



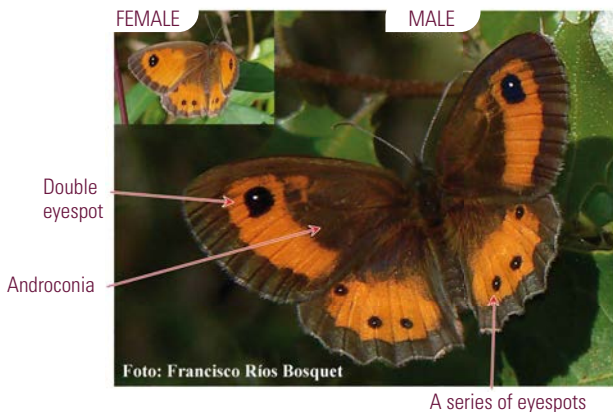
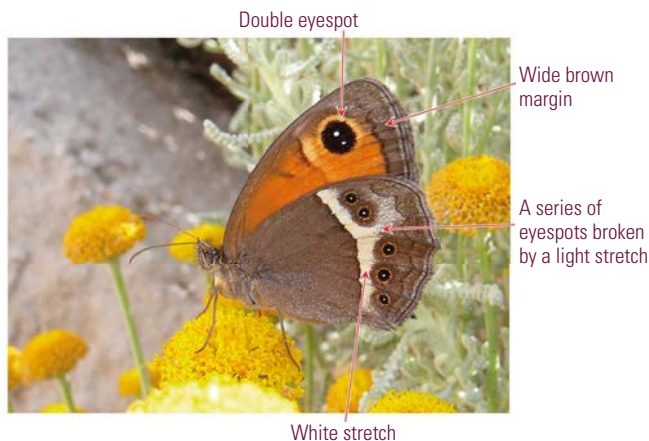
# Spanish Gatekeeper

*Pyronia bathseba* (Fabricius, 1793)

## DESCRIPTION

Wingspan: From 3.4 to 4 cm. **Closed wings:** The hindwing is brown, and a white stretch which goes across it. Behind it, there is a series of eyespots, which is broken by a light stretch. The forewing is orange, with a double eyespot and a wide grey and brown margin. **Open wings:** This species hardly ever stretches the wings. Both sexes are orange with broad brown margins in the shape of an eight, although sometimes male butterflies miss one of the white dots in the centre. There is a series of eyespots on the hindwings. Female butterflies have larger orange sections, as the androconia covers a big part of male wings.

## KEY FOR VISUAL IDENTIFICATION





## SIMILAR SPECIES

When it stretches the wings, it can be confused with **the Gatekeeper** and **the Southern Gatekeeper**, but both of these species miss a series of the eyespots on the hindwing, among other differences.



MALE

Gatekeeper

FEMALE

MALE

Southern Gatekeeper

FEMALE

## BIOLOGY &amp; HABITAT

There is only one generation which flies from March to September, something which depends on the altitude of the place. They are more active in May and June.

It is common and rather numerous in forests and woodland. In dense forests, it looks for clear areas, such as paths or forest tracks. At midday when it is rather hot, it rests in shady areas. There can be dozens of butterflies resting or drinking on the flowers of the *Helychrisum stoechas* or *Teucrium lusitanicum*. Nevertheless, these are not its caterpillars' foodplants, but gramineous plants, or grasses, such as Mediterranean False-brome (*Brachypodium retusum*) and Purple False-brome (*Brachypodium phoenicoides*), or Rough Meadow-grass (*Poa trivialis*).

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
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## DISTRIBUTION

It is rather common along the GMP, especially along the stages with wide forests. It cannot be seen on the coastal stages and in more decaying stretches in the north part of the province, which do not go through woods or forests.

