A CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE OF THE BALKAN LEPIDOPTERA: NEW AND RARE EREBIDAE AND NOCTUIDAE FOR ALBANIA, COLLECTED IN 2016

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Abstract

In 2016 the author undertook five collecting trips in Albania from June to October. Material was collected at light mostly from the southern part of the country. Part of the results are presented here, the remainder are to be published soon. Three genera (Pseuodzarba, Heterophyia and Divaena) and 15 species are reported for the first time for Albania. Two other species are reported for the second time for the country. Reported species and collecting localities are illustrated in colour, when necessary with genitalia, including everted vesicas.

Keywords: Albania, faunistic, Erebidae, Noctuidae, Lepidoptera, Macrolepidoptera

Introduction

In 2016 the author undertook five collecting trips in Albania, monthly, from June to October, each with a duration of three to five nights and mostly in the lowlands and in the southern part of the country. Albania is a mountain country, but areas at altitude of about 1200m in the south are not truly montane with regard to climate, vegetation and cultivated plants; the Lepidoptera fauna is an interesting composition of Mediterranean, xeromontane and other species on the edge of their range. Since, at present, there is no active native lepidopterologist and evidently no foreign researchers working with moths, it is still easy to find new species for Albania – even some common species remain unpublished for here. Previous data published in the important monograph of Rebel & Zerny (1931) are mostly from northern and central Albania. Another important monograph (Heinicke, 1965), which presents results from the German Entomological expeditions in 1961, also deals mostly with northern and central Albania. In the articles of the Albanian lepidopterologist Kastriot Misja many new species for both northern and southern Albania are published, but they are written in Albanian and so are not well-known to foreign specialists. Many new species for Albania were published by Beshkov (1995), Beshkov & Misja (1995) and Beshkov, Misja & Abadjiev (1996). Less important and not always reliable data can be found in several articles published both in Albania and abroad. All data about Albanian quadrifid noctuoidea are being summarised in a catalogue, to be published soon by the present author (SB).

For this present paper, material was collected by S. Beshkov and Ana Nahirnić together; to save space the names are not repeated. Collecting involved
2-3 portable light traps with an 8 watt actinic (368 nm) and 8 watt “Blacklight”, both powered by 12 volt batteries, as well as a Finnish “tent trap” with a 160 watt MV bulb at the top of the pole and a 20 watt (368 nm) black light over the catching pot below. An additional 20 watt (368nm) lamp was also positioned about 70 metres from the tent trap. All traps ran throughout the night.

All genitalia slides are photographed with Zeiss stereo microscope Stemi 2000-C with axioCam eRc 5s. Genitalia slides are fixed on glass in Euparal; solitary everted vesicas were photographed in alcohol before mounting on glass. All genitalia are stained with Eosin Red. Insects are photographed with Sony DSCHX400v digital camera. All trips were self-financed by the author and in his own time.

Inventory of species

**Erebidae**

*Lygephila lusoria* (Linnaeus, 1758) Korca Region, above Kloce Village, near the antennae, 1217m, N40°41’02”; E20°41’40”, 4.vii.2016, grassy slopes with *Corylus avellana* on top (Plate 1), 1 ♂ (Plate 12.1); Korca Region, above Zvezda Village on the road to Prespa Lake 1088m, N40°43’59”; E20°52’49”, 6.vii.2016, limestone slopes with *Buxus* and *Carpinus* (Plate 2), S. Beshkov, A. Nahirnić & A. Vaso leg., 1 ♂. New species for Albania.


**Noctuidae**


*Pseudozarba bipartita* (Herrich-Schäffer, 1850) Lushnja Region, above Stan-Karbunara, 64m, N40°55’03”; E19°43’57”, 11.viii.2016, olives and ruderal on sandy hill (Plate 4), 1 ♂ (Plate 12.4). New genus and a new species for Albania.

*Cucullia xeranthemi* Boisduval, 1840 Ionian Sea Coast, Palasa Village near Dhermi, 274m, limestone slopes with *Quercus cocciifera* and *Phlomis fruticosa* above *Quercus macrolepis* old trees (Plate 5), N40°10’35”; E19°36’21”, 6.vi.2016, 1 male (Plate 12.5). New species for Albania.
Plate 1. Collecting locality above Kloce Village, near the antennae.

Plate 2. Collecting locality above Zvezda Village.
Plate 3. Collecting locality above Bistrica Village.

Plate 4. Collecting locality above Stan-Karbunara, Lushnja Region.
Plate 5. Collecting locality on Ionian Sea Coast, near Palasa village.

Plate 6. Collecting locality in Devoli Gorge, near Strelea Village.
Plate 7. Collecting locality above Drenova Village.

Plate 8. Collecting locality on Ionian Sea Coast, below Ilias village.
Plate 9. Collecting locality below Dardha above Boboshtica village.

