

Notes on some species of *Nycteola* Hb. (Lep., Noctuidae)

by

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A few years ago N. S. OBRAZTSOV published an important paper, entitled "Revision der palaearktischen Arten der Gattungen *Nycteola* Hb. und *Erschoviella* Gen. nov." (*Eos*, Madrid, 29 : 143—172, December 1953). The name *Nycteola* is two years older than its synonym *Sarrothripus* Curtis, so that this well-known name must be dropped.

OBRAZTSOV showed in his paper that Europe is not only inhabited by *Nycteola revayana* Scopoli and *N. degenerana* Hb., but also by two other species, which hitherto had not been recognized as such.

Only a few months earlier the Czechoslovakian author J. PATOČKA described how caterpillars of *Sarrothripus* had been very injurious in his country to different species of poplars. Dissection of a number of adults proved them to belong to two species not identical with *revayana* and *degenerana* (*Zool. a entom. Listy* 2 : 76—88, Červen = June 1953), and in the following year the Hungarian lepidopterist L. KOVÁCS published a new species of *Sarrothripus* from his own country (*Ann. Hist.-Nat. Mus. Hung.*, new series 5 : 308—310, 1954). Since these authors were working independently from each other it is evident that synonyms could hardly be avoided.

As far as I know a comparison of the three papers has not yet been published, and as I had an opportunity of studying Dr. KOVÁCS' type material I think some notes on the synonymy of the different species may be useful.

1. *Nycteola cuneana* Patočka

*Sarrothripus cuneana* Patočka, June 1953, l.c., p. 80.

*Nycteola pseudodilutana* Obraztsov, Dec. 1953, l.c., p. 161.

A comparison of the figures of the wing markings and genitalia given by PATOČKA and by OBRAZTSOV shows that there can be no doubt about the synonymy of the two names.

OBRAZTSOV figures the genitalia of a male from an unknown locality and of a female from Terlan in Southern Tirol. PATOČKA also gives excellent figures of the genitalia and moreover of the chrysalis (l.c., p. 83). He states that the caterpillars live between the leaves of poplars and willows, which they spin together, and that in 1952 especially the second generation caused considerable damage to several species of *Populus*. Photographs of damaged leaves are given (l.c., pl. III, fig. 11—14).

OBRAZTSOV has correctly observed that the aedeagus figured by NORDSTRÖM in Svenska Fjärilar (p. 201, fig. 153, 1940) as the one of *N. degenerana* Hb., is actually the aedeagus of *N. cuneana*. Dr. F. NORDSTRÖM kindly informs me that the aedeagus figured is presumably from a specimen which was bred in 1934 from a caterpillar found at Djurö, near Stockholm. If the species can be estab-

lished with certainty for the Swedish fauna, it is highly probable that it also occurs in Germany.

In his *Lepidoptera Britannica*, p. 406, 1811, HAWORTH cites a *Tortrix dilutana* which OBRAZTSOV identifies as *dilutana* Hb. = *N. cuneana* Patocka. However, this conclusion is unfounded. There exists a form of *revayana* which strongly resembles HÜBNER's *dilutana* and which has always been regarded as such by both British and Dutch lepidopterists (cf. the note on *N. revayana*, p. 163). OBRAZTSOV also refers to *N. cuneana* the specimen figured as *Sarrotbripus lathamianus* by HUMPHREYS & WESTWOOD (*Brit. Moths* 2, pl. XCI, fig. 13, 1845). According to the text this specimen was from the cabinet of Mr. BENTLEY and the "species" was taken "in the Kentish Woods", in August (l.c., p. 152). I have not been able to see this figure, but the late Dr. COCKAYNE informed me that there is no proof whatever (except for a single straggler of *N. degenerana* Hb.) that apart from *N. revayana* the British Isles are inhabited by other species of the genus *Nycteola*. The same holds true for the Netherlands. The *lathamiana* of the British authors (STEWART, HAWORTH, STEPHENS, WOOD) was no doubt a *revayana* form.

OBRAZTSOV identifies the species with the moth figured by HÜBNER as *dilutana* (*Samml. Eur. Schmetterl., Tortr.*, fig. 6, (1796—1799)). KOVÁCS (l.c., p. 307) on the contrary is convinced that the figure refers to *degenerana*, which is figured as nr. 8, and consequently makes this name a synonym of *dilutana*. But fortunately the name *dilutana* is not valid for reasons stated by OBRAZTSOV (l.c., p. 163), who therefore erects the new name *pseudodilutana*.

