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On the Study of Type Materials of Four Species of Genus *Dasychira* HÜBN. in British Museum (N.H.), London

(Lepidoptera, Lymantriidae)

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Abstract. Syntypes of four species of genus *Dasychira* HÜBNER, are studied and it is observed that in all the cases the holotypes are not selected by the original authors. Therefore lectotypes and paralectotypes are designated. A new combination *Pseudodura dudgeoni* (SWINHOE) is proposed for *Dasychira dudgeoni* SWINHOE. *Pseudodura dasychiroides* STRAND is synonymised with *P. dudgeoni* (SWINHOE).

Genus *Dasychira* HÜBNER is one of the important genus under family Lymantriidae. Certain species of this genus like *D. grotei* MOORE occurs in India in the plains as well as upto an elevation of 7000 ft. on the Himalayas and its food plants are *Acacia arabica*, *Pisidium guava* and *Shorea robusta* etc. When in epidemic form this species destroys hundreds of square miles of "Sal" forests particularly in Assam. Defoliation is most severe during August to October. This genus is known by nearly 600 species from the world including 29 species of Indian origin. The present paper deals with the study and observations on the four species of genus *Dasychira* HÜBNER.

1. *Dasychira dudgeoni* SWINHOE, 1907

SWINHOE (1907) described this species from Sikkim and Khasia Hills based on unspecified number of male and female specimens. Details of the material examined by him are as follows:

"Expanse of wings, ♂ $1\frac{1}{2}$, ♀ $7/10$ inch. Hab: Sikkim (DUDGEON) (♂ type in B. M.), Khasia Hills, ♂ ♀ (type ♀)"

From the above it appears that SWINHOE selected one male from Sikkim and one female from Khasia Hills as types. In British Museum (Natural History) (BMNH) collection, there are two males and one female specimens which appear to be of original syntypic series from the data labels. One of these two males, is herewith designated as lectotype which is labelled as "Type" (red and white, circular, printed), "Sikkim, XII. 1895, G. C. DUDGEON" (white, rectangular, typed), "G. C. DUDGEON, 95.203" (BMNH registration number) (white, rectangular, printed), "Dasychira dudgeoni ♂ SWINHOE type" (white, rectangular, handwritten). The remaining two specimens (one male and one female specimen from Khasia Hills) here designated as paralectotypes are labelled as "2178, Khasia Hills" (white, rectangular, handwritten), "Dasychira dudgeoni SWINHOE Co-type" (white, rectangular, handwritten), "SWINHOE Coll., Brit. Mus., 1926.239" (BMNH registration number) (white, rectangular, printed). It appears that one more female specimen from Khasia Hills, was with SWINHOE at the time of description of this species, to which he had labelled as type. But the author could not trace out the same in BMNH collection.

A careful study of the above material showed that hind tibiae are with one pair of spurs, forewings with two areoles, vein 6 originating from the point of cell, veins 9 and 10 anastomosing with 8 and 7, veins 12 and 11 anastomosing each other. All these

characters are of *Pseudodura* STRAND and not of *Dasychira* HÜBNER. Therefore *Dasychira dudgeoni* SWINHOE is given a new combination as *Pseudodura dudgeoni* (SWINHOE), **comb. n.** *Dasychira dudgeoni* SWINHOE is already kept under genus *Pseudodura* STRAND in BMNH collections but there is no published record for the same.

This species was compared with few identified specimens of *Pseudodura dasychiroides* STRAND from Formosa (Taiwan) available in BMNH collection but no difference was found between the two. Therefore it is felt that *P. dasychiroides* STRAND from Formosa may be synonym of *Pseudodura dudgeoni* (SWINHOE).

