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Middle East Lepidoptera 48:
Eremophysa jabaliya sp.n.,
a further discovery from Northern Oman
(Lepidoptera, Noctuidae)

Edward P. Wiltshire

Abstract

Eremophysa jabaliya sp.n. from Oman is described.

Zusammenfassung

Eremophysa jabaliya sp.n. aus Oman wird beschrieben.

Introduction

BOURSIN (1958:3-6) described the new genus *Eremophysa* (Noctuidae, Amphipyryinae), basing it on four species from Iran and Afghanistan previously placed in *Sidemia* STAUDINGER, 1892, and *Luperina* BOISDUVAL, 1828. In one of his last revisions (BOURSIN 1970:45-80) he described two more new species of *Eremophysa* and differentiated two others which his first article had suggested to be doubtfully synonymous. He based the second of the 1970

new species, *Eremophysa omanensis*, on a defective specimen from Muscat, captured by ELLISON in November 1948; this holotype is in the British Museum (Nat.Hist.), London.

Though I received successive lots of moths captured from 1973 onwards in Oman, and particularly near Muscat, by M.D. GALLAGHER and others, no further *Eremophysa* was found among them, until GALLAGHER in November 1986 took advantage of a newly-constructed road crossing the Jebel Akhdar range close to the Jebel Shams, and attracted to light at the highest altitude accessible by car a rich assortment of species already known from these mountains but also 18 specimens of a fine *Eremophysa*. Very surprisingly these were not *Eremophysa omanensis* (BOURSIN, 1970) but a new species described below. A perfect specimen of BOURSIN's *Eremophysa* species is still awaited; it appears to have become scarce since 1948 in Oman and to be unknown in other parts of Arabia.

***Eremophysa jabaliya* sp.n.**

(Figs. 1, 2 & 3)

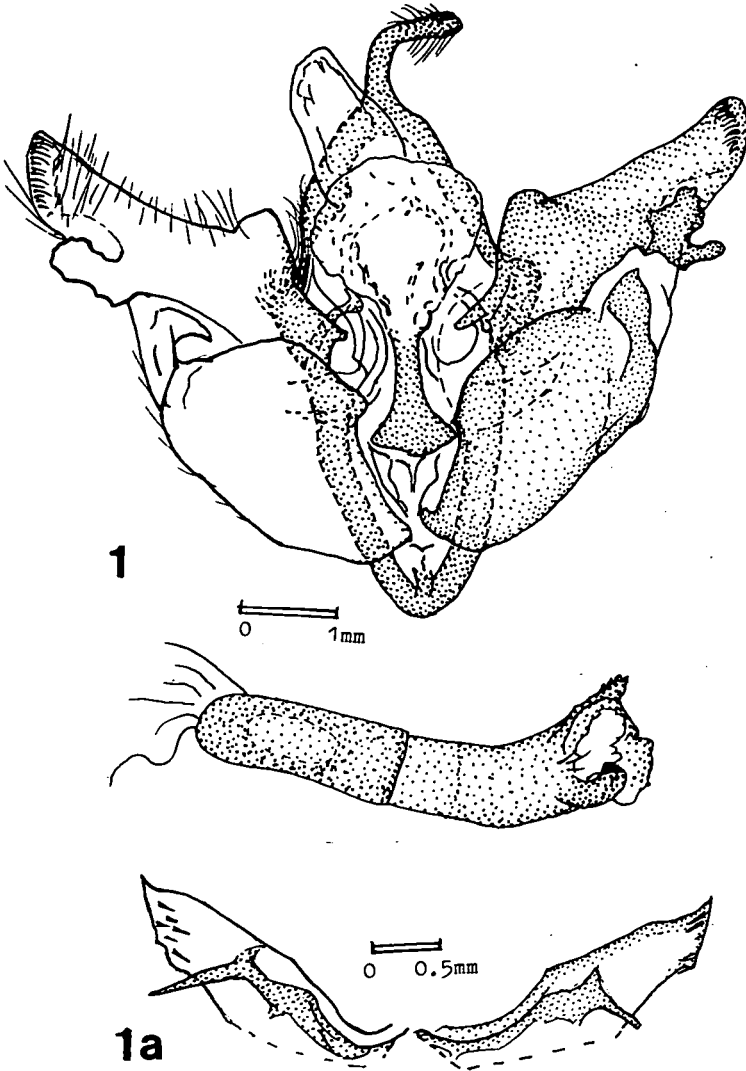
Holotype ♂ (Prep. 2564), N. Oman, Jabal Akhdar, Jabal Shams, 2400 m, 23°15'N, 57°16'E, 23.x.1986 (leg. M.D. GALLAGHER) in coll. WILTSHIRE in British Museum (Nat. Hist.), London.

Paratypes: 10♂♂ & 7♀♀ (Preps. 2582 & 2568), same date, place and captor, in same coll. (2♂♂♀♀ transferred to main coll. BMNH).

Diagnosis: Span 46–50 mm, i.e. larger than *Eremophysa omanensis*, forewing upper-side, clearer marked but less contrasted; also differing in male genitalia, the harpe being, not a tapering spine, but a dilated and elaborately frilled, sclerotised process, slightly assymetrical.

