

MYTHIMNA (*MORPHOPOLIANA*) LANGUIDA (WALKER, 1858): FIRST RECORDS FOR THE IBERO-BALEARIC AREA (LEPIDOPTERA: NOCTUIDAE: HADENINAE)

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Summary: On the basis of two specimens collected during 2001 in southern, coastal localities, the noctuid moth *Mythimna (Morphopoliana) languida* (Walker, 1858) is recorded for the first time from the Ibero-balearic area.

Key words: faunistics, first mention, Ibero-balearic area, Lepidoptera, *Mythimna (Morphopoliana) languida* (Walker, 1858), Noctuidae.

***Mythimna (Morphopoliana) languida* (Walcker, 1858): Primera cita para el área iberobalear (Lepidoptera: Noctuidae: Hadeninae)**

Resumen: Sobre la base de dos individuos recolectados durante 2001 en localidades meridionales y costeras, el noctuido *Mythimna (Morphopoliana) languida* (Walker, 1858) se cita por primera vez del área iberobalear.

Palabras clave: área iberobalear, faunística, Lepidoptera, *Mythimna (Morphopoliana) languida* (Walker, 1858), Noctuidae, primera cita.

Introduction

The Ibero-balearic area is thought to be relatively well-known from a faunistic viewpoint, as far as noctuid moths (Lepidoptera: Noctuidae) concerns (CALLE, 1983; YELA & SARTO I MONTEYS, 1990; YELA, 1992, 1998). Nevertheless, from time to time further species are being reported as new for this area (e.g. GASTÓN & REVILLA, 1998; PÉREZ DE-GREGORIO, 1999; FIBIGER & AGASSIZ, 2001). This is due to progressively more extensive sampling efforts, and is of little wonder considering the high diversity of noctuid moths, the spatially discontinuous, patchy distribution of many species and the meagre knowledge about several local districts (YELA, 1998). In the frame of our sampling schemes (see YELA, 1992; DE VRIEZE, 2002), we have recently recorded a couple of specimens of a noctuid species hitherto unreported from the Ibero-balearic area. These specimens were referred, at first glance, to genus *Mythimna* Ochsenheimer, 1816, subgenus *Morphopoliana* Hrebay & Legrain, 1996.

Material and methods

Adults were collected with artificial light sources. Due to the high external similarity among the adults of most species of subgenus *Morphopoliana* (see HREBLAY, 1996; YOSHIMATSU & HREBLAY, 1998), identification was carried out by means of examination of the internal genitalia (e. g. LAFONTAINE & MIKKOLA, 1987; YELA, 1992; FIBIGER & GOATER in FIBIGER, 1997).

Results

Two individuals were collected, with following data (for geographic distribution, see Fig. 1): male, Almuñecar (Granada, Spain - 30SVF36), 18-IX-2001, leg. et coll. J. L. Yela (Toledo, Spain); female, Jávea (Alicante, Spain - 31SBC19), 24-XI-2001, leg. et coll. M. De Vrieze (Stekene, Belgium) (Fig. 2). The vesica of the Almuñecar specimen is tubular with two thin diverticula at right, matching figure 39 in Hrebay (1996) (see Fig. 3).

Discussion

Taxonomic identity, characterisation and distribution of *Mythimna (Morphopoliana) languida* were reviewed by HREBLAY (1996). This species inhabits many different open habitats throughout equatorial, tropical and subtropical Africa and Asia, including the Near East (HACKER, 2001), several localities of the Mediterranean Basin both in the African shore (ANDRES & SEITZ, 1923; WILTSCHKE, 1948) and in the European one (RONKAY, 1985; PARENZAN & SCALERCIO, 1996; REZBANYAI-RESER & HAUSMANN, 2000b), and it has even been recorded as a supposed sporadic immigrant in South Tyrol (REZBANYAI-RESER & HAUSMANN, 2000a) and Germany (GAEDIKE & HEINICKE, 1999; REZBANYAI-RESER & HAUSMANN, 2000b). The presence in the Iberian area is, therefore, not surprising. Judging from the chronology of the faunistic records, it seems that *M. languida* is progressively spreading northwards and westwards, at least in the West Palaearctic, perhaps tracking slight habitat changes in the frame of global warming. Therefore, the question remains if the Iberian records mentioned in this paper witness the arrival of the first populations of a continuous, steady enlargement of the distribution area or if they have to be regarded as sporadic immigrants (or their immediate offspring). It seems highly improbable that *M. languida* has been present for longer in S-W Spain, because the Almuñecar and Jávea districts have been focus of our sampling schemes during at least the last decade (in the case of Jávea, the sampling period lasts 17 years; DE VRIEZE, 2002).