In BMNH collection the specimens of *P. dasychiroides* STRAND from Formosa, are kept as synonym of *P. dudgeoni* (SWINHOE) but this was done in reference to certain wrong entries in the index card for the species. It is mentioned on the card that MATSUMURA (1933) has suncked *P. dasychiroides* STRAND to *P. dudgeoni* (SWINHOE). After going through the paper of MATSUMURA (1933) it becomes clear that he has treated *P. dasychiroides* STRAND as a standing species and simultaneously synonymised his own species *Olene dudgeoni*, published in 1921, from Japan with it. Also there is no mention of *Dasychira dudgeoni* SWINHOE or *Pseudodura dudgeoni* (SWINHOE) in his paper. Therefore the author feels that the above synonymy of *Pseudodura dasychiroides* STRAND to *P. dudgeoni* (SWINHOE) is new to science **syn. n.**

2. *Dasychira thwaitessii* MOORE, 1883

MOORE (1883) described this species from Ceylon, based on unspecified number of male and female specimens. Details of the material examined by him are as follows: „*Expanse*, ♂ $1\frac{1}{2}$, ♀ $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches. Allied to *D. horsfieldii*. Locality – Ceylon”

The above lines clearly indicate that the original author had neither mentioned the number of specimens examined nor selected any one of them as holotype. In BMNH collection the author could examine one male and one female specimen which appear to be of original syntypic series from the data labels. Both the specimens are labelled as type. Therefore the male specimen labelled as „Type” (red and white, circular, printed), „MOORE Coll., 94.106” (BMNH registration number) (white, square, printed), „Ceylon ♂” other side „*Dasychira thwaitessii* ♂ type MOORE” (white, rectangular, handwritten), is designated as lectotype. The female specimen, labelled in same manner as lectotype, is designated as paralectotype. This specimen carries a number 313. This species had been reported from Nilgiri Hills and Trivandrum also by earlier workers. BRYK (1934) in his catalogue of the family has mentioned that the type of the species is from Trivandrum but the original description for the species clearly indicates that it is from Ceylon.

3. *Dasychira magnalia* SWINHOE, 1903

SWINHOE (1903) described this species from Khasia Hills on the basis of unspecified number of male and female specimens. Details of the material examined by the original author are as follows:

„*Expanse* of wings, ♂ $1\frac{6}{10}$, ♀ $1\frac{7}{10}$ inch. Khasia Hills. Is a distinct and good form allied to nothing I know”

From the above lines it appears that SWINHOE neither mentioned the number of examined specimens nor selected any holotype. In BMNH collection there are one male and one female specimens from Khasia Hills with BMNH registration number 1903-317 which appear to be of original syntypic series. Both of them are labelled as types. Therefore the male specimen is hereby designated as lectotype which is

labelled as „Type“ (red and white, circular, printed), „Khasis, Nat. Coll.“ (white, rectangular, printed), „1903-317“ (BMNH registration number) (white, square, printed), „*Dasychira magnalia* ♂ SWINHOE type“ (white, rectangular, handwritten), „22“ (genitalia photo number) (white, rectangular, handwritten). The female specimen labelled in the manner of above lectotype is designated as paralectotype.

4. *Dasychira orimba* (SWINHOE, 1894)

SWINHOE (1894) described this species under genus *Olene* HÜBNER on the basis of one male and one female specimens from Shillong. Later on he himself in 1903 transferred it under genus *Dasychira* HÜBNER. Details of the specimens examined by SWINHOE, are as follows:

„Expanse of wings ♂ $16/10$, ♀ $19/10$ inch. Shillong, one pair“

The above lines show that there was one pair of specimens before SWINHOE at the time of description of species but he never selected the holotype. In BMNH collection, the author could examine above pair and both of them are labelled as type. So the male specimen labelled as „Type“ (red and white, circular, printed), „Shillong“ (white, rectangular, printed), „1901.178“ (BMNH registration number) (white, rectangular, printed), „*Olene orimba* SWINHOE ♂ type“ (white, rectangular, handwritten), is hereby designated as lectotype. The female specimen labelled in same manner as the male, is designated as paralectotype.

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