diverse mountains are found. Butterflies are everywhere in Macedonia and all along our route there is almost continuous butterfly habitat. This is why no stop can be disappointing.

It is hard to choose the best species out of more than 200 that have been recorded so far. Perhaps Grey Asian and Macedonian Grayling, Grecian Copper, Bavius and Little Tiger Blue, Krueper's Small White, Balkan Clouded Yellow, Russian Heath, Balkan Marbled White or Lattice Brown. A total of 100+ species are expected to be found on this tour. Your guide Dime Melovski is a young and enthusiastic butterfly expert who has travelled all around the country to verify the old butterfly records and fill the gaps in the less surveyed regions.

Left: Russian Heath | Far left: Lesser Fiery Copper



Ascalaphids are always a nice addition



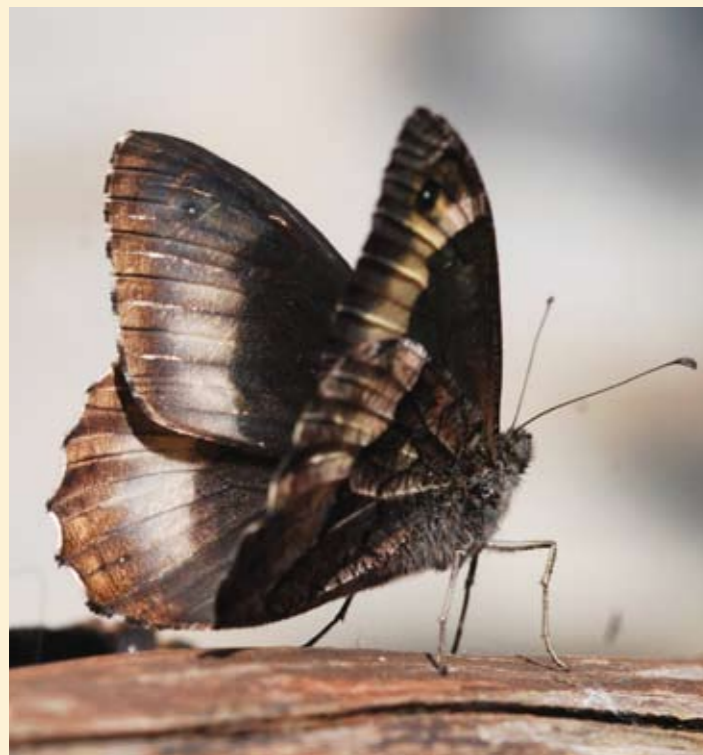
Vitachevo plateau
with great variety of butterflies



up to over 2000m by 4wd cars in Pelister NP



Farmland network of various insect-rich habitats



FACT FILE

Macedonia

8 days | 3 hotels

dates: **22 - 29 Jun and 29 June - 6 July 2013**

ground price: €990 / £805

single room supplement: €105 / £85

guide: Dime Melovski (and Martin Hrouzek)

airport: Skopje, Macedonia (FYR)

