Southern Festoon

Regno: fauna
Invertebrates
zerynthiapoly.jpg [1]

Southern Festoon - *Zerynthia polyxena*

One of the most beautiful butterflies in Italy, the Southern Festoon is characterised by bright colours and patterns on both the upper and underside of its wings, with shades ranging from yellow-organe to red, edged with black.

The species over-winters as a pupae; the chrysalis, sheathed in a thin silk wrapping, is fixed to the ground by a few silken threads.

The adults can be seen in flight from the beginning of spring, the maximum numbers emerging at the end of April. Once a common wetland species, the *Southern Festoon*, like the Large Copper, Lycaena dispar *[2]*, is now rather rare, because of the disappearing marshlands, due to land reclamation, and the subsequent disappearance of the Birthwort, *Aristolochia*, the only plant the larvae feed on.

According to the list drawn up by the International Union for Nature Conservation, the Southern Festoon is under threat (i.e. in danger of extinction) in Czechoslovakia.

Although it is potentially present over all peninsular Italy, but not the higher areas of Sardinia, is it highly localised and now is only found in some relict stations, including the Fucecchio Marshes.

Source URL: http://zoneumidetoscane.it/en/southern-festoon

Links:
[1] http://zoneumidetoscane.it/sites/default/files/zerynthiapoly.jpg
[2] http://sitopadule.gis3w.it/en/large-copper-butterfly