

## New species of the genus *Athamanthia* (Lepidoptera, Lycaenidae, Lycaeninae) from Kyrgyzstan

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The members of the entomological expedition being worked in the Inner Tien Shan region (east part of the Suusamyр-Too Mts., Kyrgyzstan) in the 1999 summer with the participation of the author have collected unusual specimen of the genus *Athamanthia* Zhdanko on the flowering sage (*Salvia* sp.), together with *Phoenicurusia margelanica* Staudinger, *Agrodiaetus iphigenides* Staudinger and *Hyponephele issykkuli* Samodurov. This butterfly is described herein as a new species, probably very local as it is hitherto known from the type locality only. All the attempts to find this butterfly in other places of the region studied were unsuccessful. By the external features and genital structures the new species belongs to the *A. dilutior* group which differs from the *A. athamantis* group by the absence of violet - red sheen on the dorsal side of the male wings and from the *A. dimorphus* group by the presence of yellowish fields on the dorsal side of male wings (Nekrutenko, 1985; Zhdanko, 1993). The male holotype of the new species is deposited in the collection of Zoological Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences St. Petersburg (ZIN); part of paratypes ibidem, together with the holotype; part of paratypes in the State Darwinian Museum, Moscow; the rest type material is distributed among the private collections of the author (Almaty), S. Churkin and V. Tuzov (Moscow). Figures in text are original.

### *Athamanthia churkini* Zhdanko, sp. n.

**Material.** Holotype ♂: Kyrgyzstan, Suusamyр-Too Mts., 7 km SE Kyzyl-Oi Vill., Keokeo-Meren [Keke-Meren] River, 1650 m, 13.07.1999 (A. Zhdanko leg.). Paratypes: 19 ♂, 4 ♀, ibidem, together with holotype (S. Churkin and A. Zhdanko); 2 ♂, ibidem, 12 km SE Kyzyl-Oi Vill., Keokeo-Meren River, 1550 m, 13.07.1999 (S. Churkin).

**Diagnosis.** The most close to *Athamanthia dilutior* Staudinger readily distinguished from the last by several characters indicated below. Forewing noticeably narrower, hind wing with yellowish background on upper side, black points on the underside of wings smaller, valva more narrow in its median part, arms of gnathos less curved, distal end of antevaginal sclerite relatively short.

**Description.** Male (holotype). Wing length 13.5 mm (12.4-15.1 mm in the type series). Antennae long, exceeding the top of cell. Antennal club elongate, brown. Fringe on the both wings black basally and white on the outer side; two variegations of long black fringe setae. Upper wing side yellow-brown, without violet sheen. Forewings narrow. Upper forewing side along the costa and near the base covered with greyish scales; its basal part with two black points (upper more developed) on yellow background. Apical discal spot large, elongate, postdiscal row S-shaped, consists of distinct black points, lower ones spread along the wing; submarginal arched row is complete consisting of separate black points (in *A. dilutior* they are larger and fused together). Complete row of marginal points spreads along the black wing edge. Hind wing yellowish in its median part but darkened along its margins. Apical black spot of discal cell distinct. One black point of postdiscal row is seen near the outer side of discal crossvein. Yellowish antemarginal bend well developed. Ternal tail short (2 mm), with white terminal tassel. Rounded anal lobe reduced. Underside of wings yellowish-white, with complete rows of black points characteristic for the genus *Athamanthia*, but in *A. dilutior* they are larger. Orange submarginal spots on both wings are separated by light veins. Black submarginal points on both wings are slightly diffuse. The size of black marginal points on forewing gradually decreases from top to base, whereas on the hind wing they are almost equal. Basal area with bluish scales absent in old specimens.

Male genitalia (fig.1) quite characteristic for the genus *Athamanthia* are most close to *A. dilutior*, but uncus is more short and rounded, aedeagus thin and less curved. Valva is wider in its median part while its distal end more elongated, arms of gnathos are curved less strongly. Internal fold present.

Female (forewing length 13.6 mm) quite similar to male, but forewing apex is rounded, pale yellow background on hind wing is less clear, ternal tails are thicker and slightly longer, orange-yellow spots on the underside of both wings are large.

