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***Bocchoris bleusei* (Oberthür, 1887) a new species for the Maltese Islands (Lepidoptera: Crambidae)**

A. Catania

Abstract

Bocchoris bleusei (Oberthür, 1887) is here recorded for the first time from the Maltese Islands.

KEY WORDS: Lepidoptera, Crambidae, *Bocchoris bleusei*, Malta.

***Bocchoris bleusei* (Oberthür, 1888) una nueva especie para Malta
(Lepidoptera: Crambidae)**

Resumen

Bocchoris bleusei (Oberthür, 1887) se cita por primera vez para Malta.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Lepidoptera, Crambidae, *Bocchoris bleusei*, Malta.

Introduction

Bocchoris bleusei (Oberthür, 1887) is a Multi brooded moth, known from the North African countries Libya, and Tunisia. It is also recorded from Tenerife and La Gomera Spain, Iran and Afghanistan.

Material examined

MALTA, 1 ♂, Żebbug, 12-V-2017, at light, leg. A. Catania. Both genus and species are new to the lepidopteroфаuna of the Maltese Islands. I propose the Maltese name “Sinklera dehbija”, after the golden markings on its wings.

Discussion

SPEIDEL *et al.* (1991) include this species in the genus *Bocchoris* Moore, 1885. In SLAMKA (2013), it is mentioned that this species may be discovered in Malta, Sicily and Sardinia. This assumption was probably triggered by the fact that these Mediterranean countries are close to North Africa and there is the possibility of accidental importation or migration. KARSHOLT & VAN NIEUKERKEN (2011), forgot to mention this species which is present and described from Algeria. REBEL (1906) mentions *Bocchoris bleusei* (Oberthür, 1888) from Tenerife, in the Canary Islands so its European range starts from these Southern European islands including Malta. From the 10th till the 12th of May, south-westerly winds of around 30 Km/hr persisted over the Maltese Islands. This is typical weather for the months of April and May and generally brings to our shores various species of

Heterocera, amongst which one can list *Autographa gamma* (Linnaeus, 1758), *Trichoplusia ni* (Hübner, [1803]), *Chrysodeixis chalcites* (Esper, [1803]), *Helicoverpa armigera* (Hübner, [1808]), *Heliothis nubigera* (Herrich-Schäffer, 1851), *Heliothis peltigera* (Hübner, [1808]), *Hyles livornica* (Esper, 1780). It is here also good to note that two rare species have been recorded during these dates and though not new records for the Maltese islands are valid as they are very rare migratory species. These include *Tysanoplusia daubei* (Boisduval, 1840) and *Isturgia disputaria* (Guenée, 1858), the latter species being the second record for Malta (CATANIA, 2008).

Bocchoris bleusei feeds on the succulent plant *Suaeda vera* (Forssk. ex J. F. Gmel.) of the Amaranthaceae family. This was formerly known as *Suaeda fruticosa* (WOLFGANG & MICHAEL, 1989). It is a scarce plant in Malta and grows on coastal areas. The possibility that *Bocchoris bleusei* adapts itself and becomes established in Malta may be possible if other specimens apart from this record managed to make their way to our shores.



Bocchoris bleusei (Obth.), MALTA, 1 ♂, Żebbug, 12-V-2017.

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