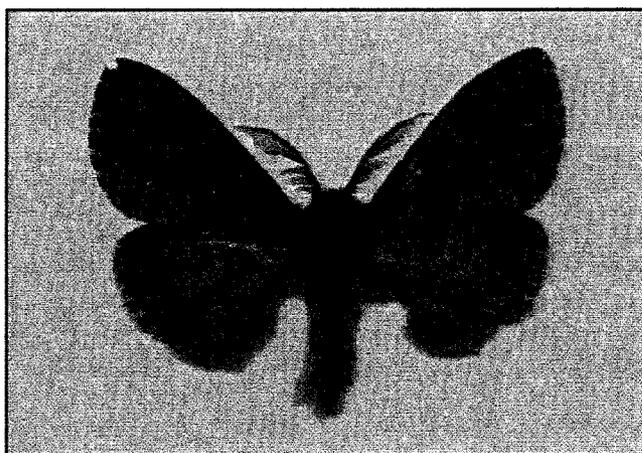


First record of *Lymantria atlantica* (Rambur, 1837) (Lepidoptera:Lymantriidae) from the Maltese Islands

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The family Lymantriidae is represented in Europe by no less than 29 species (Karsholt & Razowski, 1996). In Malta three species had been previously recorded. *Orgyia trigotephras* Boisduval, 1828 is by far the commonest species. In this species, the female is apterous while the male is often seen during the day and is easily mistaken for a butterfly. *Euproctis chrysorrhoea* (Linnaeus, 1758) has been recorded on two occasions, once from Gnejna Bay on June 27, 1983 from 3 specimens by the author, and secondly by Anthony Seguna from a single specimen collected from Bingemma on June 3, 1993 (Sammut, 2000). The third species is *Casama innotata* (Walker, 1855) recorded from a single specimen collected by Anthony Seguna from Bnghisa on October 23, 1987. The record of this last species from the Maltese Islands is the only record to date for all of Europe (Sammut, 2000).

A male specimen of the fourth species of Lymantridae, *Lymantria atlantica* (Rambur, 1837), was taken at light from Wied Babu, Zurrieq by Denis Magro on August 30, 2002. The specimen is in the collection of Mr. Denis Magro.



This African species has been recorded for Europe from France, Spain, Corsica, Sardegna and Sicily (Karsholt & Razowski, 1996). It also occurs in North Africa (Seitz, 1913).

Little is known about the biology of this species. The eggs are laid in bark crevices. The larvae feed during the night on foliage of *Schimus*, causing great damage, and hide during the day. Adults are on the wing in June and are attracted to light. The species is reported to be migratory (Soures, 1948). Locally, the larval food plant has not been identified.

I propose the Maltese name “L-Imferfex ta’ l-Atlantiku” for this species.

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