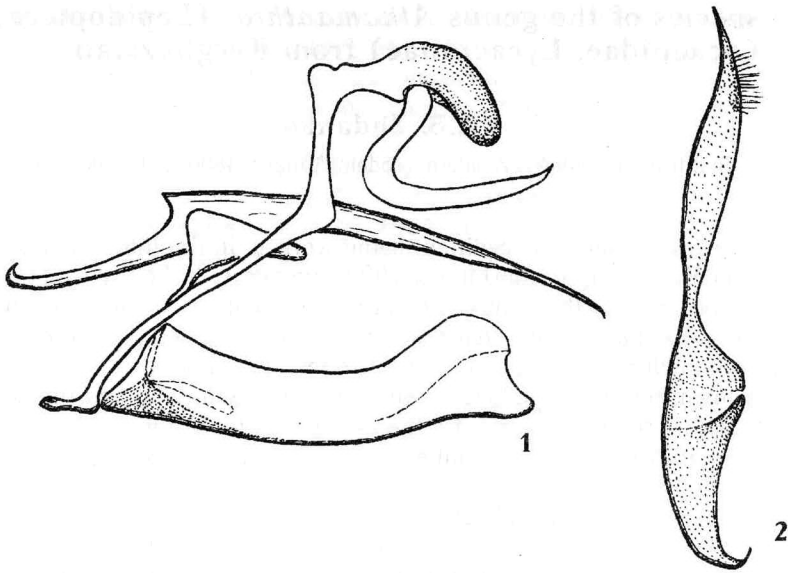


Fig. 1, 2. Genitalia of *Athamanthia churkini*, sp. n. (paratype). 1 – male; 2 – female.

Female genitalia. Ovipositor plates beanlike and sclerotized in basal part. Posterior apophyses tender, thin, slightly curved, hardly shorter than VIII segment. Anterior apophyses reduced. Both genital plates (fig.2) are connate and form elliptic sclerite. Lateral view of this sclerite is narrower than in *A. dilutior*, antevaginal plate with considerable shorter distal end. Bursa membranous, without signa.

*Distribution.* Hitherto known from the type locality only (Kirghizia, eastern part of Suusamyр-Тоо Mt. range, Keokeo-Meren River).

*Habitat and biology.* Abrupt stony eastern slopes with steppized vegetation and *Atraphaxis* / *Spiraea* bushes 1550-1650 m a.s.l. Flight period July. Host plant probably *Atraphaxis laetevirens*. Butterflies usually feed on *Salvia* sp. flowers, together with *Phoenicurusia margelanica* Staudinger and *Agrodiaetus iphigenides* Staudinger.

*Etymology.* The species is named in honour of my friend, Dr. Sergei Churkin who collected the first specimen of the new species.

### References

**Nekrutenko Yu. P., 1985.** A revision of the type-specimens of *Lycaena phoenicurus* group (Lepidoptera, Lycaenidae). *Vestn. Zool. n. 6*, pp. 43-49. (in Russian).

**Zhdanko A. B., 1993.** [Systematics, biology and distribution of Lycaenids of the genus *Athamanthia* Zhd. (Lepidoptera, Lycaenidae)]. *Entomol. Obozr.*, v. 72, n. 3, pp. 664-674. (in Russian).

### Резюме

**Жданко А.Б. Новый вид рода *Athamanthia* (Lepidoptera, Lycaenidae, Lycaeninae) из Кыргызстана.**

В статье описывается новый вид рода *Athamanthia* Zhd. (Lycaeninae), пойманный летом 1999 года в Киргизии (хр.Суусамыр-Тоо). Новый вид по внешним признакам и строению гениталий относится к группе *A. dilutior*, которая отличается от группы *A. athamantis* отсутствием фиолетово-красного отблеска сверху на крыльях самца и от группы *A. dimorphus* - наличием желтоватых полей сверху на крыльях самца, (Жданко, 1993). Голотип и часть паратипов хранятся в коллекции Зоологического института РАН (г. Санкт-Петербург). Остальные паратипы хранятся в коллекциях Дарвиновского музея (г. Москва), С. Чуркина и В. Тузова (г. Москва). Рисунки оригинальны.