

Paysandisia archon, new to Páros Island, Greece (Lepidoptera: Castniidae)

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Abstract. The S American Castniid moth *Paysandisia archon* (Burmeister, 1800), which was accidentally introduced to several S European localities, is now also being recorded for the first time from the Greek island of Páros. This record is the first ever published for Greece as a whole by a lepidopterological journal, all past Greek records having been either in the form of announcements in the local press, or having been included in a doctorate thesis.

Samenvatting. *Paysandisia archon*, nieuw voor Páros eiland, Griekenland (Lepidoptera: Castniidae)
De Zuid-Amerikaanse mot *Paysandisia archon*, die toevallig ingevoerd werd in enkele Zuid-Europese lokaliteiten, wordt hier voor het eerst van het Griekse eiland Páros vermeld en daarmee tevens voor heel Griekenland in een entomologisch tijdschrift. De overige meldingen bestonden uit lokale krantenartikels in het Grieks of een melding in een doctoraatsthesis.

Résumé. *Paysandisia archon*, espèce nouvelle pour l'île grecque de Páros (Lepidoptera: Castniidae)
L'espèce sud-américaine, *Paysandisia archon* (Burmeister, 1800), est mentionnée ici de l'île grecque de Páros et ainsi également pour la totalité de la Grèce, puisque les autres mentions étaient publiées seulement dans des journaux locaux en grec et dans une thèse doctorale.

Key words: Castniidae – *Paysandisia archon* – Greece - Páros Island – Accidental introduction.

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Introduction

Paysandisia archon (Burmeister, 1800), a South American moth belonging to the family Castniidae and inhabiting Brazil, NW Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay, was accidentally introduced to Europe in the years between 1985 and 1995 as a direct result of the importation of infested palm trees, the moth's only known larval food-plant. Colonies were eventually established in mainland Spain, the Balearic Islands, France, mainland Italy and Sicily (Leraut 2006). In some areas, especially in Spain, the moth has reached pest proportions, and attempts are being made to eradicate it.

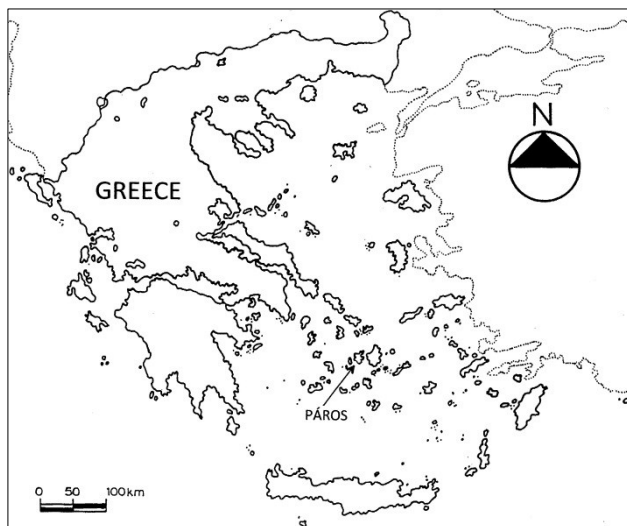


Fig. 1. Map of Greece.

The first record of the species for Greece (Fanourakis & Reppas 2008 [Thesis]) dates back to 2006, and refers to the islands of Kríti (Crete) and Ródos (Rhodes), while further Greek records, appearing as articles in local newspapers, include also the island of Híos (Chios). Unfortunately all information relating to Greece is given

in Greek language and none of it was ever published in entomological journals, remaining unknown to the lepidopterological community. It thus appeared desirable to remedy this situation by producing the present paper.

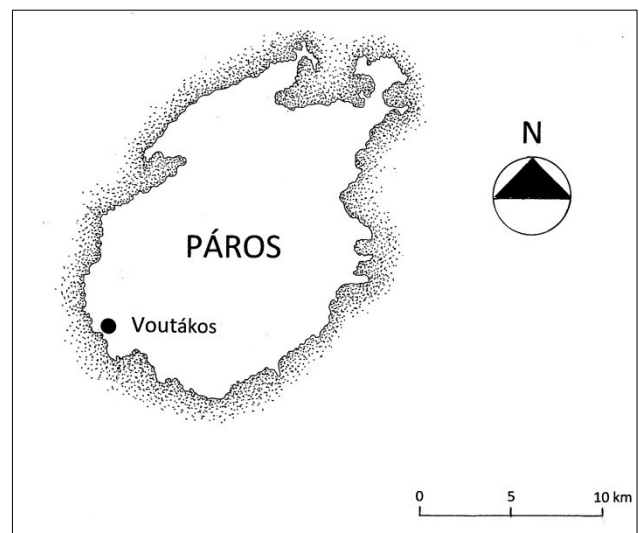


Fig. 2. Map of Páros Island.



Fig. 3. Male *Paysandisia archon* (Burmeister, 1800), Greece, Páros Island, Voutákos, sea level, 15–18.vii.2010. Scale bar 1 cm.

New Greek record

On 15th to 18th July 2010, while on the Aegean island of Páros (Figs 1 & 2), a seaside locality was visited that supports vineyards as well as a large number of planted palm trees, the latter representing at least three separate species. In the morning of 16th July a large moth was accidentally flushed from oleander bushes, which in flight was somewhat reminiscent of *Theretra alecto* (Linnaeus, 1758), a Spingid common to the island, but in colour and silhouette appeared different. When it finally settled it was realized that it was the Castniid *P. archon*. Five specimens were recorded in all, one male of which was captured (Fig. 3).

Discussion

The number of specimens recorded clearly suggests that the moths were members of an established colony. The island's ample supply of palm trees and its mild

climate, both should act positively in keeping the colony alive and allowing it to spread, if indeed the latter has not already taken place. The introduction of *P. archon* to Páros Island must be attributed to the massive importation of palm trees, which have become of late one of the most favoured of garden plants. The fast spreading of the moth in Europe and its parallel establishment in parts of N Africa and the Middle East, suggest that the road is open for it to spread in full in the Asiatic and African continents, wherever the climate permits and the larval food-plant is available.

Acknowledgements

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References

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