

The rediscovery of *Utetheisa pulchella* (Linnaeus, 1758) (Lepidoptera: Arctiidae) in the Crimea after 68 years of apparent absence

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Synopsis

After 68 years of apparent absence, *Utetheisa pulchella* (Linnaeus, 1758) has been rediscovered in the Crimea; because of its rarity in the Ukraine, it is listed as a Red Data Book species.

Key words: *Utetheisa pulchella* (Linnaeus, 1758), Crimea, Ukraine.

The arctiid moth *Utetheisa pulchella* (Linnaeus, 1758) was first recorded in the Crimean peninsula in 1881 (Grumm Grshimailo, 1882). While examining Lepidoptera material in the collections of the Museum of Natural History of the Kharkov University (Kharkov, Ukraine), the Zoological Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences (St Petersburg, Russia), the Zoological Museum of the Kiev University (Kiev, Ukraine), and the Zoological Museum of the Tavricheskiy University (Simferopol, Ukraine), as well as searching for relevant data in the literature (Grumm Grshimailo, 1882; Melioransky, 1897; Kryukova *et al.*, 1988), it was found that all the specimens of *U. pulchella* from the Crimea had been collected between 1881 and 1939. During this period, only 33 specimens were found or recorded from the following localities: Yevpatoriya, Sevastopol, Simferopol, Mt Chatyr-Dag, Miskhor, Gurzuf, Alushta, Feodosiya and Kerch. This very rare species has been listed in the *Red Data Book of Ukraine* (1994).

Thirty years of intensive field observations in the Crimea by the present author produced no further records of *U. pulchella* and it was assumed that it had become extinct in the peninsula. However, during an autumn expedition in 2007, a female (Fig. 1) was found in a very beautiful biotope (Fig. 2) in Bakhchisaray district; precise data for the specimen are as follows, 'Crimea, 1 km NE. of Krasnyy Mak, 44°39' N, 33°47' E, 100 m above sea level, 3.xi.2007'. The female was at rest amongst grassy vegetation near calcareous rocks on the west-facing slope of the Internal mountain ridge of the Crimea (Efetov, 2005: 98, fig. 53) and is a representative of the third generation. Hitherto, the third generation in the Crimea had been recorded as occurring from September–October (Efetov & Budashkin, 1987; 1990), but this record shows that the flight can continue until the beginning of November.

Thus, this recent locality record confirms the presence of *U. pulchella* in the Crimea and may be the result of a new wave of immigration.



Photo: K. A. Efetov

Fig. 1. Female of *Utetheisa pulchella* (Linnaeus, 1758). Ukraine: Crimea, Bakhchisaray district, 1 km NE. of Krasnyy Mak, 100 m (44°39' N, 33°47' E), 3.xi.2007.



Photo: K. A. Efetov

Fig. 2. Locality on the western bank of the river Belbek where *Utetheisa pulchella* (Linnaeus, 1758) was found. Ukraine: Crimea, Bakhchisaray district, 1 km NE. of Krasnyy Mak, 100 m (44°39' N, 33°47' E), 3.xi.2007.

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