

**Molecular Systematics of the Lycaena Xanthoides Species Group**  
**(Lepidoptera: Lycaenidae)**

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Three closely related butterfly species, *Lycaena xanthoides* (Boisduval), *L. editha* (Mead), and *L. dione* (Scudder), comprise the *L. xanthoides* species group. Various authors have treated these three taxa as one, two, or three different species. Extensive intraspecific morphological variation and morphologically intermediate populations, have prompted some authors to classify *L. xanthoides* and *L. editha* as one species. I used DNA sequencing and phylogenetic analyses to test the hypothesis that each member of the group represents a monophyletic lineage. My results demonstrate that each taxon is reciprocally monophyletic, and thus warrant species status. However, the relationships among the three taxa remain unclear, likely due to incomplete lineage sorting following fragmentation in *L. xanthoides*' geographic range.