

Short Communication

First record of orange yellow moth, *Aegocera venulia* (Cramer) (Noctuoidea: Noctuidae) from Maharashtra, India

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Abstract

Based on the unidentified collections present in Western Regional Centre, Zoological Survey of India, Pune, this paper presents a new distributional record of *Aegocera venulia* (Cramer, [1777]) from Maharashtra, India.

Keywords: *Aegocera*, Noctuidae, Maharashtra

Introduction

Noctuidae is the largest family in the order Lepidoptera. Kitching (1984) placed agaristinae as a subfamily of Noctuidae. The adults of these groups are diurnal or crepuscular, mostly bright coloured, stout bodied insects consisting of simple antennae which are dilated distally. The genus *Aegocera* was first reported by Latreille in 1809. The type species of this genus is *Aegocera menete* Cramer (Hampson, 1894) in Africa. This genus is easily identified by the Palpi with the 2nd joint clothed with long hairs, antennae strongly dilated distally. Four species viz., *Aegocera tripartita* Kirby, 1880, *Aegocera venulia* (Cramer, [1777]), *Aegocera bimacula* Walker, 1854 and *Aegocera accurata* Swinhoe, 1889 have been described from different localities of India (Hampson, 1894). While working on the Agaristinae present in the collections of the Zoological Survey of India, Western Regional Centre, Pune, six specimens of *A. venulia* were studied, described and illustrated herein. The objective of this paper is to provide an addition to the already known species of genus *Aegocera* from Maharashtra. *A. bimacula* was reported from the Sanjay Gandhi national Park and the Malshej Ghat of Maharashtra (Shubhalaxmi *et. al.*, 2011). *A. venulia* is commonly called as orange yellow moth (Gupta

and Thakur, 1986). This species has been reported for the first time from Maharashtra.

Material and Methods

The specimens belonging to the agaristinae subfamily lying in the collections of the Zoological Survey of India, Western Regional Centre, Pune were studied. The specimens were relaxed, pinned and preserved as dry for further laboratory studies. They were examined under Leica EZ 4 HD stereozoom microscope. All identified specimens were labeled, registered and deposited at National Zoological Collection, Zoological Survey of India, Western Regional Centre, Pune, Maharashtra, India (ZSI-WRC). The specimens were identified as per Moore (1882) and Hampson (1894). The terminology used for describing morphological features is as per Moore (1882) and Hampson (1894). The description of female genitalia follows Singh and Sekhon (2015). The distributional records have been verified from the published literature (Hampson, 1894; Gurule and Nikam, 2011, 2013; Shubhalaxmi *et. al.*, 2011; Singh and Sekhon, 2015; Gupta and Thakur, 1986; Sekhon, 2015 and Chakraborty *et. al.*, 2014). The detailed Survey localities are mentioned under material examined (Figure 1). For studying the genitalia,

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the standard procedure given by Robinson (1976) and Zimmerman (1978) are followed.

Results and Discussion

Order LEPIDOPTERA Linnaeus, 1758
 Suborder GLOSSATA Fabricius, 1775
 Infraorder HETERONEURA Tillyard, 1918
 Clade MACROHETEROCERA Chapman, 1893
 Superfamily NOCTUOIDEA Latreille, 1809
 Family NOCTUIDAE Latreille, 1809
 Subfamily AGARISTINAE Boisduval, 1833
 Genus *Aegocera* Latreille, 1809

Aegocera venulia (Cramer, [1777])

Phalaena venulia Cramer, [1777]; *Uitl. Kapellen*, 2(9-16): 165.

Aegocera venulia, Hampson, 1894, *Fauna of British India (Moths)*, 2 : 158.

Material examined: Female, Trayambakeshwar, Nashik, Maharashtra (20.11°N and 73.57°E, elevation 734 mASL), 21.x.1973, coll. M.B. Rao and Party (Reg. No. ZSI-WRC-L-1448); 02 Female, Banwada, Aurangabad, Maharashtra (19.87°N and 75.24°E, elevation 556 mASL), 09.ix.1964, coll. R. N. Chopra and Party (Reg. No. ZSI-WRC-L-1449); 01 Female, Dak Bungalow Compound, Aurangabad, Maharashtra (19.55°N and 74.93°E, elevation 478 mASL), 11.ix.1964, coll. R. N. Chopra and Party (Reg. No. ZSI-WRC-L-1447.); 01 Female, Fardapur, Aurangabad, Maharashtra (20.58°N and 75.72°E, elevation 374 mASL), 19.ix.1964, coll. R. N. Chopra and Party (Reg. No. ZSI-WRC-L-1446); 01 Female, Fardapur, Aurangabad, Maharashtra (20.58°N and 75.72°E, elevation 374 mASL) 12.ix.1964, coll. R. N. Chopra and Party (Reg. No. ZSI-WRC-L-1445).

Description: (Plate 1 a) Head and thorax brownish, collar region yellow-white with black patch on sides; antennae black; abdomen yellow with dorsal black spots; fore wing