Plate 10. Collecting locality in Goloburdo, near Ostren i Vogel village.
Plate 11. Collecting locality near Ksamil with view to Kerkira island.

Teinoptera lunaki (Boursin, 1940) Korca Region, Devoli Gorge, near Strelca Village, Maliq district, 755m, N40°43'18"; E20°31'35"; 5.vi.2016, serpentine slopes with Quercus trojana, Cotinus coggyria, Colutaea, Carpinus, Fraxinus ornus, Astaragalus, etc. (Plate 6), 3 ♂ ♂ (Plate 12.6). The genus Teinoptera Calberla, 1891, known before as Copiphana Hampson, 1906 has an interesting conical structure on the frons, without scales, with a rounded axilla inside (Plate 16.4). Balkan endemic species, new for Albania.


Bryophila tephocharis (Boursin, 1954) Korca Region, above Kloe Village, near the antennae, 1217m, N40°41’02”; E20°41’40”, 4.vii.2016, grassy slopes with Corylus avellana on top, 3 ♂ ♂ (Plate 13.2), Gen. prep. 3./22.iv.2017, male genitalia with everted vesica (Plate 17.2); Korca Region, above Zvezda Village on the road to Prespa Lake, 1088m, N40°43’59”; E20°52’49”,
6.vii.2016, limestone slopes with *Buxus* and *Carpinus*, S. Beshkov, A. Nahirić & & A. Vaso leg., 1♂ (Plate 13.3). New species for Albania. *Bryophila tephrorcaris* can be easily split from *Bryophila rectilinea* by its dark hind wings, larger wingspan and sometime more colourful forewings. Male genitalia, especially everted vesica are diagnostic. A male *Bryophila rectilinea* (Warren, 1909) is illustrated for comparison (Plate 13.1).

*Spodoptera cilium* (Guenée, 1852) Ionian Sea Coast, below Ilias Village, Dhermi district, St. Theodor monastery, 153m, N40°07’52”; E19°39’19”, 17.x.2016, Maquis with *Quercus macrolepis*, *Arbutus unedo*, *Pistacia lentiscus*, *Cupressus*, etc. (Plate 8), 3♂ 3♀ (Plate 13.4); Delvina Region, near Syri i Kalter, Bistrica Village district, 136m, N39°55’03”; E20°11’03” 19.x.2016, *Platanus orientalis* forest near small river, 1♂ . New species for Albania.

*Heterophysa dumetorum dumetorum* (Geyer, [1834]) (= *dumetorum mutica* Christoph, 1885) Korca Region, above Drenova Village, 1050m, N40°35’18”; E20°48’23” 7.vii.2016, river valley in serpentinite slopes with *Artemisia alba*, *Acantholimon*, etc., 8♂ 3♀ (Plate 13.5) and 3♀ 3♀ (Plate 13.6). New genus and a new species for Albania. *Heterophysa dumetorum* is known from Caucasus, Transcaucasia, Russian Turkestan, Turkey, Syria and Iran with a few localities in Europe on the Balkan Peninsula (Greece, Kosovo, Montenegro), Italy, France and Spain.

*Haden a adriana* (Schawerda, 1921) Korca Region, Devolli Gorge, near Strelca Village, Maliq district, 755m, N40°43’18”; E20°31’35”, 5.vi.2016, 1♂ (Plate 14.1), male genitalia with everted vesica checked, Gen. prep. 2./28.iv.2017, S. Beshkov (Plate 17.3). Second locality in Albania, previously this species was known only from Vrissara village, Gjirokastra region (Beshkov, 2000).

*Hadena gueneei* (Staudinger, 1901) Korca Region, below Dardha, above Boboshtica Village, 1225m, N40°32’26”; E20°47’31”, 8.vii.2016, above valley on serpentinite slopes with *Juniperus* and scarce grass vegetation (Plate 9), 1♂ (Plate 14.2), male genitalia with everted vesica checked, Gen. prep. 1./28.iv.2017, S. Beshkov (Plate 17.4), they are very similar to these of *Haden a adriana* (Schawerda, 1921), but the female genitalia as well as the appearance show significant differences between both these species. New species for Albania.

*Hadena albimacula* (Borkhausen, 1792) Korca Region, above Kloece Village, near the antennae, 1217m, N40°41’02”; E20°41’40”, 4.vii.2016, 1♀ ; Korca Region, above Drenova Village, 1050m, N40°35’18”; E20°48’23”,
Plate 12.
Plate 13.
Plate 14.
Plate 15.
Plate 16.

9.viii.2016, 1 ♀ (Plate 14.3); Golobrdo Mts, Between Klena and Ostreni Vogel villages, *Corylus avellana, Corylus colurna, Acer, Quercus, Carpinus* light forest on limestone area, 1186m, N41°24’19”; E20°28’41”, 12.viii.2016 (Plate 10), 1 ♂. New species for Albania.

