

Thria robusta WALKER, 1857,
nec *Pandesma anysa* GUENÉE 1852, in Europe

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Abstract

The author reports the occurrence of *Thria robusta* Wlk. in Europe and summarizes its wider distribution. Until BERIO (1968) revised the two genera, *Pandesma* and *Thria*, the authors of literature since 1900 have confused the two species *Pandesma anysa* GUENÉE and *Thria robusta* WALKER. *P. anysa* Gn. is distributed in Central- and East-Asia, while *T. robusta* Wlk. is found in Central- and West Asia and in the whole of Africa.

Zusammenfassung

Die Verfasser rapportieren die Fundorte von *Thria robusta* Wlk. in Europa und fassen die übrige Ausbreitung zusammen. Bevor BERIO (1968) die zwei Gattungen *Pandesma* und *Thria* revidierte, haben europäische Autoren nach 1900 die zwei Arten *Pandesma anysa* GUENÉE und *Thria robusta* WALKER verwechselt. Die Ausbreitung von *P. anysa* Gn. ist in Zentral- und Ost-Asien, während *T. robusta* Wlk. in Zentral- und West-Asien und in ganz Afrika gefunden worden ist.

When my family went on a charter tour to Algarve, Portugal, in October 1978, I managed to equip them with a 125 W. Hg-lamp. It was placed on the balcony of a room on the 9th floor. They caught approximately 400 specimens. Among them was a species, which, by looking in SEITZ (1914), I determined to be *Pandesma anysa* GUENÉE, 1852. In order to confirm my opinion I wrote to E. P. WILTSHIRE, England, who put me on the track of the right name, *Thria robusta* WALKER, 1857 (see BERIO, 1968) (Fig. 1). The species was unknown from Portugal.

It appears in the Spanish list (GOMEZ BUSTILLO & FERNANDEZ-RUBIO, 1976) and also in the recent book on the Noctuidae of Spain (CALLE, 1983) as *P. anysa* Gn. Only one record of this species is known from Spain, from the southern province of Huelva. In fact, this was the only record of this species from Europe.



Fig. 1. *Thria robusta* WALKER, 1857. Portugal, Algarve, 14.X.1978. leg. U. FIBIGER, coll. M. FIBIGER. Photo : T. KJELSEN.

B. SKULE, Denmark, has informed me that this African migrant was recorded three times near Monemvasia :

– Hellas, Lakonia, 5 km s. Monemvasia, 20.III.1979, 1 ex. (B. SKULE leg.), 16.XII.82, 1 ex. and 14.VII.1983 (G. CHRISTENSEN leg.)

In 1984, A. MOBERG, E. v. MENTZER & M. FIBIGER were in Greece and caught 2 more specimens :

– Hellas, Attiki, Erythrae, 650 m, 29.IX.1984, 1 ex. and
– Hellas, Achaia, Mt. Chelmos above Kalavrita, 1700 m, 6.X.1984, 1 ex.

Taxonomy

The name *Pandesma anysa* GUENÉE, 1852 is not a synonym of *Thria robusta* (WALKER, 1857), but belongs to another species, which has never been found in Europe.

In 1968 Dr. BERIO published a revision of the genera *Pandesma* GUENÉE, 1852 and *Thria* WALKER, 1857. All species in the genera belong to the tropics and subtropics of the old world and most of them have migratory tendencies.

The species are (BERIO, 1968) :

Genus *Pandesma* GUENÉE, 1852

(Type species : *P. quenavadi* GUENÉE, 1852 from Sri Lanka, Ceylon).

1. *P. quenavadi* GUENÉE, 1852. Asia (= *jubra* SWINHOE, 1889).
2. *P. anysa* GUENÉE, 1852. Asia (from India and eastward to the Pacific).
3. *P. muricolor* BERIO, 1966. Africa.
4. *P. satanas* BERIO, 1968. India.
5. *P. submurina* WALKER, 1865. Australia.

Genus *Thria* WALKER, 1857

(Type species : *T. robusta* WALKER, 1857).

1. *T. robusta* WALKER, 1857. Distribution — see below.
(= *fugitiva* WALKER, 1858)
(= *opposita* WALLENGREN, 1865)
(= *sennaarensis* FELDER, 1874)
(= *grandis* STAUDINGER, 1877)
(= *terrigena* CHRISTOPH, 1877)
(= *similata* MOORE, 1883)
(= *distincta* ROTHSCILD, 1920)
2. *T. decaryi* VIETTE, 1966 (= *malgassica* BERIO, 1966). Madagascar.

Thria robusta WALKER is very variable and sexually dimorphic. It is not possible to distinguish races and not worth while describing varieties/aberrations, as it is difficult to find two specimens with exactly the same wing pattern.

Distribution

Thria robusta WALKER migrates and is found in all Africa and West- and Central Asia, Palestine, Lebanon (ELLISON & WILTSHIRE, 1939), Iran, USSR, Transcaspia, Turkestan, Achal Tekke-area (STAUDINGER & REBEL, 1901), Turkey (HACKER, in litt.), India and Arabia (BERIO, 1968). In North Africa it is found in Algeria, Tunisia (SEITZ, 1938), Morocco (RUNGS, 1981) Egypt (WILTSHIRE, 1948) and Libya (several specimens 1983. leg. U. SENECA, Denmark).

Biology

The caterpillar is polyphagous on trees and bushes, for example Labbakh (*Albizia lebbek*) (WILTSHIRE, 1948). The imagines fly in North Africa from June to December. The male genitalia of all species in the two genera mentioned here are shown in the paper of BERIO (1968). The figures in SEITZ, 1914 (called *Pandesma similata* MOORE, 1883, *Pandesma senna-*

rensis FELDER, 1874 and *Pandesma anysa* GUENÉE, 1852) and *Pandesma anysa* GUENÉE, 1852 in CALLE, 1983 are errors. They all show *Thria robusta* WALKER, 1857.

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