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AMPHISBATHIS INCONGRUELLA NEW TO CENTRAL ITALY
(Lepidoptera, Lypusidae)

INTRODUCTION

We reported an interesting record for Italian Microlepidoptera fauna. *Amphisbathis incongruella* (Stainton, 1849) was recorded for the first time in Central Italy. We documented approaches and case scenarios for identifying the specimens and discussed them in the following text.

Amphisbathis incongruella (Stainton, 1849)

RECORDS. Italy, 1 ♂, Trevi (PG), Monte Matigge, 580 m, 26.II.2013 (gen. slide OEC 66, Manuela Pinzari), F. Falcinelli leg.

MATERIAL AND METHODS. Singleton male was collected by F. Falcinelli on the 26th February 2013 in Monte Matigge, near Trevi (PG), 580 m, in Central Italy (figs 1-2). Monte Matigge is a small, arid and destined to pasture, limestone relief. The individual was collected in the daytime, when it rested on a leaf of grass.

The species was identified by dissection of the genitalia using for the taxonomic identifications characters reported by Lvovsky (1989) and Tokár et al. (2005). Genital parts were mounted on microscopic slide (1 ♂, gen. slide OEC 66, Manuela Pinzari) that was shown in figs 1-2.

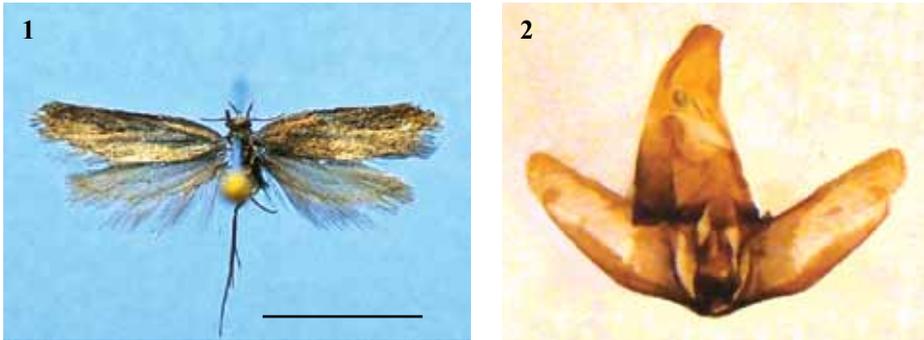
The specimen was preserved in the private collection of Zerun Zerunian (Assisi (PG), Italy).

DISTRIBUTION. *Amphisbathis incongruella*, member of the Family Lypusidae (Heikkilä & Kaila, 2010), is widely distributed in Europe however it was

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Figs 1-2 – *Amphisbathis incongruella* (Stainton, 1849), adult (1) and male genitalia (2) (gen. slide OEC 66, Manuela Pinzari). Scale bar = 5 mm.

considered a rare and not easily observable species. It is currently not mentioned for the Italian fauna (Baldizzone et al., 1995; Parenti, 2002; Karsholt et al., 2013). Actually, *A. incongruella* was already found in Italy as reported by Tokár et al. (2005; Huemer, pers. comm.). In particular, two males were collected in North-Italy: in March 1959 in Pietramurata (TN) by Burmann (1979) and 28 November 1976 in Laatsch (BZ) by Tarmann. Both specimens are stored in Coll. Burmann.

BIOLOGY. Larva lives in a case build from pieces of grass or other vegetation and feeds on *Calluna vulgaris* (L.) Hull, *Pilosella officinarum* Vaill., *Thymus polytrichus* Kerner. In Northern Europe males fly during sunny days between March and May, while females may not actually be able to fly due to their rather reduced forewings and enlarged abdomen (Aarvik, 1987; Tokar et al., 2005; Huisman et al., 2009).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Amphisbathis incongruella is a moth species that typically occurs in spring in other European countries. In Italy, adults come early their flight period and emerge already in February. Despite the past studies carried out in northern Italy and in the same sites, where the few ancient records were collected, since 1979 the species was not seen again (Huemer, personal communication). This was due to small size and showy habitus of the species and also its very elusive behaviour. Additionally, males diurnal habits and females low mobility certainly contribute to make *A. incongruella* a species rather difficult to observe. However, *A. incongruella* is widespread in Europe and the find in Monte

Matigge in Umbria, confirms the presence of the species in Italy and represents the most advanced site on the eastern-mediterranean edge of its range. In fact the species is known for Spain, but it results absent in the southeast Europe, i.e. Balkan Peninsula (Karsholt et al., 2013).

The larval host plant, *Calluna vulgaris*, is found widely in Europe and Asia Minor; in Italy, Umbria and Northern Lazio represent the southern edges of its range, because it is absent in southern Italy. In Monte Matigge *C. vulgaris* is not present but it was found in some areas away from a few tens of km. However, there are other plants, mentioned as host plants of *A. incongruella* (Tokar et al., 2005), *Pilosella officinarum* Vaill. and *Thymus polytrichus* Kerner. These plants are present throughout Italy.

We can not exclude that *A. incongruella* is present further south in Italy. In fact, as shown in past studies (Pinzari et al., 2006, 2010, 2012) and recently (Pinzari & Pinzari, 2013; Pinzari et al., 2013) the knowledge of moths in Italy can still reserve many surprises.

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SUMMARY

Amphisbatis incongruella (Stainton, 1849) that was known only for two male specimens from areas in the provinces of Trento and Bolzano and never found in Italy since 1976 is mentioned for the first time in Central Italy.

RIASSUNTO

Amphisbatis incongruella nuova per l'Italia Centrale (Lepidoptera, Lyposidae).

Amphisbatis incongruella (Stainton, 1849), nota soltanto per due esemplari maschi delle province di Trento e Bolzano e mai più ritrovata dal 1976 sul suolo italiano, è citata per la prima volta per l'Italia Centrale.

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