New data on rare and protected butterflies and moths from Bessaparski Ridove Hills, Bulgaria (Insecta: Lepidoptera)

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Abstract
Data on seven Macrolepidoptera species previously not reported from the area of Bessaparski Ridove Hills, Pazardzhik Region are given. One of them, Dioszeghyana schmidtii pinkeri HreBlav & Varga, 1993, is included in the Annex II of the 92/43 Habitat Directive of the European Commission. Other six species are known from very few remote localities in Bulgaria. They are: Melitaea ornata Christoph, 1893 = telona Frühstorfer, 1908, Clela filacea (Herrich-Schaffer 1847), Panchrisia aurea (Hübner, [1803]), Behounekia freyeri (Frivaldszky, 1839), Conistra rugasae macedonica Pinker, 1956 and Grammodes bifasciata (Petagna, 1787).

Introduction
Bessaparski Ridove Hills are situated in Central Bulgaria, Upper Thracian lowland. One of these five hills can be accepted also as a part of Rhodope Mts. or connection between Upper Thracian lowland and Rhodopes. The Bessaparski Ridove Hills are almost deforested with dominated dry xerothermic grass vegetation on limestone or Proterozoic marble slopes. In some parts of the hills still can be find secondary forests of Quercus pibescens, Q. cerris and Carpinus orientalis. Climate is warm and dry.

Material and methods
Data presented here are result of more than 3 years field collecting in Bessaparski Ridove Hills. Collected data come mostly from Kapitan Dimitrjevski and Cngyanovo-Sinitevski Hills, from where material was collected all over the year. Mostly one or two portable light traps with “black” and/or actinic 8W tubes powered by 12V battery were used for collecting. A 160W MVL, powered by 220V generator, was used occasionally.

Results
As a result of our study, several rare species were found, seven of which are discussed here. These species, as shown below on the maps, was previously known from very few remote localities, mostly in distal parts of the country – SW Bulgaria, Eastern Rhodopes, Black Sea Coast. Their presence in Bessaparski Ridove Hills extends significantly their distribution in Bulgaria. On the maps, the new localities are marked with red and the previously published ones with black dots.