

Anumeta arax sp. n. from Turkish Armenia (Lepidoptera, Noctuidae, Catocalinae)

Michael FIBIGER

Molbechs alle 49, 4180 Sorø, Denmark

Summary

During a lepidopterological visit to Turkish Armenia in 1989 a new species of *Anumeta* Walker, 1858. was found. This is described here as *Anumeta arax* sp. n. In September 1993 a further visit to this area was made. A few notes on collecting in this politically very tense, but entomologically very interesting area are given.

Résumé

Découverte d'une nouvelle espèce d'*Anumeta* Walker, 1858 au cours d'une expédition lépidoptérologique en Arménie turque en 1989. Description de celle-ci sous le nom d'*Anumeta arax* sp. n. L'auteur a revisité ces lieux en septembre 1993 et donne quelques indications sur la chasse aux papillons dans cette région, où la situation politique est très tendue, mais qui est très intéressante pour les entomologistes.

Introduction

Turkish Armenia is one of the most beautiful and lepidopterologically important areas in the western Palaearctic region. However, since 1988 it has not been fully safe to travel, camp or catch insects because of the unstable political situation in the area. The Arax valley is perhaps the most interesting locality of the region. It runs east-west at a low level (at Aralik : 825 m) just north of, and below, the imposing Mt. Ararat. Unfortunately, the Turkish, Armenian and Kurdish peoples all claim sovereignty over the area, which is at present situated in Turkey. By the end of 1993, the tense situation had become distinctly dangerous for touring lepidopterists who wanted to collect in the area. Together with the Danish lepidopterist, Fritz Schepler, I visited the area at the beginning of September 1993. We collected at night only with "black" lamps (pure ultraviolet 125 watt bulbs and 20 watt tubes),

and were as usual met by the very friendly local people, but also by masses of heavily armed, friendly gendarmes and soldiers. Everybody was scared of each other, often with good reason, and this anxiety creates aggression.

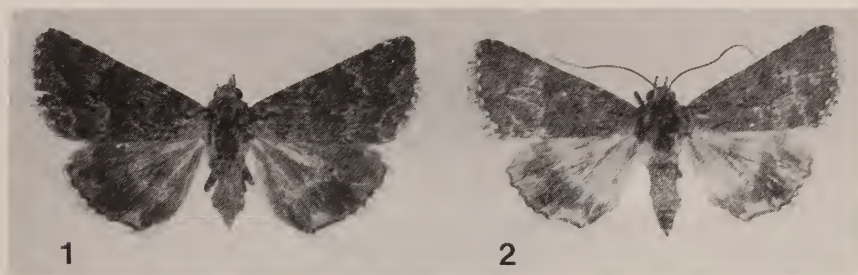
When I worked in the area in 1989, Nils Esser (a Danish coleopterist) and I were allowed by the gendarmes to camp and catch moths along the asphalt road from Igdir to Aralik, but we had to set up the lamps within 5 metres from the road, and we were not allowed to stay. In 1993 it was impossible — even armed with psychological arguments rehearsed in my mind — to obtain the same permission. We were forced to camp in a storm (only catching with an 8 watt superactinic tube two metres from the car) close to the military camp in the middle of the village of Hasanhan, approx. 30 km west of Aralik. The unexpected, but good records from both visits to the area will be published in a later paper. Here I will only mention the catch in 1989 of a dozen specimens of *Drasteria picta* (Christoph, 1877), two specimens of *Gonospileia munita* (Hübner, [1813]), both species new to Turkey, and in 1993 the record of two specimens of *Cardiestra vassilini* (A. Bang-Haas, 1927), also new to Turkey and previously only known from the type specimen.

In 1989, I also captured one specimen of the genus *Anumeta* Walker, 1858 which was unknown to me and to everyone to whom I showed it. Not until 1992 in St. Petersburg, visited in connection with the successful SEL Congress in Helsinki, did I find four more specimens of “my” *Anumeta* in the Zoology Institute, Russian Academy of Science. They were placed under the name *caucasica* Rjabov, in litt. Dr. Irina L. Sukhareva who kindly helped me during my visit also translated the Cyrillic writing on the labels. The four specimens were all recorded from the Armenian side of the Arax valley (former Armenian S.S.R.) within 10 km from the locality in Turkey where I found it : 10 km north west of Aralik. As the name *caucasica* to my mind should represent a mountain species further to the north, I have decided to describe it here under the name *Anumeta arax* sp. n.

Anumeta arax sp. n.

HOLOTYPE : ♂ (Fig. 1) Turkey, prov. Kars, 10 km NW Aralik, 825 m, 22.vii.1989, genit. prep. 1798, leg. & coll. M. Fibiger.

