

Distribution of Butterflies and Skippers in Europe

(Lepidoptera: Rhopalocera, Grypocera)

24 Years Mapping European Butterflies (1995-2019)
Final Report

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**Mapping
European Butterflies**

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Abstract. The present publication contains the final report closing for the author after 24 years the research project “Mapping European Butterflies” (MEB), hopefully for the time being only. The publication contains new updated distribution maps and tables of all species. Included are also compact chapters on taxonomy, annotated check-lists of genus and species group names, chapters on zoogeography, conservation, and project history. Conservation proposals to safe-guard the diversity of Papilioidea and Hesperioidea in Europe with special reference to rare endemic species and hot spots of high diversity are made. MEB history is described. MEB is the only truly European undertaking supported during the past 24 years by more than 300 contributors. MEB is primarily indispensable for the study and conservation of European butterflies and indirectly for the conservation of insects sharing resp. utilizing their habitats; butterflies as the leading bio-monitoring group.

Key words: conservation, distribution, distribution maps and tables, Europe, Grypocera, history of Mapping European Butterflies – Final Report 1995-2019, Holocene, Lepidoptera, project history, Rhopalocera, taxonomy, zoogeography.

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1. Preface

The scientific research project “Mapping European Butterflies” (MEB) is 24 years old: 1995 announced and 2019 with the final report closed and the data bank, the only of its kind. I am proud passing MEB onto the Lepidoptera section of an old and highly reputable museum, one of the most respected European museums: Naturhistorisches Museum Wien (NHMW).

Twenty-four years is a long time in a human life, about one third of my just about 80 years long life. For these 24 years MEB absolutely dominated my life. In the course of these 24 years I made contacts to lepidopterists all over Europe and many of them having recognized the importance of MEB cooperated with me subsequently became my good friends. Sadly I must admit that I had to overcome various adversities in the course of the past 24 years of the project (v. chapter on the history of MEB).

I am proud to present after 24 years the final account of Mapping European Butterflies, a project I have invented and for which I lived 24 years. Looking back on these 24 years I am proud to say “I have done all this, MEB in the first place, and much more than that: I have done it my way. I hope I am not exaggerating the merits of my contribution to the advancement to the study and conservation of European butterflies, oft ahead of time and against the odds. I humbly ask all users of MEB to excuse my mistakes. Who does not venture anything all his life cannot spoil anything except making his own life worthless. I hope that, not being arrogant, at the close of my life I can claim: I have not lived idly.