Phenologically, adults of *M. languida* have been observed throughout the year, and HACKER (2001) suggest a multivoltine life-history strategy. Examining the extra-tropical data together, a mainly bivoltine strategy seems to become apparent, with adults observed both in spring and early summer and again in late summer and autumn. As stated in YELA (1992), many potentially multivoltine, basically tropical/subtropical-centered species, act as bivoltine when submitted to the stronger climatic conditions of the Mediterranean area, be they continental Mediterranean (with cold to very cold winter) or coastal Mediterranean (with more or less

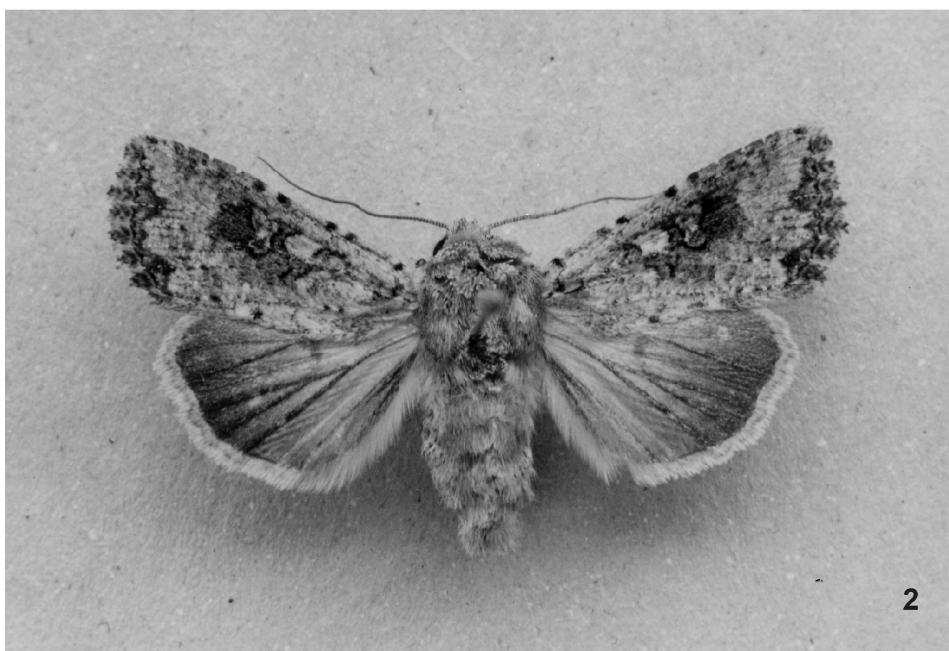
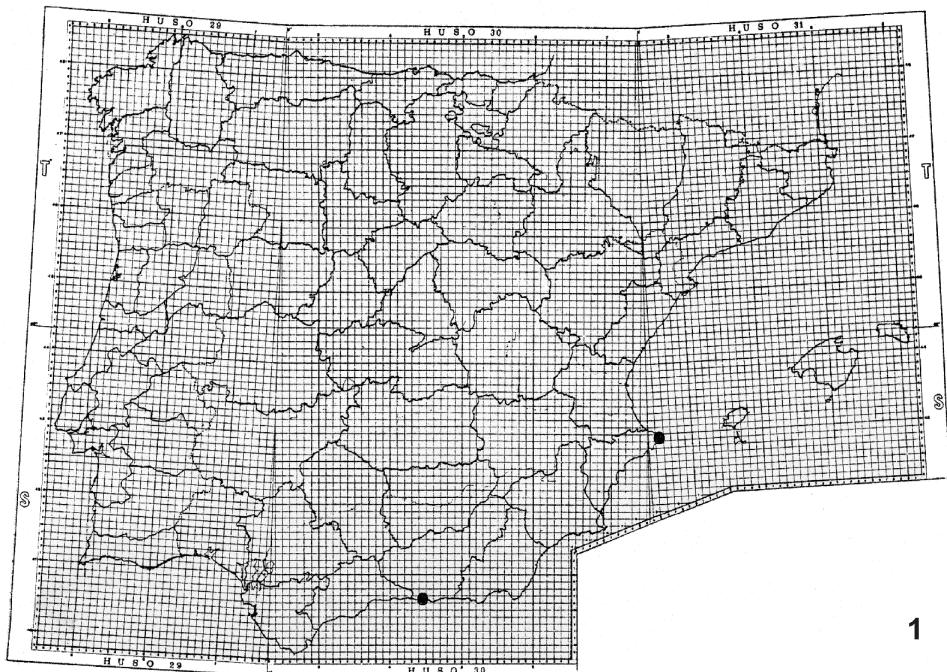


Fig. 1. Geographical distribution of *Mythimna (Morphopoliana) languida* in the Ibero-balearic area.

