



Taxonomic notes on the genus *Satyrimum* Scudder, 1876 (Lepidoptera, Lycaenidae) of Afghanistan with description of two new taxa

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Abstract

A new species and a new subspecies of *Satyrimum* Scudder, 1876 (subfamily Theclinae, tribe Eumaeini) from the subgenera *Superflua* Strand, 1910 and *Armenia* Dubatolov & Korshunov, 1984 respectively are described from Bamyan Province, Central Afghanistan—*S. (S.) skrylniki* sp. n. and *S. (A.) hyrcanica bamiana* ssp. n. The new species of *Superflua* belongs to the Iranian complex of species. It inhabits the territory of Afghanistan, being isolated from two other species of the subgenus known from the territory in question. The new subspecies of *Armenia* is also found in isolation both from the nominate subspecies and two Middle and Central Asian subspecies. Both findings clarify some aspects of zoogeography of the Central Afghanistan mountains.

Key words: Theclinae, Eumaeini, hairstreaks, systematics, zoogeography, Palaearctic, Iranian Plateau, Hindu Kush, morphology, genitalia

Introduction

Afghanistan is one of the most poorly investigated areas of the Palaearctic realm, despite its primary importance as the zoogeographical division between the fauna of Southwest Asia and the faunas of Middle and Central Asia, and thus needs thorough exploration. While some groups of butterflies inhabiting the country are relatively well-studied (e.g. the traditionally “popular” genera *Parnassius*, *Colias*, *Karanasa* and others, which first of all attracted notice of the few entomologists who worked in the region), the Lycaenidae fauna of Afghanistan is rather incomplete. A few investigations on members of the family Lycaenidae inhabiting Afghanistan were conducted by Heydemann (1954), Wyatt (1961), Forster (1937; 1972; 1973), Sakai (1978) and others, resulting in a number of remarkable species, such as *Lycaena aeolus* Wyatt, 1961, *L. kiyokoae* Sakai, 1978, *L. eberti* (Forster, 1972), *Micropsyche ariana* Mattoni, *Vacciniina omotoi* Forster, 1972, *Agrodiaetus afghanistanus* Forster, 1972, *A. afghanicus* Forster, 1973. The latest significant work on the Afghan butterflies was the well-known book by Sakai (1981) where the family Lycaenidae was treated very superficially. Since the end of the XX century there weren't any essential butterfly studies in Afghanistan.

At the end of 2000's, a team of Ukrainian entomologists—Igor G. Pljushtch, Oleg V. Pak, Elena S. Ivanova and Yuriy E. Skrylnik—started entomological investigations in Eastern and Central Afghanistan. Their collecting trips were very fruitful and brought a range of new species along with known species new to the region. Undescribed species of Satyridae and Lycaenidae collected during their expeditions were published in recent papers (Churkin *et al.* 2011; Krupitsky *et al.* 2012). Materials collected by their expeditions also helped to clarify the status of a controversial taxon in the genus *Polyommatus* (Vodolazhsky *et al.* 2011).

In the present paper, which is the first in the series of forthcoming papers on the fauna and systematics of the Afghan Lycaenidae, we describe two new taxa of hairstreaks (subfamily Theclinae, tribe Eumaeini), which were collected in Central Afghanistan during the last five years. These discoveries are important from the zoogeographical point of view, as clarifying some aspects of zoogeography of mountains of Central Afghanistan and revealing the link of its fauna to those of the mountain ranges of Central and Southwest Asia.