

Cucullia ilniczkyi sp. n. from Mongolia (Lepidoptera: Cuculliinae)

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Abstract. A new *Cucullia* Schrank, 1802 species, *Cucullia ilniczkyi* sp. n. is described from eastern Mongolia. The main external and genitalia diagnostic features of the new species and its closest relative are characterised and discussed. They are illustrated with two colour figures, the genitalia are presented with two monochromatic figures.

Key words. *Cucullia*, Mongolia, new species, description, taxonomy.

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Introduction

Cucullia Schrank, 1802 is one of the most species-rich genera of Noctuidae and the Palearctic taxa of it have been revised and well-known, since the two revisions of Ronkay & Ronkay (2009) and Ronkay, Ronkay & Gyulai (2011). That is why it was surprising that the renowned Hungarian coleopterologist, Dr Sándor Ilniczky managed to find a species new to science from the relatively well-researched Mongolia during his 2024 expedition in the eastern region of the country.

The new species described below is the allopatric sister of the well-known *Cucullia balsamitae* Boisduval, 1840 in the *Cucullia umbratica* species group. *C. balsamitae* is distributed mostly in the western Palearctic steppe zone, the eastern known occurrence is near the Issyk-Kul; while the new species is restricted only to eastern Mongolia.

Abbreviations for personal and institutional collections used herein are as follows: PGM = collection of Péter Gyulai (Miskolc, Hungary). Other abbreviations used: GYP = genitalia slide prepared by Péter Gyulai; m = male; HT = holotype; TL = type locality.

Description of new species

***Cucullia ilniczkyi* sp. n.** (Figs 1, 3)

Holotype. male, E-Mongolia, Hentiy aimak, NE of Öndörhan, N 47° 18,350', E 110° 38,845', 1034 m, 28. V. 2024, leg. S. Ilniczky, slide no. GYP 6157 (PGM).

Diagnosis. *Cucullia ilniczkyi* sp. n. (Figs 1, 3) is the most related and resembling to *Cucullia balsamitae* (Figs 2, 4) (TL: Russia meridionale, thus a male specimen from that region was used to this diagnosis), mostly in the external features; however, their distribution pattern strongly differs. *C. ilniczkyi* sp. n. (Figs 1, 3) can be separated from *C. balsamitae* (Figs 2, 4) by its somewhat broader, almost monochromatic pale greyish forewings with finally defined reniform stigmata, the almost lack of the narrow, elongate, pale ochreous patch of the forewing cell, and the broader, lighter hindwing, with more diffuse brownish marginal suffusion.

