

I have bred from the egg four of our larger species of *Argynnis*, viz., *diana*, *cybele*, *aphrodite* and *idalia*, and have had the egg and chrysalis of *atlantis*, and have drawings of the several stages of each species; and now having bred *myrina*, I can say that so far as I have seen of the preparatory stages of all these species, they are congeneric. The simple difference that is found among them is not in the shape of the eggs, or the forms and habits of the caterpillars, or the forms of the chrysalids, but merely in the behavior of *myrina* as regards the second brood, each of the others being, so far as is yet known, single brooded.\* And neither in the preparatory stages nor in the butterflies themselves do I see any reason for separating *myrina* and the smaller species from the genus *Argynnis*, or making more of them than a group. A group is as expressive as a genus, and a genus with its groups should present at one view an entire class with all its families, inter-related, though in differing degrees, as having had a common ancestor, and any system of arrangement which elevates what are properly groups into independent genera, destroying the unity of the class, strikes me as unnatural, and therefore unphilosophical.

But in passing we may as well look into the facts about this genus *Brenthis*—*Brenthis* Hübner (Scud. Syn. List, 1875) and learn something about the manufacture of modern genera.

The species *myrina* is closely like *euphyrosync* of Europe, and congeneric with it, no matter how *Argynnis* be split up. Hübner, in his Verzeichniss, amused himself with assorting the known butterflies into batches or parcels, as a child would sort his alleys and taws, by color, stripes and shape, putting blues into one lot, browns into another, one-striped into a third, two-striped into a fourth, regardless of characters which would be generic, that is, *which would indicate blood relationship or a common descent*. It is a very rare thing to find one of his batches—which he called a coitus, meaning a batch or assemblage, and which is in no sense a genus, for the element of common descent does not enter into this whimsical system—co-extensive with a genus. It is by the merest chance if it is so. Nor does the coitus correspond with a natural

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\* Though there are some reasons for suspecting that in West Virginia the other species must be double brooded also. That, however, is not determined, and I do not assume it. But this difference in the same genus as regards the number of broods, supposing it exists in *Argynnis*, is paralleled by the *Apaturus celtis* and *clayton*, the former being here double, the latter single brooded.