New data on *Euchera* Hübner, [1826] 1816
(= *Stibolepis* Butler, 1878)
(Lepidoptera: Eupterotidae)

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Abstract

The species group *Euchera* Hübner, [1826] 1816, rev.stat. (= *Stibolepis* Butler, 1878), rev.syn. is rejected from the *Phiala* Wallengren, 1860, and considered as an own genus including 3 species. Two new combinations are established: *Euchera fervidaria* (Fabricius, 1787) nov.comb., and *Euchera albida* (Plötz, 1880) nov.comb. The following new synonymies here are established: *Euchera fervidaria* (Fabricius, 1787), = *Stibolepis nivea* Butler, 1878, nov.syn., = *Phiala* (Stibilepis) ochriventris Strand, 1911, nov.syn., and *Euchera albida* (Plötz, 1880) = *Stibolepis abluta* Holland, 1893, nov.syn. The male lectotype is designated for *Phalaena fervidaria* Fabricius, 1787 from the BMNH collection.

Key words: Lepidoptera, Eupterotidae, *Euchera, Phiala*, Afrotropics, taxonomy, new synonymy.
Zusammenfassung


Introduction

The article deals with a small group of Afrotropical monkey-moths included so far in large and seemingly heterogeneous genus *Phiala Wal lengren, 1860* (recte: *Heteromorpha Herrich-Schäffer, [1855]*)). The group joins rather large broad-winged species looking similar males of *Melanothrix Felder, 1874*. Bright snow white and black wing pattern and extreme rarity their members in the collection allow to suppose they are day-flier or crepuscular moths not attracted (or only weakly so) to any light sources. So far they are known in a very few collected specimens, and 6 names were introduced in connection with this group (chronologically given):

* cunina Cramer, 1782, Phalaena
* fervidaria Fabricius, 1787, Phalaena
* nivea Butler, 1878, Stibolepis
* albida Plötz, 1880, ?Phricodia
* abluta Holland, 1893, Stibolepis
* ochriventris Strand, 1911, Phiala (Stibilepis).

It is not quite understandable why so many so different moths are joined within the name *Phiala* at present; the name joins also such taxa as *Lichenopteryx Felder, 1874*, and *Rhabdosia Hübner, [1820]*. All they have very similar male genitalia, with reduced tergal appendages, fused valvae and very long saccus similar related Oriental *Eupterote Hübner, [1820]*. We are considering the *Euchera* group as a natural monophyletic complex and therefore given it here as an own genus including three species.

Material and methods

Material studied are from the museums abbreviated here as:

BMNH....... The Natural History Museum, London, UK;
CMNH....... The Carnegie Museum of Natural History, Pittsburgh, USA;
ZMHU....... Zoologisches Museum der A. Humboldt Universität, Berlin, Germany.
Other abbreviations used are:
TL = type locality;
TS = type species;
HT – holotype;
LT – lectotype;
‘|’ means a new line on the labels.

Photographs of adult were taken by an Olympus Camedia C-750 camera with a Soligor Adapter Tube and Slide Duplicator for Digital 10 diopters modified for object glasses, and were not altered.

**Euchera Hübner, [1826] 1816 rev.stat.**


In the Genus Euchera three species are known.

**Euchera cunina (Cramer, 1782): Fig. 1**


= Euchera cunicaria Hübner, [1826] 1816 – Verzeichniss bekannter Schmettinge [sic!]: 305, an unnecessary replacement name.

Most mysterious species of the genus; its type was not found neither in BMNH nor in the Naturalis biodiversity Center, where some types by Cramer are kept, and the species is known only after original drawing. I can’t be sure if this drawing is really exact, but pattern elements of the moth quite distinct from those two other species of the genus, fervidaria F. and albida Plötz. Ringed abdomen is seemingly a fantasy of the painter. The species was collected in Sierra Leona, on the western end of Africa, in the country with high species endemism.

No one member of this species was seen from the western regions of Africa therefore I can’t confirm a status of this species.