## 2. *Nycteola asiatica* Krulikovsky

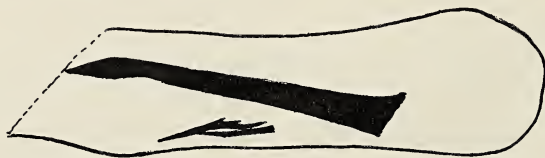
*Sarrotbripus revayana* Scop. var. *asiatica* Krul., 1904, *Rev. Russe d'Ent.* 4 : 91.

*Nycteola asiatica* (Krul.), OBRAZTSOV, Dec. 1953, *Eos* 29 : 77.

*Sarrotbripus hungarica* Kovács, 1954, *Ann. Hist.-Nat. Hung.*, new series, 5 : 308.

KRULIKOVSKY described the form as a "var.", a subspecies, intending to indicate by that name the whole of the Central Asian population (see: German translation of the Russian text given by OBRAZTSOV). According to the modern interpretation of the international rules of zoological nomenclature OBRAZTSOV was therefore fully justified to promote the name to species rank, the name of the original author and the date of his publication remaining unchanged.

KOVÁCS' *hungarica* is a synonym of *asiatica*. This author gives a sketch of the wing markings and figures parts of the male genitalia, but he omits the aedeagus, which is the easiest character for recognizing the species with certainty (though he quite correctly describes it in his text). I therefore give a figure of this organ drawn from a paratype of *hungarica*. This figure shows that the paratype possesses



Aedeagus of a paratype of *Sarrotbripus hungarica* Kovács from Nadap (Hungary).

the long slender thorn and the bunch of small ones which OBRAZTSOV also figures for *asiatica*, so there can be no doubt that *asiatica* and *hungarica* represent the same species.

*Nycteola asiatica* has a wide distribution in Hungary as may be seen from the list of localities given by KOVÁCS. He also saw a specimen from Herkulesfürdő (Herculesbad) in Rumania. OBRAZTSOV mentions the species from Spain (Castilia), S. Italy, S. Tirol, parts of W. and S. Russia, and from widely separated localities in Asia. WILTSHIRE writes that *asiatica* inhabits oases in the mountains of Iraq, where the caterpillar feeds on poplars (The Lepidoptera of Iraq, p. 89, 1957). The material of the Budapest Museum sent to me by Dr. KOVÁCS contains a specimen from Valais in S. Switzerland and no doubt it will yet be found in many other European localities.

KOVÁCS mentions that the caterpillar was found in Hungary on willow, but that it very probably also feeds on other trees (poplar and oak).

### 3. *Nycteola populana* Patočka

*Sarothripus populana* Patočka, June 1953, *Zool. a entom. Listy* 2: 77.

It is Dr. KOVÁCS' opinion that this species is identical with *N. degenerana* Hb. (in litt.). This is, however, quite out of the question. I much regret that I have not seen original material of *N. populana*, so I must judge solely from the figures given by PATOČKA, which are excellent. A comparison of OBRAZTSOV's figures of *N. asiatica* Krul. and my own slides of *hungarica* (which, as I have shown above, represents the same species) with the figures of *populana* shows there is little doubt that they are closely related. Both have a strong straight spine in the aedeagus, a character which is not shown for any of the other European and Asiatic species figured by OBRAZTSOV. The differences between them are the following: the aedeagus of *populana* is shorter and comparatively thicker, the thorn is shorter and thicker than in *asiatica*, the bunch of small thorns is absent; the ductus bursae of *populana* is shaped differently from that of *asiatica*, it is distinctly broader; the shape of the transverse lines on the fore wings is different.

Very little as yet is known of the distribution of the species. PATOČKA mentions that in 1952 its caterpillars (and those of *N. cuneana*) were injurious to different species of poplar in southern Slovakia. They live between poplar and willow leaves which are spun together, and closely resemble caterpillars of the oak feeding *N. revayana*.

### 4. *Nycteola revayana* Scopoli

As I previously stated in the note on *N. cuneana*, a form of *revayana* exists (at least in the British Isles and in Holland) which closely resembles HÜBNER's figure of *dilutana* and to which we used to apply the latter name. However since it is apparent that this figure does not refer to *revayana* it is necessary to choose a new name for the well known *revayana* form, for which I propose *dilutanoides* f. nov., erecting as holotype a male in the collection of the Amsterdam Zoological Museum, taken at Oosterbeek (prov. of Guelderland), 6.XI.1868.

