Trifurcula griseella nov. spec.

(Lepidoptera, Nepticulidae).

By
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On 30th May 1954, in the afternoon, I visited one of the well-known Danish collecting-grounds, Asserbo in the north of Sealand, searching for moths. Although the weather was unusually hot the result was poor. Collecting at a usually profitable locality, the outskirts of a military training area, a sandy place where heather, dwarf sallow, birch, and small pines are growing, I only succeeded in sweeping a few specimens of *Nepticula betulicola* Stt., *Bucculatrix artemisii* H. S., *Lithocolletis quinqueguttella* Stt. etc. I expected to find *Nepticula repentiella* Wolff, which in late May usually can be taken in numbers at this very place, but only got one specimen which I regarded as a *repentiella* male.

While setting the specimen I immediately saw that it did not belong to *repentiella,* the wing colour being different, and the body looking much slender. When afterwards I examined the genitalia I was highly surprised to find that the specimen did not at all belong to the genus *Nepticula* but proved to be a *Trifurcula* male, a result which judging from its small size — wing expanse 5.0 mm —, colour, etc., was most unexpected.

The European species of the genus *Trifurcula* Zell. have been treated by Klimesch (1953, Zeitschr. Wien. Entom. Ges. **38**, p. 160—170, 191—196). The appearance of the specimen in question did not correspond with the description of any of the species mentioned by Klimesch, all being more or less yellowish in colour, and larger

(wing expanse 6.0—9.5 mm), the smallest figure mentioned (5.0 mm) referring to the female of *serotinella* H. S. the male of which, however, being recorded as 6.5—7.0 mm. In the Danish specimen a peculiar feature appeared at the underside of the forewing, which carried an easily perceptible yellow spot near the base. The genitalia were somewhat alike those of *confertella* Fuchs — *serotinella* H. S. — *orientella* Klim. but the larger cornutus was much more prominent than in these species, being more than half as long as the total length of the aedeagus (in the species mentioned about one third as long), and the shape of the vinculum and especially the length of the transtillae differed.

I sent an illustration of the genitalia to Dr. Klimesch asking him to make a comparison with his mounts, and his conclusion was that the genitalia did not agree, and that the specimen must belong to a *nova species*.

As to the early stages of the *Trifurcula* species very little is known. *T. immundella* Zell. feeds on Sarothamnus, other species are supposed to feed on Cytisus and Genista. At the locality where the specimen was taken a few bushes of Sarothamnus occurred but Genista is not at all found in this part of Denmark.

In 1955 and 1956 I several times visited the locality in order to obtain more material, but in vain. As the species is well defined I prefer to publish a description and thus draw attention to its presence.

Dr. Klimesch, whose valuable assistance I greatly acknowledge, has also been kind enough to examine the Danish specimen and states that it mostly resembles *T. orientella* Klim. but that the colour of the underside of the forewing is much darker than in any previously known species of the group. Nor is the peculiar looking yellow coloured patch at the underside of the forewing present in any other species.

Trifurcula griseella nov. spec.

♂. Alar expanse 5.0 mm. Antennae dark grey. An-

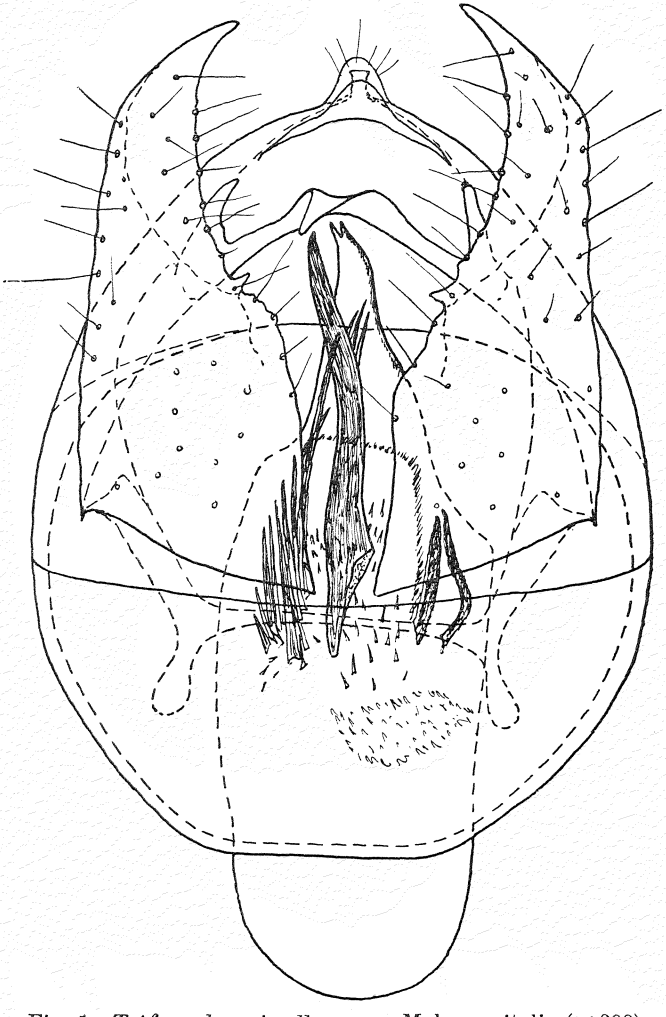

Fig. 1. *Trifurcula griseella* n. sp. Male genitalia (× 300).

tennal eyecaps yellowish white. Head brownish. Ground colour of forewings grey, peppered with coarse darker

scales, preferably towards the apex, no wing markings. At the underside of the forewing, near the base, a well defined patch of tiny light yellow coloured scales, distinctly contrasting the otherwise dark grey surface of the underside of the wing. Ciliae grey. Hindwings light grey.

Genitalia (fig. 1). Valvae narrow, points slightly inwardly curving. Aedeagus stout, bottle-shaped. The band of long cornuti much shorter than in e. g. *T. immundella* Zell. Besides the usual plate, and numerous minute cornuti, a strong cornutus of more than half the length of aedeagus is present. Vinculum short and broad. Transtillae exceptionally short, apically rounded.

Type, labelled Asserbo 30. 5. 1954, including genital slide, labelled NLW 1797, is presented to the Zoological Museum of Copenhagen.