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NOTE ON THE CORRECT IDENTITY OF A *NOLA* LEACH SPECIES
(*Lepidoptera Noctuoidea Nolidae*) FROM MALTA

SUMMARY

The aim of this note is to correct the identity of the only *Nola* Leach species occurring on the Maltese Islands, from *Nola cristatula* (Hübner, 1793) to *Nola chlamitulalis* (Hübner, [1813]).

Key words. *Nola cristatula* (Hübner, 1793), *Nola chlamitulalis* (Hübner, [1813]), mistaken identity.

RIASSUNTO

Nota sulla corretta identità di una specie di Nola (Lepidoptera Noctuoidea Nolidae) a Malta. Lo scopo di questa nota è di correggere l'identità dell'unica specie di *Nola* Leach, presente nelle isole maltesi, da *Nola cristatula* (Hübner, 1793) a *Nola chlamitulalis* (Hübner, [1813]).

Parole chiave. *Nola cristatula* (Hübner, 1793), *Nola chlamitulalis* (Hübner, [1813]), Identificazione errata.

INTRODUCTION

In the early 1980's, the late Mr. Anthony Valletta, on one of his visits to his family in England, took with him moths collected from Malta, by himself and others. It was also usual for him to visit his friends at the Natural History Museum, London and to compare Maltese specimens with those in the museum's collection. Amongst these were a few specimens of a *Nola* species

collected by the first author. He, or his friends at the museum identified this *Nola* as *Nola cristatula* (Hübner, 1793). In 1984 Valletta published the results of his visit to the British Museum (VALLETTA, 1984). In the same year, the first author published *A Systematic and Synonymic List of the Lepidoptera of the Maltese Islands* and in the year 2000, the only book in Maltese on the Lepidoptera of Malta, where he listed and figured in colour this *Nola* species, mistakenly identified as *Nola cristatula*. This error was again repeated in KARSHOLT & RAZOWSKI's work (1996) on the Lepidoptera of Europe. Recently the first author again, in his 2020 work, *Systematic and Synonymic List of the Lepidoptera of the Maltese Islands* cited this *Nola* erroneously as *Nola cristatula*.

Comparing our specimens with images of *Nola cristatula* on the various lepidoptera internet sites and especially the illustrations on plate 6 of *Noctuidae Europaeae* (FIBIGER *et al.*, 2009), it became immediately evident that the species which flies in Malta was not this species but a similar one, *Nola chlamitulalis* (Hübner, [1813]). Therefore, all references to *Nola cristatula* from Malta should be regarded as misidentifications for *Nola chlamitulalis*.

MATERIAL EXAMINED: MALTA, (♀) Rabat, 14.vii.1979 at light, P. Sammut leg; (♂) Rabat, vi. 1981 at light, P. Sammut leg; (2♂♂), Rabat, ix.1981 at light, P. Sammut leg; (♀) Rabat, 10. viii.1984 at light, P. Sammut leg; (♂) Rabat, 19.vii.1985 at light, P. Sammut leg; (♂) Wied il-Kbir, 16.vi.1985 at light, A.Seguna leg; (♂) Mtarfa, 12.vii.1991 at light, A. Catania leg; (♂) Dwejra, 20.iv.1992 at light, A. Seguna leg; (♀) Mellie a, 20.viii.2007 at light, A. Seguna leg; (♀) Dwejra, 20.vi.2012 at light, A. Catania leg.

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Nola chlamitulalis (Hübner, [1813]) (♂) at light, July 1981 Rabat, Malta. Leg P. Sammut.

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