

- ČELIK T. & VEROVNIK R. 2010: Distribution, habitat preferences and population ecology of the False Ringlet *Coenonympha oedippus* (FABRICIUS, 1787) (Lepidoptera: Nymphalidae) in Slovenia. – *Oedippus* 26: 7–15.
- HÖTTINGER H. & PENNERSTORFER J. 1999: Rote Listen ausgewählter Tiergruppen Niederösterreichs. – Tagfalter (Lepidoptera: Rhopalocera & Hesperidae). – 1. Fassung 1999, Amt der niederösterreichischen Landesregierung, Abteilung Umweltschutz, St. Pölten, 128 pp.
- HÖTTINGER H., HUEMER P. & PENNERSTORFER J. 2005: Schmetterlinge. Pp. 556–641. – In: ELLMAUER T. (Hrsg): Entwicklung von Kriterien, Indikatoren und Schwellenwerten zur Beurteilung des Erhaltungszustandes der Natura 2000-Schutzgüter. Band 2: Arten des Anhangs II der Fauna-Flora-Habitat-Richtlinie. – Im Auftrag der neun österreichischen Bundesländer, des Bundesministeriums für Land- und Forstwirtschaft, Umwelt und Wasserwirtschaft und der Umweltbundesamt GmbH, 902 pp.
- KUDRNA O., PENNERSTORFER J. & LUX K. 2015: Distribution Atlas of European Butterflies and Skippers. 3rd edition. – Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Peks, Schwanfeld, 632 pp.
- LECHNER K. & ORTNER A. 2021: Zur aktuellen Situation europaweit geschützter Schmetterlingsarten (Insecta, Lepidoptera) in Vorarlberg (Österreich). II. Moor-Wiesenvögelchen [*Coenonympha oedippus* (Fabricius, 1787)] und Gelbringsfalter [*Lopinga achine* (Scopoli, 1763)]. – *inatura* – Forschung online 86: 19 pp.
- ÖRVÖSSY N., VOZAR A., KÖRÖSI A., BATARY P. & PEREGOVITS L. 2010: Structure and size of a threatened population of the False Ringlet *Coenonympha oedippus* (FABRICIUS, 1787) (Lepidoptera: Nymphalidae) in Hungary. – *Oedippus* 26: 31–37.
- ŠAŠIĆ M. 2010: False Ringlet *Coenonympha oedippus* (FABRICIUS, 1787). (Lepidoptera: Nymphalidae) in Croatia: current status, population dynamics and conservation management. – *Oedippus* 26: 16–19.
- SIELEZNIEW M., PALKA K., MICHALCZUK W., BYSTROWSKI C., HOLOWINSKI M. & CZERWINSKI M. 2010: False Ringlet *Coenonympha oedippus* (FABRICIUS, 1787) (Lepidoptera: Nymphalidae) in Poland: state of knowledge and conservation prospects. – *Oedippus* 26: 20–24.
- Mag. Dr. rer. nat. Gerald SCHROT, Blumengasse 6, 7033 Pötsching, Österreich (Austria).
E-Mail: Gerald.Schrot@gmx.at
-

Return of the Handsome Cross Grasshoppers? Episode II: First Austrian records of adult *Oedaleus decorus* (GERMAR, 1825) in 70 years (Orthoptera: Acrididae). Die Rückkehr der Kreuzschrecken? Episode II: Erste Nachweise adulter *Oedaleus decorus* (GERMAR, 1825) in Österreich seit 70 Jahren (Orthoptera: Acrididae).

The Handsome Cross Grasshopper is a relatively large and easily identifiable grasshopper species that is native to Southern Europe, Northern Africa and Asia (BELLMANN et al. 2019). It occurs from the Canary Islands in the West to China in the East (HARZ 1957, 1975). This grasshopper species is characterised by four distinct white lines forming an X (“cross”) on the pronotum when viewed from above (BELLMANN et al. 2019). Adult individuals are mostly green, brown or grey with prominent dark and light spots, particularly on the forewings and the sides of the pronotum, while the transparent hindwings are yellowish to greenish with a conspicuous dark, arc-shaped subterminal band (BELLMANN et al. 2019). The tibiae of the hindlegs vary in colour from red to yellowish which can be another striking feature of this species in some individuals



Fig. 1: Adult *Oedaleus decorus* female of the brown colour type. Braunsberg, 9 July 2024. / Adultes Weibchen von *Oedaleus decorus* in brauner Farbvariante. Braunsberg, 9. Juli 2024. © David Sandler.

