

***Eustrotia matercula* (Saalmüller, 1880) a “lost” Malagasy lepidopteran**

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Abstract: Rediscovery of *Eustrotia matercula* (Saalmüller, 1880) (Lepidoptera: Erebidae) and first illustrations of its male genitalia.

Eustrotia matercula (Saalmüller, 1880) (orig. comb.: *Erastria matercula*) is one of the numerous “lost” African lepidoptera species: no photographs are presently available and it seems to have never been mentioned again by any other author. Luckily it was illustrated in a later issue by the same main author (Saalmüller & von Heyden, 1891).

The holotype, labelled “Typus”; “Madagascar, Loucoubé, Madagascar”; “Ebenau80” still exists in the collections of the Frankfurt Museum but unfortunately has not been figured in modern times. May this explain why this species was never recognized again?

I found two male specimens on 30-iv-2013 in downtown Sambava (Sava), in the garden of Hotel Mimy and I would like to take the opportunity to illustrate this species before it might get forgotten again.

The specimens have a wingspan of 20mm.

Distribution: Madagascar. The local distribution is presently unknown – though as it seems to be a common moth at Sambava. I guess that it should be common in similar biotopes and believe that it might be found at most places in low altitudes along the coast line of Northern and Eastern Madagascar.

Observations: this species seems to be rather close in markings to the African species *Eustrotia decissima* (Walker, 1865).

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Fig.1-4: *Eustrotia matercula* (Saalmüller, 1880)

Fig.1 – adult, male, 20 mm, Sambava, 30-iv-2013

Fig.2 – adult, in-situ

Fig.3 – original illustration by Saalmüller & v. Heyden (1891)

Fig.4 – male genitalia, Fig. 4b - aedeagus

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