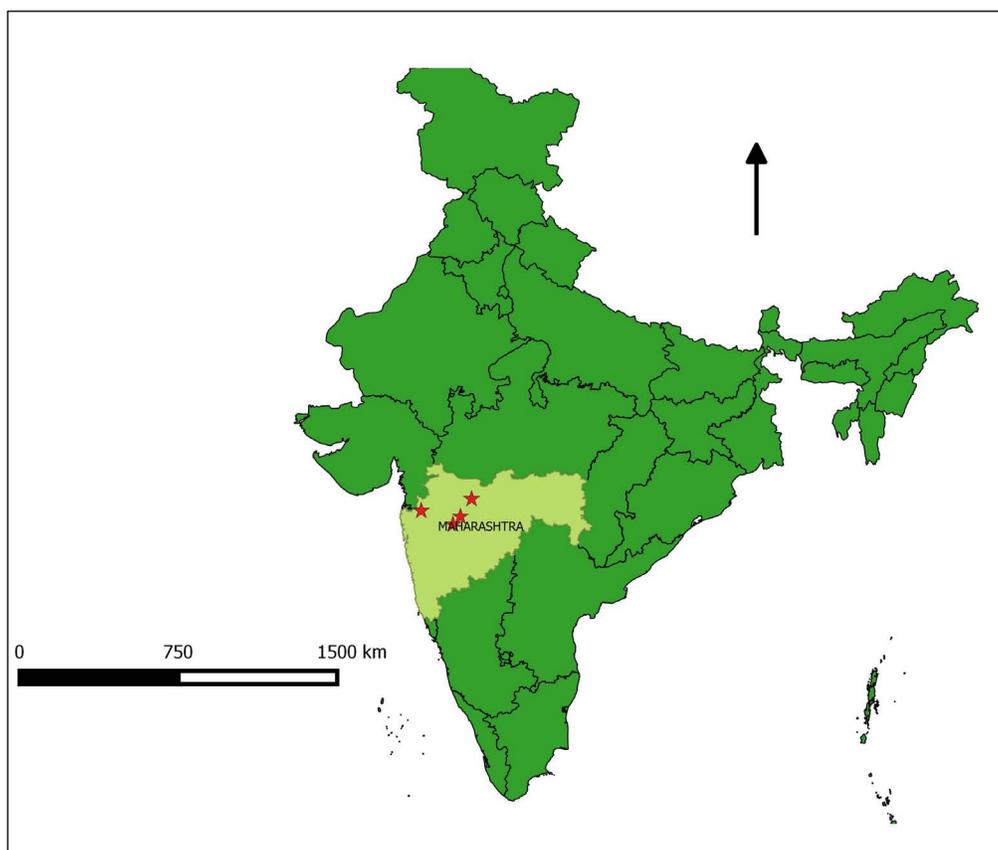


Figure 1. Map showing collection site.

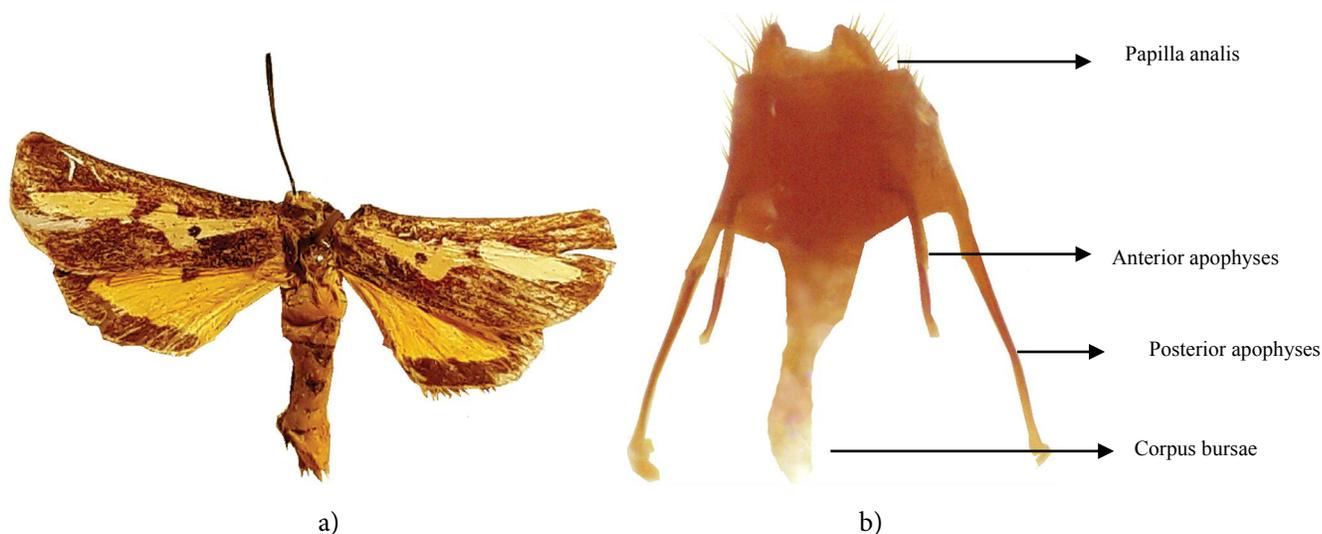


Plate 1. *A. venulia* a) Adult b) Female Genitalia

brown, thickly flecked with grey scales; longitudinal yellow-white band, angulated, extend across, notched at the upper edge, ends before reaching exterior margin; the band surrounded from outer side by a reddish brown line, possess a small black spot below the lower edge; a red marginal line; hind wing yellow with orange tinge, red-brown marginal band, a half round black discocellular spot; legs orange-yellow, black bands; cilia white.

Fore wing length: 31-33 mm.

Female Genitalia: (Plate 1 b) Corpus bursae elongate, membranous, tubular; posterior apophyses longer than anterior; papilla analis with setae.

Old Distribution: *India:* Bihar (Chakraborty *et al.* 1998); Madhya Pradesh (Ramakrishna *et al.* 2006); Puducherry

(Chakraborty *et al.* 2014); Rajasthan (Gupta and Thakur, 1986); Sub-Himalayan tracts of Kashmir and Sikkim, Plains of India (Hampson 1894); Tamil Nadu (Singh and Sekhon, 2015). *Elsewhere:* Sri Lanka; Burma (Hampson, 1894).

Larval Host Plants: *Boerhavia* sp. (Nyctaginaceae); *Trianthema* sp. (Aizoaceae) (Gardner, 1941).

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