

SAMUI BUTTERFLIES

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home about contact insects ▼ expeditions ▼ galleries ▼

Insects >> Butterflies >> Pieridae >> Appias albina darada

Appias albina darada



Male Upperside



Male underside

Boisduval 1836 - The Common Albatross

Koh Samui only. Its current absence from Koh Pha Ngan is something of a mystery, and it should be found there in the near future.

The male of this common species is easily identifiable, it has hardly any markings whatsoever! However, the female is a different matter. If you are not confused now, after reading this, you will be!

In 'Butterflies of Thailand', volume 2 by Bro. Amnuay Pinratana, published in 1983, the author mentions only a single subspecies to be found in Thailand, *Appias albina darada* (C & R Felder 1865), in which there are two female forms, named as in the photos above.

Pisuth Ek-Amnuay in 'Butterflies of Thailand' published in 2006, mentions two subspecies. *Appias albina darada*, from Thailand above the peninsular, with the paler female form as the only type of female, and he does not mention the name *f. principalis*. The second subspecies is *Appias albina albina*, from Peninsular Thailand and mainland Malaysia. Here he mentions two differing forms, a dry season form and a wet season form. I do not, yet, have a photo of the dry season form, but he shows the form *f. semiflava* as the wet season form, again not mentioning that form name.

To provide even further difficulty, the closely related species, *Appias paulina distanti* is very similar to the wet season female of *A. a. albina*!

Having found both the yellow and white female forms on Samui, the rules of sympatry suggest that there should be only one subspecies here. I feel, therefore, that I have little option but to resurrect the form names as used in Pinratana's book.

I will be more than willing to amend, if provided with appropriate evidence to the contrary!

This species is to be found in open grassland and secondary vegetation. The males, in particular, love to puddle, and are regularly found by the side of damp roads and the edge of streams

Flight Period

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Wingspan

40 - 50mm

Early Stages

Not fully known. More detailed life history information is available from the following resources: S. Igarishi - Life Histories of Asian Butterflies, Volume.2, Page 394.

Larval Foodplant

Crateva adamsonii and *Capparis heyneana* (both Capparidaceae)

Range

Sri Lanka, India, through the Malay Peninsular through the Indonesian Archipelago to New Guinea and Australia.



Female Upperside



Female Underside- d.s.f



Female Underside- w.s.f. f. principalis



Female Underside- w.s.f. f. semiflava

[<< Back to Pieridae overview](#)