

*SPODOPTERA EXCELSA* ROUGEOT,  
A NEW SYNONYM OF *ATHETIS PIGRA*  
(GUENÉE) (LEP.: NOCTUIDAE)

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### Introduction

Rougeot (1983) described some new Lepidoptera from a collection made in the High Simien mountains of Ethiopia during a week's visit in 1981. One of the species described was a noctuid moth to which he gave the name *Spodoptera excelsa* Rougeot.

As the genus *Spodoptera* contains some important agricultural pest species in Africa (e.g. *Spodoptera exempta* Walker), and the genus in Africa and the Near East has been studied in some detail (Brown & Dewhurst, 1975), it was of importance to study this newly described species.

### *Athetis pigra* (Guenée)

*Caradrina pigra* Guenée, 1852: 248.

*Proxenus pigra* Janse. 1938: 219, 238; Plates 17, 29; Fig. 61.

*Spodoptera excelsa* Rougeot, 1983: 230; Fig. 14. Holotype ♂, Ethiopia Simien Mts, Sankaber, 3400-3500m, 14.xi.1981, (P.-C. Rougeot) (MNHN, Paris) [examined]. Syn. n.

*Athetis pigra* (Guenée) (Medler, 1980: 361).

Dissection of the holotype clearly indicates that this is not a *Spodoptera* species, but a male of the species described by Guenée (1852) as *Caradrina pigra*. Janse (1938) provides very good photographs and drawings of the genitalia of this species under the name *Proxenus pigra* (Guenée). The genitalia of this species are clearly recognisable by the unusually shaped uncus and the large tubular densely-toothed cornutus on the vesica of the aedeagus.

### Discussion

*Athetis pigra* occurs widely in East and Southern Africa, Mauritius and Reunion (the type locality), but does not as far as we know have any pest status. Rougeot (1983) mentions the similarity of his species *Spodoptera excelsa* to another species, *Proxenus ignava* Guenée, which he also incorrectly referred to the genus *Spodoptera*. This species should provisionally be known as *Athetis ignava*.

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(Guenée, 1852) (J. D. Holloway, pers. comm.) pending thorough revisionary study of the genera concerned. No material of this species was examined during the present study.

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THE SLOE PUG, *CHLOROCYSTIS CHLOERATA* (MABILLE), NEW TO NORTHAMPTONSHIRE (VC32) — Whilst beating blackthorn blossom in Weldon Park, near Corby, on the 11th May 1986, a single larva of this species fell onto the tray. Although this moth's range extends northwards to Yorkshire and Westmorland ([Agassiz, D. and others], 1981, *An identification guide to the British Pugs*, B.E.N.H.S.) this is apparently the first record for Northamptonshire, (J. Ward pers. comm.). The species has been noted at two further localities in the county this year, namely Castor Hanglands NNR and Bedford Purlieus. — MARK PARSONS, Nature Conservancy Council, Northminster House, Peterborough, Cambs. PE1 1UA.

DIACHRYSLA ORICHALCEA FAB. (LEP.: NOCTUIDAE) IN HAMPSHIRE — A fresh specimen of this rare and beautiful immigrant was taken at my m.v. trap at Brockenhurst, in the New Forest, on 15.viii.1987. A. D. A. RUSSWURM, Coridon, Ober Road, Brockenhurst SO42 7ST.



Dewhurst, C F and Clifton, M P. 1987. "Spodoptera excelsa Rougeot, a new synonym of *Athetis pigra* (Guenée) (Lep.: Noctuidae)." *The entomologist's record and journal of variation* 99, 279–280.

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