Agrotis puta (Hübner, 1803), a species of Macroheterocera new to the fauna of Luxembourg (Insecta, Lepidoptera, Noctuidae)

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Abstract. *Agrotis puta* (Hübner, 1803) is reported for the first time from Luxembourg, where the species was collected from three localities in 2009 and 2011.

Introduction

Agrotis puta (Hübner, 1803), a moth of the family Noctuidae, is distributed through western and parts of central Europe, the circum-Mediterranean area, the Middle East, Iran included, and Afghanistan. The life history of this species is primarily linked to sandy grasslands but not exclusively to that type of habitat. It is also found in other habitats fulfilling the xerothermophilic needs and specialized requirements on soil composition of the caterpillar. The larvae are polyphagous, feeding on a multitude of herbaceous plants (Steiner & Ebert 1998). Due to the specialized larval needs the species is of localized occurrence within central Europe but is currently in a phase of expansion. Although *Agrotis puta* was expected to occur in Luxembourg (Fibiger 1990: 91) it had so far not been recorded from there.

Methods, sites and results

Three specimens of *Agrotis puta* have recently been captured in three localities in Luxembourg, two of them by the present author and another one by Marcel Hellers. The latter record is also presented in the present paper.

The first specimen was taken on the 14th of August 2009 at a conventional light trap running on two 20 W actinic black light fluorescent tubes in Platen, a village in western Luxembourg. The site consists of a regularly cut grasfield lawn within a residential area located at 49°47'25,2" N, 5°56'15,5" E.

The second specimen was captured by the author on the 15th of August 2009 in the Saint Roch's Chapel in Reimberg while investigating the nocturnal Lepidoptera attracted by the nightly illumination of the chapel. Reimberg is a neighbouring village to Platen. The chapel is located at the end of rue Saint-Roch, coordinates 49°48'03,2" N, 5°57'25,4" E. The specimen was found hiding in the interstices of the chapel's wall.

A third specimen was found on the 5th of August 2011 by Marcel Hellers in Bissen, where it was attracted by a conventional black light trap.

All three specimens were identified as belonging to *Agrotis puta* (Hübner, 1803) (fig. 1) as they were showing the typical whitish and very elongated orbicular stigma.

The specimens are preserved in the collection of the author and that of Marcel Hellers, respectively.

Discussion

Agrotis puta is new to the fauna of Luxembourg (Marc Meyer, pers. communication). A confusion of the species within Europe could only happen with *Agrotis syricola* Corti & Draudt, 1933, which is so far only known from the Mediterranean area. *A.*



Fig. 1. *Agrotis puta*, female. Luxembourg, Platen. Scale bar: 5 mm.

syricola differs from *A. puta* in having a distinctly larger wingspan.

Following Fibinger (1990: 91), *Agrotis puta* was expected to occur in Luxembourg. It may therefore be concluded that the species is not a recent newcomer to the country, but that its presence had simply been overlooked by the local lepidopterologists.

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