

## *Eueides aliphera* (Juliette Butterfly or Small Flambeau)

Order: Lepidoptera (Butterflies and Moths)

Class: Insecta (Insects)

Phylum: Arthropoda (Arthropods)



**Fig. 1.** Juliette butterfly, *Eueides aliphera*.

[<http://www.suan-yong.com/tt.php?s=Heliconiidae&k=40707> downloaded 7 October 2016]

**TRAITS.** *Eueides aliphera*, popularly known as the juliette butterfly or the small flambeau (locally), is identified by its narrow long wings which usually span approximately 55mm. The wings of the small flambeau are mainly reddish in colour, and outlined with a solid black border on the forewings and at the back of the hindwings (Fig. 1). This species displays a high level of mimicry to other species of the Heliconiinae tribe with its slender body form and long, brightly coloured wings (Fig. 2), which serve as a warning signal to predators. *Eueides aliphera* (both male and female) grow to a total body length of approximately 2.5cm.

**DISTRIBUTION.** *Eueides aliphera* is a resident insect from Mexico to Brazil, and some islands in the West Indies including Trinidad and Tobago (Fig. 3).

**HABITAT AND ECOLOGY.** *Eueides aliphera* prefer to live in neotropical environments consisting of scrubby forests and forest clearings. In the Caribbean, Costa Rica more specifically, *Eueides aliphera* is known for feeding on *Passiflora vitifolia*, a host plant which is found in shady forested areas. Mature butterflies tend to sleep in small groups at night, under leaves at an elevation of 2-10m above ground level.

**REPRODUCTION.** *Eueides aliphera* reproduce via sexual reproduction. Male butterflies gain awareness to the presence of pheromones, in the atmosphere, which were released by female butterflies. The male butterfly then flies down and transfers his sperm packet into the female. She stores the sperm until she reaches an optimum reproduction period (usually the earlier half of dry season). A male may go on to breed with many other females during his life span, however a female butterfly may only reproduce once. The female *Eueides aliphera* can lay up to 100 eggs at a time. These eggs are usually cream coloured, tiny spheres which are laid on the underside of the *Passiflora* leaves. When the eggs have matured, they hatch to release the larvae (caterpillars). The larvae have yellow bodies with black, orange and white stripes (Fig. 4). They grow to approximately 2.5cm in length, then enter the pupa stage where they appear as greenish white chrysalis with black markings on the wingpads. These pupae then hatch into the beautiful adult *Eueides aliphera* (Fig. 1).

#### REFERENCES

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- Walters JR, Stafford C, Hardcastle TJ, and Jiggins CD. (2012). [Evaluating female remating in light of spermatophore degradation in \*Heliconius\* butterflies: pupal-mating monandry vs. adult-mating polyandry](#). *Ecological Entomology* **37**:257-268
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Author: Khadijah Chelsea Ramnath

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**Fig. 2.** *Eueides aliphera* (lower right) and *Dryas julia*.

[<http://photos1.blogger.com/x/blogger/1954/1452/1600/597451/Eueides%20aliphera%20Juliette%20and%20Julias%20WC%20090203%20RC%20138a.jpg> downloaded 9 October 2016]



**Fig. 3.** Map showing the geographical distribution of *Eueides aliphera*.

[[http://tolweb.org/tree/ToLimages/e\\_aliphera1.jpg](http://tolweb.org/tree/ToLimages/e_aliphera1.jpg) downloaded 9 October 2016]



**Fig. 4.** *Eueides aliphera* in its larva stage of life.

[<http://caterpillars.unr.edu/lacat/species/nymphalidae/nym08/nym8.htm> downloaded 9 October 2016]

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