

## *Gonepteryx cleopatra* Linnaeus, 1767

Llimonera (ca.), Cleopatra (es.), Cleopatra (en.)

**Distribution.** North Western Africa, the Canary Islands, Madeira, Southern Europe, Turkey and the Middle East. It is present throughout the Balearic Islands.

**Description. Adult.** 55-60 mm wingspan. Large in size and bright yellow in colour with two yellow blotches on the forewings in the males which makes them unmistakable. The obverse of the hindwings is yellow with an orange spot. The females are of a weak yellow almost white colour. On the back of the forewings there is a poorly defined orange discal band. They have angular wings which makes it easy for camouflage. **Caterpillar.** 35 mm. Dark green on the back and clearer towards the edges with a white line on each side. **Chrysalis.** 25 mm. Greenish yellow in colour with a clear yellow lateral lengthwise line and a small blotch made up of nine brown points, and a pointed front. The thorax is much wider with a white line. They pupate by attaching themselves to the bud of a foodplant by means of a silk girdle.

**Caterpillar foodplants.** Buckthorn (*Rhamnus alaternus*)

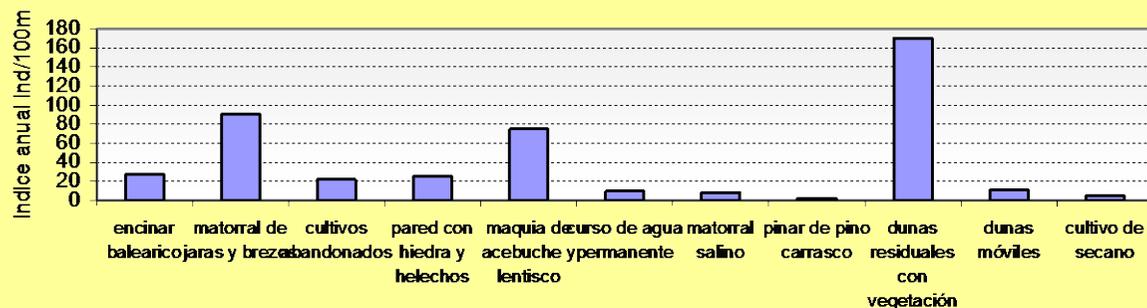
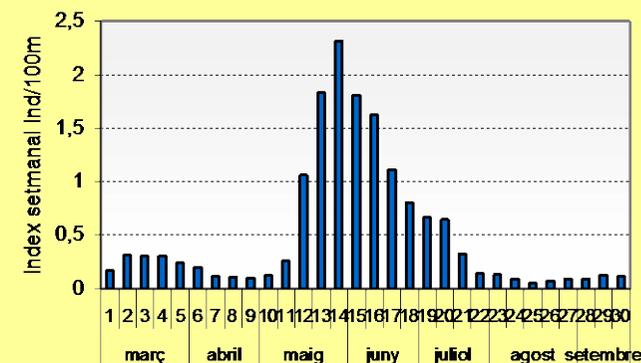
### *Gonepteryx cleopatra* in Menorca

**Representation in the BMS (Butterfly Monitoring Scheme).** It is one of the most abundant butterflies in Menorca. It represents 13% of the species observed by the BMS.

**Flight time.** Its numbers peak in the month of May when mating is observed and confirms that this species, considered on the continent has having only one brood, has more than one in Menorca. There are possibly at least three generations throughout the season. Already during the month of March couples are seen on their "nuptial" flight. Very abundant at the end of May and the beginning of June. They hibernate as adults and can be seen on many sunny winter days.

**Habitat and behaviour.** They are found in open spaces and have great mobility. It is widespread in nearly all areas, but more so on open bushland and areas where there are dunes and where it searches for maritime rocket (*Cakile maritima*), scabious (*Scabiosa atropurpurea*) and arnica (*Pulicaria odora*). It likes flowers on lilacs.

**Similar species present in Menorca.** At first sight, it is very difficult to distinguish the female *G. cleopatra* de *G. ramhi*. In flight, it can also be confused with other pieridines but its large size and the angular shape of its wings makes it easily distinguishable.



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