*Hadenia vulcanica urumovi* (Drenowski, 1931) (=castriota Rebel & Zerny, 1931) Korca Region, Devoli Gorge, near Strelca Village, Maliq district, 755m, N40°43’18”; E20°31’35”, 5.vi.2016, serpentinite slopes with *Quercus trojana, Cotinus coggyria, Colutaea, Carpinus, Fraxinus ornus, Astaragalus*, etc., 1 ♂ (Plate 14.4), Gen. prep. 1/27.iv.2017, male genitalia with everted vesica (Plate 18.1); Korca Region, above Drenova Village, 1050m, N40°35’18”; E20°48’23”, 7.vii.2016 (Plate 14.5), male genitalia with
everted vesica checked; Korca Region, below Dardha, above Boboshtica Village, 1225m, N40°32'26"; E20°47'31"; 8.vii.2016, 1 ♂ (Plate 14.6), male genitalia with everted vesica checked, Gen. prep. 3./4.v.2017, S. Beshkov (Plate 18.2). All specimens from Albania are very dark, sometimes without a clearly visible pattern (Plate 14:4; 14:5; 14:6; 15:1; 15:2; 15:3) and differ much from typical *Hadena vulcanica urumovi* (Plate 15.4) from Bulgaria, from where it was described. Without examination of genitalia incorrect identification is possible; specimens from Albania look different to the nominotypical ones.

*Hadena persimilis balcanica* Hacker, 1996 Korca Region, below Dardha, above Boboshtica Village, 1225m, N40°32'26"; E20°47'31"; 8.vii.2016, 1 ♂ (Plate 15.5), male genitalia with everted vesica checked, Gen. prep. 3./28.iv.2017, S. Beshkov (Plate 18.3), they are very similar to these of the other representatives of *Hadena luteocincta* species group, but the female genitalia as well as the appearance are sometimes a little bit more helpful for correct identification. Our specimen is very dark and does not fit well to illustrations and descriptions in the literature, so misidentification here is also possible. New species for Albania.

*Mythimna prominens* (Walker, 1856) (=*hibernica* Bellier, 1863) Lushnja Region, above Stan-Karbunara, 64m, N40°55'03"; E19°43'57", 11.viii.2016, olives and ruderal on sandy hill, 5 ♂; Ionian Sea Coast near Ksamil, between Butrint and Saranda, 56m, N39°48'31"; E20°00'27", 18.x.2016, maquis with *Quercus cocifera, Paliurus spin-a-christi, Phlomis fruticosa* (Plate 11), 1 ♂ (Plate 15.6) and 1 ♀. Not reported in the scientific literature, but there is unpublished data for this species on the Internet. New species for Albania.

*Mythimna languida* (Walker, 1858) (=*consanguis* auct., nec Guenée, 1852) Ionian Sea Coast, below Ilias Village, Dhermi district, St. Theodor monastery, 153m, N40°07'52"; E19°39'19", 17.x.2016, Maquis with *Quercus macrolepis, Arbutus, Pistacia lentiscus, Cupressus*, etc., 1 ♂ and 1 ♀ (Plate 16.1). New species for Albania.

*Rhyacia nictymeridis stavroitiacus* Toulechhoff, 1951 Korca region, below Dardha vill., above Boboshtica village, 1225m, N40°32'26"; E20°47'31", 8.vii.2016, serpentine slopes with low scarce vegetation, 1 ♂ (Plate 16.2). New species for Albania. This endemic taxon, described from Olympus Mts., till now was known only from Greece.


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References


Request for loan of high-wattage MV bulbs for research

I recently developed a method for comparing moth catches made by two different light sources. The two bulbs to be compared are each used on a Robinson trap. Both traps are run together each night, 30 m apart but separated by opaque hedging. Each comparison typically runs for 30-80 nights. I have used it successfully for comparing 125-watt MBU and MFB bulbs and then for comparing a 125-watt MFB bulb with a proprietary Eco-Robinson trap (a 20-watt Wemlite bulb). The results are due to be published in 2018, but details are available on request.

I would now like to run two more comparisons: a 250-watt MV bulb against a standard 125-watt MFB bulb and then a 400-watt MV bulb against a standard 125-watt MFB bulb. I want to do this to get comparative quantitative data on the catching power of these two higher wattage bulbs (250 and 400-watts) before they pass into history. As far as I know, these bulbs have been unobtainable for decades and are no longer made, but I believe several still survive in various parts of the country. If you have a 250-watt or 400-watt MV bulb that you would be prepared to lend or sell to me, please get in touch.

Just in case you have one, but are unfamiliar with them, please do not use without consideration of the dangers of UV. In particular, please do not test by plugging directly into the mains as this damages them; like the 125-watt versions, they need a choke in the circuit.

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