PARATYPES : 1 ♂ [Turkey], Aralych [Aralik]. 1 ♀ [Armenia], Mtschjan Artashantski region (Arax valley), Okt., leg. Arutjunjan. 1 ♀ [Armenia], Dzhuga by Dzhulfa [Arax valley], 4.vii.1932, leg. Rjabov. 1 ♀ (Fig. 2, ALLO-



Figs 1-2. *Anumeta arax* sp. n. 1 — Allotype, female ; 2 — Holotype, male.

TYPE) Armenia, Burastan, Acerjan [Kamarlu region, Arax valley], at light, 26.vi.1948, leg. G. Azaryan, genit. prep. 1799 M. Fibiger.

DESCRIPTION (Figs 1,2) : Male and female similar in size and wing pattern ; female colouration in fore and hindwing slightly darker. Wingspan : 33-34 mm. All segments of labial palpi porrect ; first segment light grey, as long as second and third together, latter two black. Antenna of male ciliate, of female filiform. Ground colour of head, thorax and forewing blackish grey. Basal and median area of forewing slightly darker. Black costal spots on and between crosslines. Lines weakly defined except for black terminal line on both wings, which is sinuate with white spots between veins on terminal side. Forewing fringes dark grey, whitish on hindwing. Stigmata absent, a black spot near reniform. Hindwing with light greyish median band, terminal area darker than basal. Whitish blotches on termen of hindwing (typical for *Anumeta* and *Drasteria*) weakly defined in male, hardly visible in female. Underside light greyish powdered with black scales. Terminal area blackish. Median stigma present on hindwing.

MALE GENITALIA (Fig. 3) : Valva, juxta, and vinculum rather simple, but uncus prominent, heavily sclerotised, with apical hook. Aedeagus straight, no cornutus, but a light sclerotised band. Vesica short, rounded with small diverticula.

Note : The preparation of the vesica was not perfect and the paratype male had already been dissected, so it was not possible to evert.

FEMALE GENITALIA (Fig. 4) : Ovipositor hairy. Apophyses equally broad their whole length. Eighth segment hairy distally. Ductus bursa weakly sclerotised. Corpus bursa unisaccate, cylindrical, two and a half times as long as broad.

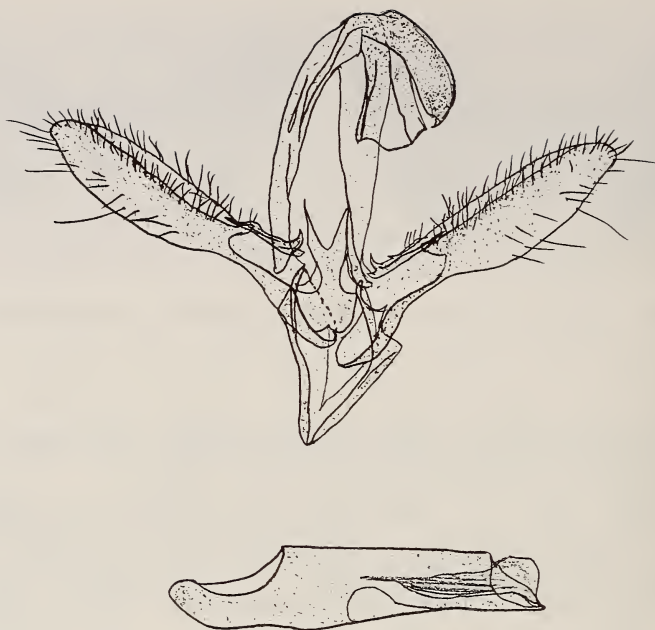


Fig. 3. Male genitalia of *Anumeta arax* sp. n. : holotype.

Remarks

Because of an urgent need for a revision of the genus *Anumeta*, which also forms the tribe Anumetini, the exact number of species cannot be stated. A little more than a score of *Anumeta* species are known, all with a desert and semi-desert, central and southwestern Palaearctic distribution. Only three species are recorded from Europe (FIBIGER & HACKER, 1991), in south-east European Russia. The genus was previously unknown from Turkey.

Systematically, *Anumeta arax* sp. n. is most closely related to *Anumeta fricta* (Christoph, 1893), *A. fractistrigata* (Alphéraky, 1882) and *A. cestina* (Staudinger, 1884).

The name of this new species is derived from the type locality : The Arax valley.



Fig. 4. Female genitalia of *Anumeta arax* sp. n. : allotype.

Acknowledgements

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Literature

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