



Seacliff buckwheat (*Eriogonum parvifolium*) hugs the California coast, where it nurtures populations of endangered ‘Smith’s’ Dotted Blues and ‘El Segundo’ Square-spotted Blues.

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# Buckwheat Blues: Part 2

## Dotted Blue and Square-spotted Blue Complexes

by Gordon Pratt and John F. Emmel

buckwheats — plants in the genus *Eriogonum*. The buckwheat blues lay their eggs upon these plants, the caterpillars feed upon these plants and the adults often nectar at these plants.

As we have said, there are four groups of buckwheat blues — Rita’s Blue complex, Small Blue, Dotted Blue complex and Square-spotted Blue complex. In last issue’s article we covered species in the Rita’s Blue complex and Small Blue. Here we will cover the Dotted and Square-spotted Blue complexes.

### Dotted Blues

The Dotted Blue complex is more complicated than the Rita’s Blue complex. The butterflies in this complex share genitalic characters: male genitalia without cristae and bifurcated claspers, while females have genitalic plates covering their genital openings. Genitalia of other buckwheat blue females are withdrawn and lack such plates. Although all populations in this complex are treated as a single species on the NABA Checklist, based upon California material we believe that there are three species, whose names might be: Pacific (Dotted) Blue\*, *Euphilotes (enoptes) enoptes*; Mojave (Dotted) Blue, *Euphilotes (enoptes) mojave*\*, and Rocky Mountain

In the previous issue of *American Butterflies*, we provided an introduction to the buckwheat blues — blues in the genus *Euphilotes*. These blues, with very complicated interpopulation dynamics, are tightly bound to the many species of

\*In cases where a taxon is treated as a subspecies on the NABA Checklist but is considered to be a species by the author, the corresponding NABA species is placed in parentheses. In the instant case, the author treats *mojave* as a species whereas on the NABA Checklist it is treated as a subspecies of *enoptes*.