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FIRST RECORD OF *PSEUDOCATHARYLLA NIGROCILIELLA* ZELLER, 1863 (LEPIDOPTERA: CRAMBIDAE) FROM KERALA

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Reviewer: Peter Smetacek

Abstract

Pseudocatharylla nigrociliella (Zeller, 1863) is reported for the first time from Kerala, India.

Keywords: *Pseudocatharylla nigrociliella*, First Record, Kerala

Introduction

Hampson (1896) reported a total of 1133 Pyraloid species from India. Mathew (2006) listed 1646 Pyraloid species occurring in India. Mathew & Menon (1984) reported 155 Pyraloid species from Kerala, of which 116 were recorded for the first time. Since then, no other data are available. In the present note, *P. nigrociliella* is reported for the first time in 129 years from India.

Study Area

Paleri (11.6196 N, 75.7575 E) is a small village situated 50 km north of Kozhikode (Calicut) city in northern Kerala, India (Fig.1). The village has a rocky hill called Bullock Hill, surrounded by a patch of deciduous forest. The private coconut garden with a thick undergrowth of grasses where the moth was observed is near the forest.

Materials and Methods

On 1.viii.2020, at 10 am on a sunny day, a small white moth perched on a grass blade was photographed. The image was uploaded to an online moth forum and it was identified as *Pseudocatharylla nigrociliella*. The image was compared with the images of the species available in the insect forum insecta.pro and the identity was re-confirmed from the descriptions by Zeller (1863) and Hampson (1896).

Discussion

This species was first described as *Catharylla nigrociliella* (Zeller, 1863) from India near Bombay. Later, it was re-described as *Argyria nigricosta*, Hampson, 1891 from the western slopes of the Nilgiris, 3000' (Tamil Nadu, India). Hampson (1896) shifted *A. nigricosta* to *Crambus* Fabricius, 1798. Bleszynski (1961) proposed *Pseudocatharylla* and placed *nigrociliella* in it. Bleszynski (1962) synonymised Hampson's *Cr. nigricosta* with *Pseudocatharylla nigrociliella*, Zeller.

Combining the known distribution of the various synonyms of *P. nigrociliella*, it is known from Dharamsala (Himachal Pradesh), the old Bombay Presidency, which could be anywhere in the modern state of Maharashtra (Hampson, 1896), and the present report extends the known distribution to Kerala. Earlier, in South India the moth was reported at 3000' above sea level. The present sighting is on the plains, 184 km west of the Nilgiris and this shows that this moth is not confined to the mountainous regions in South India.

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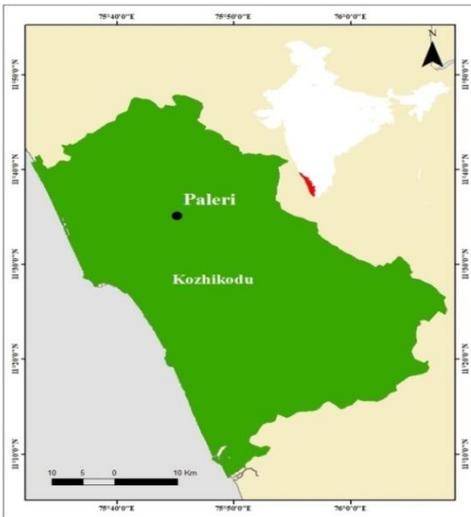


Fig.1: Map of the Study Area



Fig.2: *Pseudocatharylla nigrociliella*