group size: 4-14

number of species: 85 - 105

ITINERARY IN BRIEF

D1 Arrival at Skopje, night Kavadarci

D2 Babuna and Taor gorge, night Kavadarci

D3 Vitachevo plateau, night Kavadarci

D4 Mariovo region, night Prilep

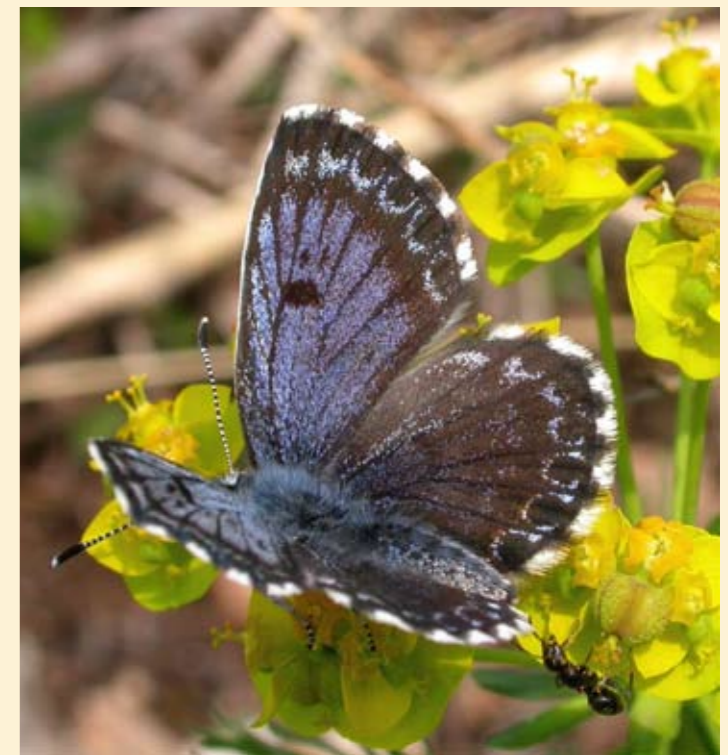
D5 Pelister NP, night Ohrid

D6 Galichitsa NP, night Ohrid

D7 Galichitsa NP, night Ohrid

D8 Departure from Skopje

Left: Southern Rock Grayling | Right: Chequered Blue



Eastern Wood White



Hungarian Skipper one of the commonest species



Black-veined White widespread and common



Graylings are very well represented in Macedonia



HIGHLIGHTS

- Unspoilt nature
- Apollo and Clouded Apollo
- Macedonian and Grey Asian Grayling
- Krueper's Small and Eastern Wood White
- Balkan Clouded Yellow
- Grecian and Lesser Fiery Copper
- Blue Argus
- Little Tiger and Damon Blue
- Southern White Admiral
- Cardinal and Niobe Fritillary
- Freyer's Fritillary
- White-banded and Southern Rock Grayling
- Esper's Marbled White
- Russian and Eastern Large Heath
- Lattice and Lesser Lattice Brown
- Yellow-banded and Persian Skipper

Left: South. White Admiral | Right: Ripart's Anomalous Blue

GUIDES AND HOTELS

Dime Melovski

Dime is a foremost Macedonian lepidopterist who works for renowned NGO called Macedonian Ecological Society. Dime is now the key authority who revises the old data on Macedonian butterflies. He is very friendly and fluent in English and will guide the butterfly tours to Macedonia. With him we hope to uncover some new corners of this beautiful but little known country.

Hotel in Kavadarci

is newly renovated, air-conditioned and with spacious rooms, set at the outskirts of the mid-sized town just a few steps from fields and vineyards.

Hotel in Prilep

the most modest of our three hotels. Nevertheless, rooms are clean, en suite and air-conditioned.

Hotel in Ohrid

a nicely located modern building with good services in the vicinity of Ohrid, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



Eastern Dappled White



Adonis Blue
occurs almost everywhere

Lesser Spotted Fritillary



Apollo



WEATHER AND WALKING

Since we have chosen the best period for butterflies in Macedonia we cannot be very picky about the weather. It is usually rather hot at the end of June and in July at around 35-40 Celsius. If so, we will make an early start to the day and spend early afternoon having a siesta in the hotel. High mountains should be more gracious to us weatherwise since we will be at an elevation of 1500-2000 meters. We recommend you take good suncream, head cover and sunglasses with you.

Our walks will be very easy throughout the tour and we are sure there will many opportunities for insect photography too. We typically move extremely slowly looking at the many butterflies that become rather flighty towards the end of early morning. Single specimens (especially new species for the tour) will be boxed to show typical markings. The guides are also very skillful in manually handling butterflies without damaging them.

YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT ..

- we will also pay attention to other groups of large insects like dragonflies, moths, long-horned beetles, grasshoppers or antlions. And to the many flowers too!
- 4 of the Pseudochazara Graylings occur in Macedonia, the highest number in Europe
- new species are still being discovered in the country and surprises are still possible
- no butterfly species is known to be extinct in Macedonia although several have been not confirmed for quite a long period and a few erroneously listed as such in the past.
- your guide Dime has confirmed the occurrence of some 180 species of butterflies in Macedonia

Left: Lang's Short-tailed Blue | Right: Persian Skipper



*Mountain meadows
species-rich habitats on limestone*



Macedonian Grayling country's only endemic butterfly



*Eastern Festoon
flies in a prolonged season until July*

All images were taken in areas described in the tour itinerary and provided by Martin Hrouzek, Czech Republic and Dime Melovski, Macedonia.

Right: Lattice Brown

Published by:
Ecotours & Kondor EcoLodge Ltd.
6080 Szabadszallas, Balazspuszta 90., Hungary
www.ecotours.hu
ecotours@t-online.hu
+36-30-6459318 or +36-20-8014742 (Apr - Oct)
+52 1 998 126 3073 (Nov - Apr)
skype: gabornemex



Please don't hesitate to ask for a detailed itinerary or visit our web site



*Taor gorge and Babuna river
one of the prime areas of our tour*