

Luperina zollikoferi (Freyer) found in Iceland (Lepidoptera, Noctuidae)

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A moth of the species *Luperina zollikoferi* (Freyer) was found in Iceland on 17 September, 1969. The locality is Dagverðareyri, Eyjafjörður, northern Iceland. This is the first and only Icelandic record of this eastern migratory species to date.

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The lepidopteran fauna of Iceland is poor in species. Altogether 97 species have been identified, but only about 60 of them make up the indigenous fauna. Wolff (1971) listed the Icelandic species up to 1971, but since then few have been added. Several continental species reach Iceland on occasion, some of which may breed there under favourable conditions (see Olafsson & Björnsson 1976). Some of these species occur in Iceland quite regularly, while others are more irregular and rare.

On 17 September, 1969, a moth was collected by a local person at Dagverðareyri on the western coast of Eyjafjörður, northern Iceland (9 km north of Akureyri). The moth caught the collector's attention as it was relatively large in comparison with most Icelandic species. It was sitting on laundry which had been hung out for drying. The specimen was sent to the Museum of Natural History, Akureyri, where it remained unidentified for years until the author received it and sent it to Mr. Ole Karsholt, Zoological Museum, Copenhagen, Denmark, for identification. The specimen (Fig. 1) turned out to belong to the species *Luperina zollikoferi* (Freyer, 1836).

This species has an easterly distribution and is not known to be resident west of the USSR. Its biology and early stages are unknown (Warnecke 1959).

L. zollikoferi is known for its migratory habits, though finds in northern and western Europe are sporadic. There are scattered records from Finland, Sweden, the Netherlands, and Britain where the species is far from being an annual visitor. It does not seem to have been recorded from western Europe in 1969 when the Icelandic specimen was discovered (see Fibiger & Svendsen 1981, Bretherton et al. 1983). The species has not been recorded in Denmark since 1976 (Karsholt, pers. comm.).

The find in Iceland must be regarded as unexpected, the locality being very distant from its centre of distribution, and the species is obviously a rarity in western Europe. How this moth was transported this distance is not easy to explain. Its date of arrival is, of course, unknown, since it may have survived in Iceland for some time. I have looked at weather maps for the period mid August to 17 September, 1969, and found no obvious clues. If wind-transported, this was most likely on 16 September. The weather conditions that morning were as follows: low pressure areas that existed west of Ireland and over mid Europe and high pressure areas over northern Scandinavia and Russia gave rise to a warm air current from southern Russia westwards to the British Isles, and from there northwestwards to Iceland. But the air current moved slowly over

the continent and this situation did not last for long. Therefore it seems unlikely that the moth was wind-carried all the way from Russia to Iceland. On the contrary, the wind between the British Isles and Iceland was quite strong, so the moth could well have originated in Britain. The possibility that the moth was transported to Iceland by a ship should also be considered.

I thank Mr. Ole Karsholt, Copenhagen, for identifying the specimen, providing me with information on the species and giving comments on the manuscript. I also thank Mr. Geert Brovad, photographer at the Zoological Museum of Copenhagen, for photographing the specimen. Dr. Aevor Petersen, Reykjavik, corrected the English.

Sammendrag

Et uventet fund af natsommerfuglen *Luperina zollikoferi* (Freyer, 1836) på Island er rapporteret. Den blev fundet den 17. september 1969 ved Dagverdarnes på vestkysten af Eyjafjörður, Nordisland. Hvor eksemplaret kom fra er usikkert, men efter at have undersøgt vejret de foregående dage ser det ud til at være muligt, at det er kommet via De britiske Øer den 16. september.

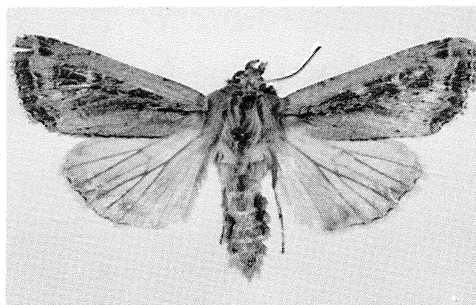


Fig. 1. *Luperina zollikoferi* (Freyer), collected on 17 September, 1969, at Dagverdarnes, Eyjafjörður, northern Iceland. (Photo: Geert Brovad).

Fig. 1. *Luperina zollikoferi* (Freyer) indsamlet den 17. september 1969 ved Dagverdarnes, Eyjafjörður, Nordisland. (Foto: Geert Brovad).

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