(BELLMANN et al. 2019). *Oedaleus decorus* is known to be one of the best fliers among Central European grasshopper species (BIERINGER 2017).

In Austria, situated at the species' northern range limit, the Handsome Cross Grasshopper was recorded in the 19th and first half of the 20th century, but no adult individuals had been found since 1954 (BIERINGER 2017). However, in 2021 three nymphs were discovered at the base of a wind turbine in a wind farm on the Parndorf Plain northeast of Halbthurn (Burgenland), representing the first national record of the species after 67 years, although no adults were observed at the site (WÖSS 2021).

On 23 June 2024 Günther Wöss discovered three *Oedaleus decorus* nymphs on the Braunsberg plateau (Lower Austria; 48.1529° N, 16.9534° E, 310 m asl), representing the second national record of the species since 1954. Subsequent visits to the site were more successful than those at Parndorf Plain in 2021: On 4 July 2024 Bernhard Paces and David Sandler found two adult males – the first adult *O. decorus* in Austria since 1954 – during a University of Vienna field excursion. On 6 July 2024 Günther Wöss recorded one additional adult male and one female. On 9 July 2024 Bernhard Paces, Monika Reisinger and David Sandler visited the Braunsberg again and unexpectedly recorded 15 adult males and 6 females in 3.5 hours of intensive search (Fig. 1 and Fig. 3). All of them were different individuals than the ones recorded at the previous excursions. Thus, at least 18 males and 7 females were present along the edge and the upper slope of the Braunsberg



Fig. 2: Habitat of *Oedaleus decorus* at the Braunsberg plateau, 23 June 2024. / *Habitat von Oedaleus decorus* auf dem Plateau des Braunsberges, 23. Juni 2024. © Günther Wöss.

plateau in July 2024. They were found between 48.1534° N, 16.9551° E, 320 m asl in the east of the plateau and 48.1531° N, 16.9532° E, 300 m asl in the west at sparsely vegetated, rocky, xerothermic, grazed sites (Fig. 2). The following accompanying species were also present directly at the site: *Calliptamus italicus* (LINNAEUS, 1758), *Oedipoda caerulescens* (LINNAEUS, 1758), *Chorthippus mollis* (CHARPENTIER, 1825), *Chorthippus brunneus* (THUNBERG, 1815), *Chorthippus biguttulus* (LINNAEUS, 1758), *Euchorthippus declivus* (BRISOUT DE BARNEVILLE, 1849) and – as the first record for the Braunsberg plateau – *Dociostaurus brevicollis* (EVERSMANN, 1848). All recorded individuals of *O. decorus* were photographed and picture comparisons of the colour patterns of the left forewing of each individual, conducted by David Sandler, enabled us to differentiate between individuals of the same sex (Fig. 3). Interestingly, individuals not only vary substantially in their colour patterns in general, but even the two sides of one animal can show striking differences in their patterns of the dark markings – especially easy to observe when comparing both wings (Fig. 3). 18 of the 25 individuals recorded had a predominantly green colour pattern, while 7 were mostly brown.

One male was collected and added to the Insecta-Varia-Collection of the Natural History Museum in Vienna (a collection permit was available). Until 2024, the phenologi-



Fig. 3: Collage of 18 different *Oedaleus decorus* individuals showing six females (top 12 pictures) and 12 males (remaining 24 pictures). The left and the right body side of each individual is shown side by side. Different individuals within rows are separated by a vertical black line. Braunsberg, 9 July 2024. / Collage von 18 verschiedenen Individuen von *Oedaleus decorus*, die sechs Weibchen (oberste 12 Bilder) und 12 Männchen (restliche 24 Bilder) zeigt. Die linke und die rechte Körperseite jedes Individuums sind nebeneinander abgebildet. In den Zeilen sind unterschiedliche Tiere durch eine senkrechte schwarze Linie getrennt. Braunsberg, 9. Juli 2024. © Fotos: Bernhard Paces, Collage: David Sandler.



