

Lacanobia splendens, a new species for the Belgian fauna (Lepidoptera: Noctuidae)

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Samenvatting. *Lacanobia splendens*, een nieuwe soort voor de Belgische fauna (Lepidoptera: Noctuidae)

Zowel op 09 juli 2004 als op 20 juni 2005 werd een exemplaar van *Lacanobia splendens* (Hübner, 1808) gevangen te Viersel (provincie Antwerpen). Het gaat om de eerste en tweede waarneming van deze soort in België. De verspreiding en ecologie van deze soort worden kort besproken.

Résumé. *Lacanobia splendens*, une espèce nouvelle pour la faune belge (Lepidoptera : Noctuidae)

Le 09 juillet 2004 et le 20 juin 2005, un exemplaire de *Lacanobia splendens* (Hübner, 1808) fut trouvé à Viersel (province d'Anvers). Il s'agit de la première et deuxième observation de cette espèce en Belgique. Des informations sur la répartition et l'écologie de l'espèce sont données.

Key words: *Lacanobia splendens* – faunistics – Belgium – first record.

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Figs. 1–2: *Lacanobia splendens* (Hübner, 1808), Belgium, Province of Antwerp, Viersel, Nature reserve "Kleine Netevallei", 09 July 2004, leg. M. Jacobs (Photo: M. Jacobs).

On 09 July 2004, during a moth trapping session with a 125 Watt mercury vapour lamp on a tripod in the nature reserve "Kleine Netevallei" at Viersel (Belgium, province of Antwerp) a unfamiliar looking noctuid moth was trapped. At first look it resembled most *Lacanobia oleracea* or a pale *Lacanobia suasa* but the more pinkish ground colour, the strength of the cross-lines and the presence of strong red-brown shading along the proximal edge of the subterminal line were atypical. I decided to take the specimen at home for further identification. Here it became clear that it was *Lacanobia splendens*. This is the first observation of the species in Belgium. The specimen was photographed and released on the location where it was caught. *Celaena leucostigma* may cause confusion but this species which is usually on the wing during the early autumn and thus hardly overlaps with the summer flight period

of *Lacanobia splendens*, lacks a white and obviously 'toothed' subterminal line. On 20 June 2005, the species was trapped again with a 125 Watt mercury vapour lamp on a tripod on the same location.

Ecology

As the German name "Feuchtwiese – Kräutereule" and the Dutch name "Moeras-w-uil" already indicate, this species lives in marches, wetlands and wet forests. The imagos fly from the second half of May until the end of August. The species is known to be univoltine but there are strong indications that in warmer areas a partly second generation occurs in August and the beginning of September. The adult moths are seldom seen on light but are sometimes commonly seen on flowering plants and are also reported from sugaring. The larval foodplants are stated to include *Solanum dulcamara*, *Convolvulus arvensis*, *Calystegia*, *Arctium*, *Lactuca*, *Plantago* (Nowacki 1998), *Cicuta virosa*, *Menyanthes trifoliata* (Lomb & Hildebrecht 1941), *Lysimachia* (Lhomme 1923–1935). Caterpillars can be found in July and August. Two caterpillars that were found in October (Vogtsburg, Germany) were probably the result of a partly second generation female. The species overwinters as pupae.

Distribution

Lacanobia splendens occurs widely in central and southern Europe (Karsholt & Razowski 1996) but the distribution is very fragmented. In most parts of its distribution it is considered to be endangered. The decline is due to the draining of most wet habitats. The species reacts very fast on slight changes in its habitat and is therefore regarded as a good indicator for valuable wetland systems.

In Northern Europe it is absent from Norway. The first record for Denmark occurred in 1959, for Finland in 1996 and for Sweden and the United Kingdom in 2003. Worth mentioning are the invasions like observations in the UK where the species was described as new from Portland (1 July, Cade 2004). The same year another 11 specimens were identified, some of them from earlier dates which were first misidentified or left unidentified. Also 2 records from the Channel Islands in 2001 were identified later on.

This specimen was caught in an area with a mosaic of wet habitat types. Here, other typical wetland species like *Xanthorhoe biriviata*, *Orthonama vittata*, *Perizoma didymata*, *Perizoma sagittata*, *Eupithecia valerianata*, *Spilosoma urticae* and *Celaena haworthii* occur. However, after the first catch on 09 July 2004, it was not certain whether the species originated from a local population or whether it was a vagrant. The catch of a second individual on 20 June 2005 probably proves that there occurs a population in the nature reserve "Kleine Netevallei" indeed.

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