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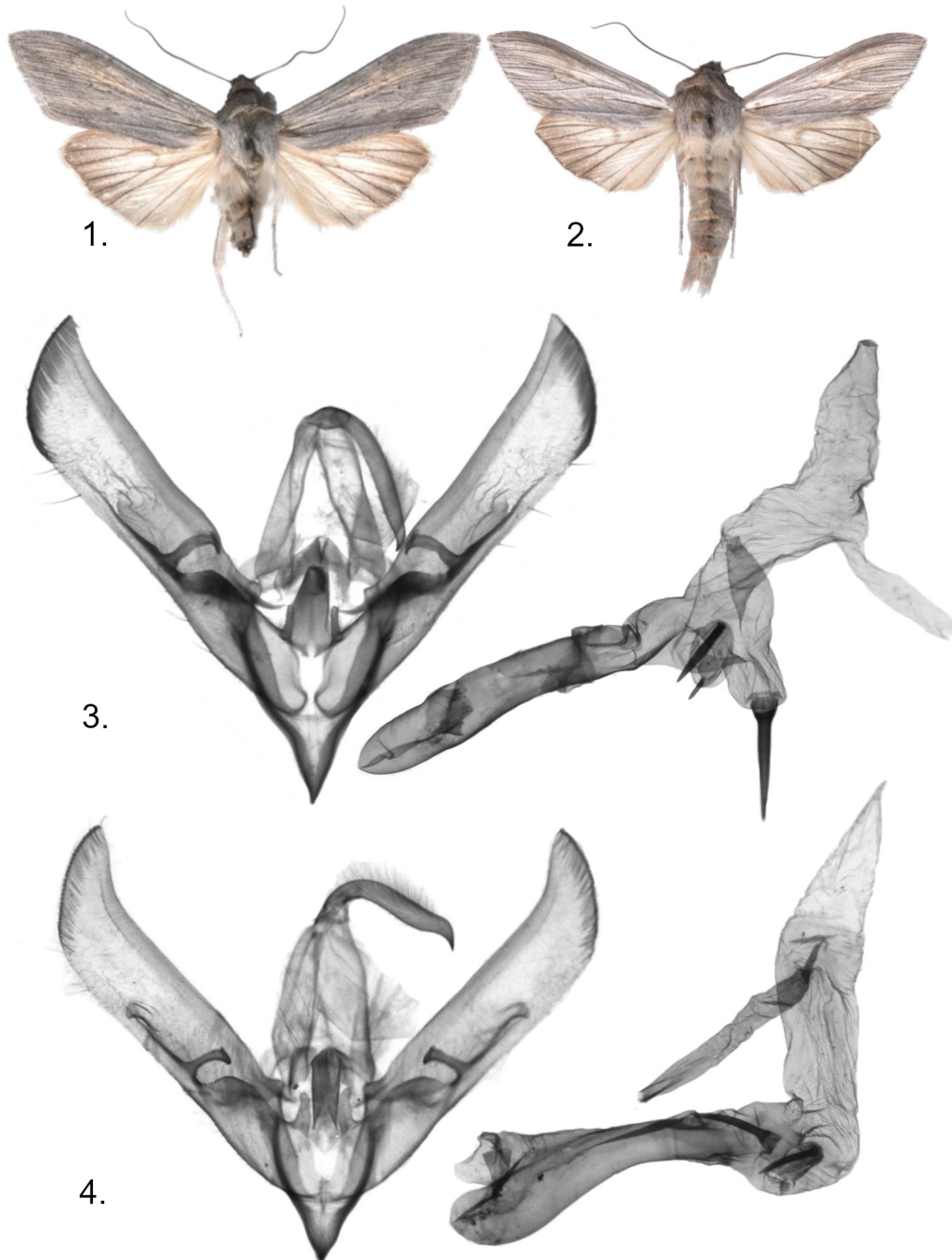
In the male genitalia capsule of *C. ilniczkyi* sp. n. (Fig. 3), the uncus is much longer and evenly thin, while it is much shorter, but broader and strongly hooked terminally in *C. balsamitae* (Fig. 4). The distal section of the valve of the new species is conspicuously broaden, but much less elongate on the dorsal end of the cucullus section than in *C. balsamitae*, with a longer row of setae of the corona. *C. ilniczkyi* sp. n. has stronger, longer harpe and basally broader, elongate triangular fultura inferior, while the latter one is column-like in *C. balsamitae*. The comparison of the vesica supports the correct separation of the two taxa. In the new species, the tube of the endophallus (vesica) slightly larger than in its congener, bearing subbasally a large, prominent diverticulum, terminated with a long, strong cornutus, and two small diverticuli, both of them are terminated with one, shorter cornutus, from which the tiny one is with about one-third length than the other one. The vesica of *C. balsamitae* (Fig. 4) lacks the large subbasal prominent diverticulum and cornutus; while the two smaller subbasal diverticulum are armed with one-one stronger cornutus than the two small ones in the new species.

Description. Wingspan 40 mm. Antennae filiform, whitish, with fine, distally more and more broad light brown line. The vesture of the head and thorax ash greyish; that of the abdomen whitish. Forewings ground colour and cilia ash greyish, with scattered fine blackish scales. Wing pattern almost lacks; only the reniform stigma signed with a paler patch, slightly bordered with a diffuse dark greyish fine line from the inner area. Under the wing tip, a diffuse, obscure, barely visible row of tiny dark gray scales run towards the inner margin. Hindwing whitish, with slightly darker, diffuse, pale marginal area and a darker brown tinge at the end of the veins; cilia white. Underside of forewings greyish-brownish, the hindwing shiny and whitish, with obscure cellular spot.

Male genitalia (Fig 3). Uncus long, evenly slim, distally slightly pubescent, and apically acute. Valva distally broadened, a corona of cucullus section terminated in a long row of strong setae. Harpe slightly inward curved, terminally asymmetrically hammer-like. Fultura inferior basally broadened, elongate triangular. Vinculum v-shaped. Aedeagus slightly ventral curved. Everted tube of endophallus (vesica) ample, large, subbasally bears a large diverticulum, terminated with a long, strong cornutus, and two small diverticuli, both of them are terminated with one smaller cornutus, with different lengths, one of them is tiny.

Etymology. The new species is dedicated to Dr Sándor Ilniczky, neurologist, renowned coleopterologist, the collector of the new species.

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Figures 1–4. *Cucullia* spp. adults and male genitalia.

1. and 3. *C. ilniczkyi* sp. n., E. Mongolia, Hentiy aimak, NE of Öndörhan, 1034 m, N47°18,350', E110°38,845', 28. V. 2024, leg. S. Ilniczky, GYP 6157 (PGM);

2. and 4. *C. balsamitae* Boisduval, 1840, Russia, S Ural, Orenburg, prov., Soiletsk dist., Pervomaisky vill., N 50°54', E 55°11', 19.-27. IV. 2022, leg. L. Korshikov, GYP 6156 (PGM).

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