

Catocala afghana Swinhoe, 1885, a new species for the Kyrgyzian fauna (Lepidoptera: Erebidae: Catocalinae)

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Abstract. *Catocala afghana* Swinhoe, 1885 is recorded for the first time from North Kyrgyzstan, in the Bishkek area.

Резюме. *Catocala afghana* Swinhoe, 1885 впервые приводится для Северного Кыргызстана (окрестности Бишкека).

Introduction

On June 24, 2004 during a moth-collecting session with a 250-Watt mercury vapour light in the Bishkek area (Kyrgyzstan), at the specific location of Kok-Dzhar (in local letters: Кок-Жар), a large underwing moth was trapped. At first determination it resembled *Catocala nupta* (Linnaeus, 1767) but the form of red fields, colouration of forewing upperside and red spotting along the external border of hindwing were atypical (Figs 1, 2). Further investigation made it clear that it was *Catocala afghana* Swinhoe, 1885 described from “Gwal” and “Quetta” localities in Southern Afghanistan (Swinhoe 1885: 352). This identification was confirmed by Dr. A. V. Sviridov. It is the first record of this species in Kyrgyzstan and in the northeastern part of Middle Asia.

Catocala afghana occurs in Afghanistan and Pakistan (Sviridov 2008) and the distribution is extremely fragmented. This record is about 1000 km from the known distribution area of the species. The biology of this little-known moth is unknown. The specimen was collected in a small river valley in the zone of foothill semideserts (Fig. 3).

Identification details. This species belongs to the *C. elocata* (Esper, 1787) species group with which it shares all the specific features: almost the same pattern of gray lines on the forewing upperside, a red spot in the marginal border on the upperside of the hindwing and the apex of the valve in male genitalia not rounded. Species closely related to *C. afghana* are *C. locata* Staudinger, [1892] and *C. deducta* Eversmann, 1843. *C. afghana* differs from them in the following characters: from *C. locata* by the shorter black band in the middle of the hindwing (not reaching the anal edge of the wing) and by the red w-shaped post-discal band connected with the red basal band in the anal part of the wing; from *C. deducta* by the darker wing coloration (especially in the forewing) and by the red w-shaped post-discal band connected with the red basal band in the anal part of the wing.



Figs 1–2. *Catocala afghana* Swinhoe, 1885. **1.** Male upperside, 24.06.2004, Bishkek area, 800 m, leg. S. Korb. **2.** Male underside, 24.06.2004, Bishkek area, 800 m, leg. S. Korb.



Fig. 3. Biotope where *C. afghana* Swinhoe, 1885 was caught: Bishkek area, locality Kok-Dzhar, 800 m, semidesert.

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