Fig. 4: Adult *Oedaleus decorus* female of the green colour type. Prellenkirchen, 11 July 2024.
/ Adultes Weibchen von *Oedaleus decorus* in grüner Farbvariante. Prellenkirchen, 11. Juli 2024.
© Alexander Panrok.

cally earliest national record of adult *O. decorus* in Austria dates back to 24 July 1894 (BIERINGER 2017). Thus, the adult individuals found at the Braunsberg on 4 July 2024 represent the phenologically earliest record date for adult Handsome Cross Grasshoppers in Austria known so far. On 11 July 2024 Alexander Panrok found another adult *O. decorus* female of the green colour type near Prellenkirchen (Lower Austria; 48.0660° N, 16.9883° E, 150 m asl) on an agricultural field (Fig. 4). This location is about 10 km east-southeast of the Braunsberg plateau. Based on photos taken by Alexander Panrok, it was safe to assume that this was not one of the 25 individuals photographed a few days earlier on the Braunsberg. The individual flew off in southeastern direction soon after its discovery. This record adds a third location to the list of sites where *O. decorus* has been recorded since 1954. To our knowledge, the mentioned records of the Handsome Cross Grasshopper in Austria represent a complete list of all findings in Austria between 1954 and 2024.

The first discovery of adult Handsome Cross Grasshoppers in Austria since 1954 reported here was not unexpected after the discovery of nymphs three years before at the Parndorf Plain around 30 km south of the Braunsberg (WÖSS 2021). This finding is part of a broader, probably climate-change-driven, trend of increasing populations and range expansions among several rare, xerothermic Orthoptera species occurring in Eastern Austria. Examples include *Saga pedo* (PALLAS, 1771), *Acrida ungarica* (HERBST,

1786), *Dociostaurus brevicollis*, *Gampsocleis glabra* (HERBST, 1786) and *Tessellana veysseli* (KOÇAK, 1984) (BIERINGER et al. 2018, WÖSS & PANROK 2021, PANROK 2023). In addition, in 2024 adult Handsome Cross Grasshoppers were reported from six different sites all located between 27 km and 120 km from the Braunsberg plateau in the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary (INATURALIST 2024). Just 22 km north of the Braunsberg plateau, adult *O. decorus* were found in Slovakia in 2022 (S. Svetlíková, pers. comm.).

The preferred habitat of *O. decorus* is described as sparsely vegetated, xerothermic grassland (BELLMANN et al. 2019). In Austria, this habitat type only persists at grazed sites in the long term, and therefore grazing is a key conservation management measure for this species (ZUNA-KRATKY et al. 2013, BIERINGER 2017). It is noteworthy that the slopes of the Braunsberg plateau are grazed by a herd of feral sheep which can be easily observed when visiting the area and their traces can be found all over the site where *O. decorus* was present.

The relatively large number of adult males and females of Handsome Cross Grasshoppers found at the Braunsberg in 2024 raises hopes that a potential source population for future range expansions of this species in Eastern Austria has been established. The discovery of a single individual near Prellenkirchen is reason enough to expect that other suitable habitat patches could soon be colonised by dispersing individuals. However, strong fluctuations in population size are typical for this grasshopper species (BELLMANN et al. 2019). Grazing as a conservation measure can be a powerful management option for many endangered Orthoptera species in Austria (BIERINGER & WEISSMAIR 2017). Therefore, it should be implemented and/or continued at adjacent xerothermic grassland sites: to provide suitable habitats for potential future range expansions of *O. decorus* in Austria on the one hand, and to promote overall biodiversity in these ecologically valuable habitats on the other.

Acknowledgements

The authors want to thank Benjamin Seaman for contributing numerous linguistic improvements to this manuscript. In addition, we are grateful to Liesbeth Forsthuber and Werner Reitmeier for their thorough revisions of the manuscript.

References

- BELLMANN H., RUTSCHMANN F., ROESTI CH. & HOCHKIRCH A. 2019: Der Kosmos Heuschreckenführer. – Franckh-Kosmos Verlags-GmbH & Co. KG, Stuttgart, 432 pp.
- BIERINGER G. 2017: Kreuzschrecke *Oedaleus decorus* (GERMAR, 1825). Pp. 608–611. – In: ZUNA-KRATKY T., LANDMANN A., ILLICH I., ZECHNER L., ESSL F., LECHNER K., ORTNER A., WEISSMAIR W. & WÖSS G.: Die Heuschrecken Österreichs. – Denisia 39, Linz, 880 pp.
- BIERINGER G. & WEISSMAIR W. 2017: Gefährdung und Schutz der Heuschrecken in Österreich. Pp. 161–180. – In: ZUNA-KRATKY T., LANDMANN A., ILLICH I., ZECHNER L., ESSL F., LECHNER K., ORTNER A., WEISSMAIR W. & WÖSS G.: Die Heuschrecken Österreichs. – Denisia 39, Linz, 880 pp.
- BIERINGER G., ZACHERL M. & ZUNA-KRATKY T. 2018: Wiederfund der Nasenschrecke (*Acrida ungarica*) im Seewinkel. Ergebnisse der Erhebungen 2018. – Unveröffentlichter Projektbericht an den Nationalpark Neusiedler See – Seewinkel, 9 pp.

