



## Description of two new species of *Meharia* Chrétien, 1915 (Lepidoptera: Cossidae) from East Africa

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The genus *Meharia* Chrétien, 1915 is a monotypic genus in the subfamily Mehariinae (Yakovlev 2011), clearly differentiated from other taxa in the family Cossidae. The morphological features of the genus are described in detail by Komarov and Zolotuhin (2005), Borth *et al.* 2011, Saldaitis and Ivinskis (2010) and Yakovlev (2011). Two unknown species of *Meharia* were collected in Kenya and Malawi and we describe them herein as new. The new species are similar to *Meharia acuta* Wiltshire 1982 and are distributed in the Arabian Peninsula (Hacker 1999; Yakovlev 2011). All three species have specific tineoid appearance and labial palpi twice as long as the head diameter. Currently, including the two newly described species, the genus *Meharia* consists of 13 species (Hacker 1999; Hacker *et al.* 1999, 2001; Yakovlev and Saldaitis 2008; Yakovlev 2011): *M. acuta* Wiltshire (distributed in Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Oman); *M. avicenna* Yakovlev (distr. in S Iran); *M. fischeri* Yakovlev & Saldaitis (distr. in Morocco); *M. hackeri* Saldaitis, Ivinskis & Yakovlev (distr. on Socotra Island, Yemen); *M. incurvariella* Chrétien (distr. in Algeria and Morocco); *M. murphyi* Yakovlev & Saldaitis **sp. nov.** (distr. in Malawi); *M. ostrauskasi* Ivinskis & Saldaitis **sp. nov.** (distr. in Kenya); *M. philbyi* Bradley (distr. across the Arabian peninsula in Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Oman); *M. scythica* Komarov et Zolotuhin (distr. in the S Volga region, SW Russia: ); *M. semilactea* (Warren et Rothschild) (distr. in Israel, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Oman, UAE, Yemen, the Sinai Peninsula, Egypt, N Sudan, Morocco and Mauritania); *M. tancredii* Sutton (distr. in N. Iran); *M. tanganyikae* Bradley (distr. in Tanzania); *M. yakovlevi* Saldaitis & Ivinskis (distr. on Socotra Island, Yemen).

### List of abbreviation

MWM       Museum of Thomas Witt (Munich, Germany);  
ZSSM       Zoologische Staatssammlung der Bayerischen Staaten (Munich, Germany).

### *Meharia murphyi* Yakovlev & Saldaitis **sp. nov.**

(Fig. 1)

**Holotype:** male (Fig. 1A), N Malawi, Rumphi dist., Vwaza Marsh Game Res., Kawiya camp., 1230 m, 12–14 Aug. 2008, S 10°55', E 33°30', leg. R. Murphy (deposited in MWM/ZSSM), genital preparat number: RY 1268.

**Diagnosis.** Externally the new species is most similar to *M. acuta* Wiltshire (Fig. 2) and *M. ostrauskasi* Ivinskis, Saldaitis **sp. nov.** (Fig. 3). From *M. acuta* it differs by size (the wingspan is twice as large), by a rounded apex and the absence of white longitudinal spots on the forewing and, in the male genitalia, a bird beak-shaped uncus, a longer and even ventral margin of the valva, an absence of a rod crossing the surface of the valva and a weakly developed saccus. *M. murphyi* differs from *M. ostrauskasi* (Fig. 3A) by size (the wingspan is nearly twice as large), by the weakly developed saccus in the male genitalia (Fig. 1B), the caecum penis of phallus more narrow, dorsally without cornutus.

**Description.** Male (Fig. 1A): wingspan 41 mm, forewing length 20 mm; antenna bipectinate, about 3/4 length of forewing, pecten long, four times longer than diameter of flagellum. Labial palpi two times longer than diameter of head. Thorax and abdomen covered by white-yellow scales. Forewing narrow, long, with rounded apex, dirty yellow, mixed with light brown scales especially in costal and distal area with two light brown bands in the submarginal and postdiscal area. Hindwing light brown, in basal part lighter, prolonged, apex rounded. Fringe on wings long, white-yellow.