**Description.** Basal area of the fore wings brownish, followed by a pale

grey band, central area again brownish, outer area pale grey; basal and central area bordered by distinct transverse lines.

I mounted the genitalia of this male, though I had not the slightest doubt about its identity; it proved to be a *revayana* form.

In conclusion I wish to thank Dr. L. Kovács of the Hungarian Natural History Museum at Budapest for the loan of a number of his paratypes.

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Brouwer, F. I., Leven en werken van E. Heimans. Dissertatie, uitgegeven door J. B. Wolters, Groningen. 1958. Prijs gebonden f 16,50.

Hoewel de inhoud van dit werk niet van entomologische aard is, kan ik niet nalaten er althans kort de aandacht op te vestigen. HEIMANS en zijn medewerkers toch hebben door hun publicaties een enorme invloed ten goede uitgeoefend in ons land op de bestudering van de natuur en vanzelfsprekend heeft ook de entomologie daarvan geprofiteerd.

De schrijver heeft ongetwijfeld een belangrijk werk verricht door alle gegevens, die maar enigszins te achterhalen waren over HEIMANS en zijn werk, bijeen te brengen nu het nog kon. En zo is het boek een interessante bijdrage geworden tot de geschiedenis van een periode van ontwakende belangstelling voor de natuurstudie, die omstreeks 60 jaar geleden aanving.

Het werk telt 402 bladzijden en is uitstekend geïllustreerd. — LPK.

Linneana Belgica. In België verscheen een nieuw entomologisch tijdschrift, waarvan het eerste nummer 1 maart 1958 gepubliceerd werd. Als doel wordt aangegeven de studie van de entomologie van West- en Midden-Europa, in het bijzonder die van België en de omliggende landen. Vooral voor lepidopterologen lijkt het tijdschrift me heel belangrijk. De twee nu verschenen nummers bevatten tal van mededelingen over de Belgische vlinderfauna, die voor een juiste interpretatie van de gegevens van onze eigen fauna natuurlijk onontbeerlijk zijn. In het mei-nummer beschrijft VAN SCHEPDAEL een ab ovo kweek van *Maculinea teleius* Brgrstr. (*euphemus* Hb.), de eerste publicatie van een geheel gelukte kweek.

De abonnementsprijs bedraagt 150 B. fr. per jaar, terwijl het secretariaat berust bij de heer J. VAN SCHEPDAEL, 23 Rue Albert, Hal. — LPK.

Trek van Distelvlinders. Toen ik op 2 juni j.l. aan een waai bij de Eem zat te vissen, jakkerden voortdurend Distelvlinders voorbij. Het was een warme broeierige dag. Op zeker ogenblik dreef het onweer ons naar de enige boerderij ter plaatse. Op het erf vlogen de Distelvlinders elkaar onstuimig achterna. Er waren daar 25 exemplaren. Later, tegen de avond, zonden de dieren zich op de dijken, een bekende gewoonte van ze. In totaal zag ik die dag 71 *cardui*'s en 1 *Atalanta*. Als ik nog een groter stuk van de dijken had geïnspecteerd, zou het cijfer aanmerkelijk hoger zijn geweest.

Natuurlijk ben ik zeer benieuwd, of ook anderen iets van deze trek gezien hebben. Ik heb zelf nog nooit zo'n aantal Distelvlinders op trek waargenomen.

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[In *Ent. Z. Frankfurt* 68 : 144 (1958) wordt gemeld, dat sinds 9 mei tamelijk sterke vluchten van *V. cardui* door Zuid-Duitsland noordwaarts vlogen. In Zwitserland zijn opvallend veel vroege trekkers waargenomen (diverse artikelen in *Mitt. ent. Ges. Basel*, N.F. 8 (3), 1958). Het ziet er naar uit, dat 1958 een interessant trekvlinderjaar wordt! — LPK.]

Bibliotheek. Wij ontvingen de Insectentabel geschreven door Els VAN DAMME en Kees NAAKTGEBOREN en uitgegeven door de C.J.N.

Deze gestencilde publicatie van 30 bladzijden geeft een inleiding tot de entomologie en een zeer bruikbare determineertabel op de orden en onderorden der insecten. — KR.