HARZ K. 1957: Die Geradflügler Mitteleuropas. – Gustav Fischer Verlag, Jena, 494 pp. + 20 Tafeln.

HARZ K. 1975: Die Orthopteren Europas, Bd. II. – The Hague, Dr. W. Junk N.V., Series Entomologica 11: 939 pp.

INATURALIST 2024: Available from <https://www.inaturalist.org> (accessed 13 November 2024).

PANROK A. 2023: Bemerkenswerte Bestandsentwicklungen und Funde der Kleinen Beißschrecke (*Tessellana veysseli*), Heideschrecke (*Gampsocleis glabra*) und Großen Sägeschrecke (*Saga pedo*) im südlichen Wiener Becken und an der Thermenlinie. – Biodiversität und Naturschutz in Ostösterreich – BCBEA 7/1: 17–28.

WÖSS G. 2021: Die Rückkehr der Kreuzschrecken? Erstfund von *Oedaleus decorus* (GERMAR, 1825) für Österreich seit 67 Jahren (Orthoptera: Acrididae). – Beiträge zur Entomofaunistik 22: 322–325.

WÖSS G. & PANROK A. 2021: Neue Funde des Östlichen Kreuzgrashüpfers *Doclostaurus brevicollis* (EVERSMANN, 1848) in Ostösterreich (Orthoptera: Acrididae). – Beiträge zur Entomofaunistik 22: 141–154.

ZUNA-KRATKY T., BIERINGER G., DENNER M., DVORAK M. & KARNER-RANNER E. 2013: Schutzprogramm für die gefährdeten Heuschrecken des Nordburgenlands. – Naturschutzbund Burgenland, Eisenstadt, 159 pp.

Bernhard PACES, MSc MSc, University of Vienna, Department of Evolutionary Biology, Unit Integrative Zoology, UBB, Djerassiplatz 1, 1030 Wien, Österreich (*Austria*).
E-Mail: bernhard@paces.at

David SANDLER, Weixelberg 3, 3664 Martinsberg, Österreich (*Austria*).
E-Mail: david.sandler27@gmail.com

Monika REISINGER, University of Vienna, Department of Evolutionary Biology, Unit Integrative Zoology, UBB, Djerassiplatz 1, 1030 Wien, Österreich (*Austria*).
E-Mail: monika.reisinger@outlook.at

Alexander PANROK, Viechtlgasse 9/5, 2340 Mödling, Österreich (*Austria*).
E-Mail: alex.panrok@gmx.at

Mag. Günther WÖSS, Naturhistorisches Museum Wien, 1. und 2. Zoologische Abteilung, Burgring 7, 1010 Wien, Österreich (*Austria*).
E-Mail: guenther.woess@nhm.at

Eine für Österreich neue Bockkäferart, *Aseum tenuicorne* KRAATZ, 1879, vom Mödlinger Eichkogel (Niederösterreich). A new longhorn beetle for Austria, *Aseum tenuicorne* KRAATZ, 1879, found on the Eichkogel near Mödling (Lower Austria).

Das am Rand des Wiener Beckens gelegene Naturschutzgebiet Eichkogel ist als Hotspot der Artenvielfalt bekannt (FOELSCH & FOELSCH 2021) und ein beliebtes Exkursionsziel bei Naturinteressierten. Umso erstaunlicher ist es, dass in diesem gut untersuchten Gebiet im Mai 2023 eine bisher aus Österreich nicht bekannte Bockkäferart (Familie Cerambycidae), *Aseum tenuicorne* KRAATZ, 1879, nachgewiesen werden konnte.

ZOBODAT - www.zobodat.at

Zoologisch-Botanische Datenbank/Zoological-Botanical Database

Digitale Literatur/Digital Literature

Zeitschrift/Journal: [Beiträge zur Entomofaunistik](#)

Jahr/Year: 2025

Band/Volume: [26](#)

Autor(en)/Author(s): Wöss Günther

Artikel/Article: [Return of the Handsome Cross Grasshoppers? Episode II: First Austrian records of adult *Oedaleus decorus* \(Germar, 1825\) in 70 years \(Orthoptera: Acrididae\) 272-278](#)