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A new *Elachista* species (Lepidoptera, Elachistidae, Elachistinae) from Latvia

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Abstract

Elachista sulcsiella sp. n. from Latvia is described. A series of specimens was collected by netting and breeding in three localities. The newly described species belongs to the *Elachista bifasciella*-group and is likely a close relative of *E. irenae* Buszko and *E. talgarella* Kaila. The adult habitus and genitalia of both sexes are figured.

Key words: Latvia; Elachistidae; new species

The fauna of the micro-moth group Elachistinae (= Elachistidae s. str.) is richly represented in North Europe and considered to be generally well investigated (Traugott-Olsen & Nielsen 1977). Nevertheless, after the publication of this book a number of new species have been discovered (Kyrki & Karvonen 1985; Kaila 1998; Kaila & Kerppola 1992; Albrecht & Kaila 1994; Aarvik & Berggren 2004; Kaila *et al.* 2008; Kaila & Sippola 2010). Many species have very local and restricted distribution and they can thus escape discovery for a long time. Another reason for their being overlooked can be great fluctuations in abundance that are commonly observed in northern species. Some species of southern or eastern origin can also time after time expand their distributional range.

In early June 1985 the author, and later his colleague Dr. I. Šulcs, obtained a series of an unknown *Elachista* in the forested vicinity of Riga. At first the species was thought to be *Elachista zernyi* Hartig, known at that time only from the Alps. Under this name it was also published in faunistic papers (Savenkov 1987, 1991; Šulcs 1992). Later Kaila (1999) synonymized the North European *E. ingvarella* Traugott-Olsen with *E. zernyi*. *E. ingvarella* was known to be an inhabitant of mountain tundra of northwestern Eurasia (Traugott-Olsen & Nielsen 1977). This caused the author to doubt the identification of the Latvian taxon and motivated him to re-check the materials from Latvia. Upon closer examination and dissection of genitalia the Latvian moth appeared not to be conspecific with *E. zernyi*, nor with any named Palaearctic species (Traugott-Olsen (1974); Sinev & Sruoga (1995); Kaila *et al.* (2003); Sugisima (2005)). Based on Braun (1948) and Kaila (1999) this species has not been recorded from North America. So, it is concluded that specimens from Latvia belong to an undescribed species. Dr. L. Kaila, who has also investigated our specimens, agrees that this species is unknown to science. The species is described here as new.

Abbreviation

LMNH—Latvian Museum of Natural History, Riga, Latvia.

Elachista sulcsiella Savenkov, sp. nov.

(Figs. 1–6)

Type material. Holotype: ♂, labelled: “HOLOTYPE” (square red), “LATVIA: Rīg., Rīga (Dreiļiņi), ex l. 01.05.1989, N. Savenkov” (square white), “L. Kaila, Prep. no 2085” (square white) - in the collection of LMNH. Paratypes (11♂ 10♀): 1 ♀, the same locality, ex l. 04.06.1988, N. Savenkov, L. Kaila Prep. 2489” (LMNH); 3 ♀, the same locality, 06.06.1985, N. Savenkov (LMNH); 2 ♂ 1 ♀, same locality, 10.06.1985, I. Šulcs - 1 ♂ in LMNH, others in coll. I. Šulcs; 3 ♀, same locality, ex l. 03.06.1987, N. Savenkov (LMNH); 3 ♂, the same locality, ex l. 01.06.1988, N. Savenkov (LMNH); 1 ♀, same locality, ex l. 06.06.1988, N. Savenkov (LMNH); 1 ♀, same locality, ex l. 02.05.1989, N. Savenkov (LMNH); 1 ♂,