Hübner in his ‘Verzeichniss bekannter Schmettinge [sic!]: 305 considered the species as a member of the Geometridae and therefore changed the ending on – aria formerly typical for geometrid moths; unnecessary replacement name.
**Euchera fervidaria** (Fabricius, 1787) nov.comb.: Figs. 2-4


= *Phiala* (Stibilepis) ochriventris Strand, 1911 nov.syn. – Annals de la Société entomologique de Belgue 55: 163. TL: [Cameroon] "aus Kamerun". HT: female (ZMHU) [examined].

The most widely spread species of the genus known from western part of equatorial Africa. It was found so far from Nigeria, Gabon, and Cameroon. Wide black marginal band with zic-zac white pattern is diagnostic. Costal zone of the fore wing crossed with rather broad black fasciae, sometimes (in females) fused in a complete black band. Abdomen is dark yellow.

A synonymy between *nivea* Butler, 1878 and *ochriventris* Strand, 1911 was never doubt; they are absolutely correspond each other and only were described after different sexes. But a type *fervidaria* F., 1787 was considered for the long time as lost and it was found in recognizable condition in the BMNH, in "Mus. Dom. Banks" collection as a couple of moths. It is a rather worn but completely preserved pair; female is more worn; the male (illustrated) is designated here a lectotype of the species. It bears the following labels: a white circle with inscription "63 | 48", brownish (originally white) dense bottom label with double black frame and inscription (?by Fabricius? I saw such handwritten text on most labels of Fabricius’s specimens from different collections) "Phalena fervidaria | Fabr. Mssa Ins. N 29.", and an additional BMNH staff’s white printed label "BMNH #669742" meaning the image inventory number.

In spite the both specimens are really aged and some pattern elements are not clear visible, it is quite understandable that both three taxa under consideration are conspecific therefore the synonymy as pointed above is here established.

**Euchera albida** (Plötz, 1880) nov.comb.: Figs. 5-7


This species was described based on a single female (at least so it was given in Plötz 1880). The types by C. Plötz were deposited in Naturhistorisches Museum zu Stettin, and were lost during the 2. World War. In 1930s the typical specimen of albida Plötz, 1880 was (?) sent to A. Seitz who illustrated it in ‘Die Groß-Schmetterlinge der Erde’; hence, a male specimen is figured there instead a female originally pointed out. This specimen originates seemingly from the collection of ZMHU, where 3 more moths from Cameroon are kept; but their colors are too contrastly shown on the plate.
Figs. 2-4: (1) *Phalaena cunina* Stoll, original drawing from Cramer 1782, pl. 257, fig. G; (2) *Phalaena fervidaria* Fabricius, 1787, ♂, lectotype (BMNH); (3) *Stibolepis nivea* Butler, 1878, ♂, holotype (BMNH); (4) *Phiala (Stibilepis) ochriventris* Strand, 1911, ♀, holotype (ZMHU); (5) *Phiala albida* Plötz, 1880, in A. Seitz “Die Groß-Schmetterlinge der Erde”; (6) *Phiala albida* Plötz, 1880, ♂, Cameroon (ZMHU); (7) *Stibolepis abluta* Holland, 1893, ♀, holotype (CMNH).
These specimens are rather well correspond to the original *abluta* Holland than to *albida* Plötz and therefore they all are conspecific. A new synonymy is here established. There is no contradiction between locality "Ogové" given on the label of the typical specimen and "Kangwé" listed in the original description. Kangwé is a village on the Ogové River.

**Acknowledgements**

Work in different museums was made possible by the support from their curators: Alessandro Giusti, Geoff Martin and Martin Honey (London, Great Britain), Wolfram Mey (Berlin, Germany), John Rawlins (Pittsburgh, USA), Thomas J. Witt (Munich, Germany), Rob de Vos, the Naturalis biodiversity Center (Leiden, the Netherlands). Financial support was granted by the Thomas-Witt-Stiftung in 2008 and in 2011–2012. This work is a part of an investigation into the biodiversity of moths at the Department of Zoology (State Pedagogical University of Uljanovsk) (grant 4188.2014.4.). The images of the typical specimens from the BMNH collection are figured here courtesy of the Trustees.

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