Frons and vertex of head, with bushy tufts of yellow-grey and black hair-like scales, predominantly light yellow-grey. Palp, with first two segments similarly scaled, predominantly black; third segment shorter-scaled, smoother, similarly coloured.

Antenna of ♂, ciliate, with ciliations about the same length as the shaft-width; of ♀, with shorter ciliations.



Figs. 1, 1a: Male genitalia of two *Eremophysa* species. 1: *Eremophysa jabaliya* sp. n., intact; 1a: *Eremophysa omanensis* BOURSIN, 1970, defective (after BOURSIN, 1970: 75, fig. 111).

Proboscis, developed.

Thorax, clad dorsally with adpressed hair-like scales, of equally mixed yellow-grey and black colour, and ventrally with bushy hair-like yellow-grey scales. Feet, of normal Amphipyrene structure, femur and tibia clad with equally mixed yellow-grey and black scales; tarsi, with adpressed scales coloured in straw and fuscous bands and with normally small spines.

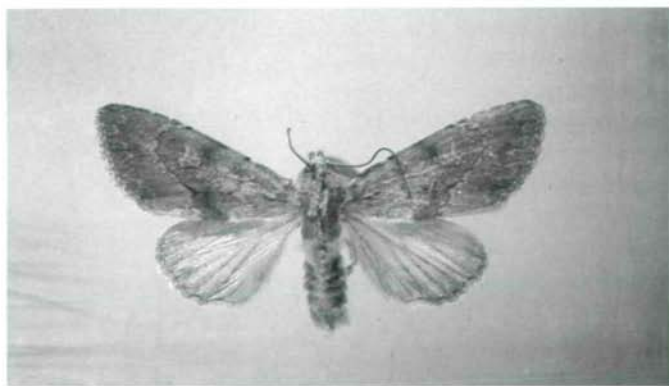
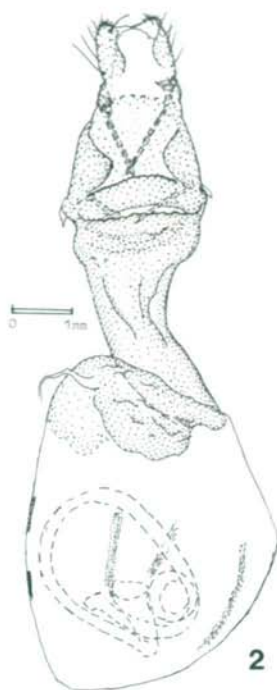
Abdomen, greyish yellow like thorax, the first five segments slightly tufted dorsally.

Forewing, light brown, strongly grey irrorated, marked with fine black basal streak, not reaching the claviform stigma; fine black antemedian and postmedian lines, the former zigzag but obsolete, the latter complete, slightly denticulate on the nervures, bent round the cell wide of the reniform stigma then running straight obliquely inwards to $2/3$ hind margin. Orbicular and reniform stigmata of normal noctuid aspect, moderately well defined, light brown and finely edged with black except above. Median field uniformly infuscated. Subterminal line, paler brown, obsolete, parallel to termen. Crossing the submarginal field the nervures are finely black-indicated. Termen, fine, black and wavy, pale straw-edged proximally. Fringes also pale straw proximally, dark grey distally.

Hindwing, dirty grey-brown, widely infuscated terminad, and with nervures infuscated. Termen, infuscated from apex to near anal corner; fringes, as on forewing.

Underside of forewing, suffused grey-brown with reniform stigma paler but ill-defined, and postmedian line widely suffused, with fuscous nervures finely marked with whitish and dark fuscous. Termen, marked with fine interneural black points; of hindwing, similar, but paler brown with postmedian line fine but weakly indicated; terminal border, wide but weakly infuscated; termen as on forewing.

Genitalia of male, of characteristic *Eremophysa* form but differing from all six known members, and particularly from *omanensis* (fig.1a), as illustrated (fig.1) and as summarised in the above diagnosis. The female genitalia of the six known congeners were not illustrated by



Figs. 2, 3: *Eremophysa jabaliya* sp.n. 1: Female genitalia; 3: ♀-paratype (Oman).

BOURSIN (1970); those of this new species are shown in fig.2: the anterior apophyses are shorter than the posterior. Antrum, a wide sclerotised cylindrical band, its caudal edge finely serrate, and with a further sclerotised and scobinated inner ring before narrowing slightly to lead into the wide, somewhat wrinkled and heavily sclerotised ductus bursae. The shoulder of the corpus bursae is also heavily sclerotised and ridged, with ductus seminis issuing near the apex; the proximal three quarters are membranous with four linear vertical and parallel signa composed of three or four rows of minute studs.

Flies at an altitude and latitude in Northern Oman with cold winters; unlike some of the other moths taken with it, it is apparently univoltine and autumnal in phenology. This, taken in consideration of the known congeners' distribution, suggests it is a climatically isolated Palaearctic element.

Literature

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Author's address:

E. P. WILTSHIRE, C.B.E.
Wychwood
High Road
Cookham Rise
SL6 9JF Berks.
England

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Autor(en)/Author(s): Wiltshire Edward Parr

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