Fig. 2. Adult female of *Mythimna (Morphopoliana) languida* (Jávea, Alicante).

severe drought due to the long summer period). The specimens mentioned in this paper would belong to the second generation, if the bivoltine cycle holds true for the Iberian area.

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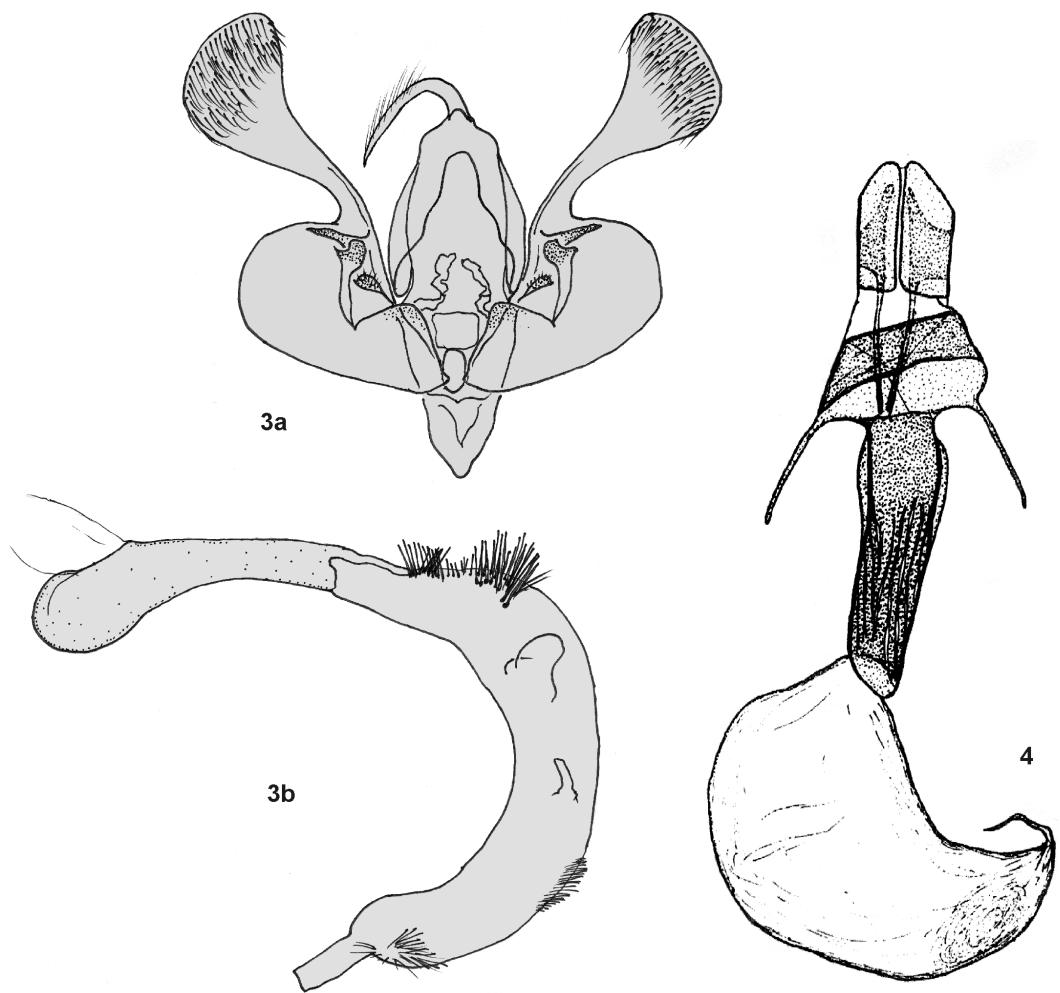


Fig. 3. Sketch of the male genitalia of *Mythimna (Morphopoliana) languida* (Almuñecar, Granada). Aedeagus with everted vesica: note the three groups of cornuti and the two median diverticula.

Fig. 4. Female genitalia of *Mythimna (Morphopoliana) languida*, after HREBLAY (1996).

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