

# *Eriocrania salopiella* (Lepidoptera: Eriocraniidae), new to the Belgian fauna

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**Samenvatting.** *Eriocrania salopiella* (Lepidoptera: Eriocraniidae), een nieuwe soort voor de Belgische fauna

De eerste exemplaren in België werden gevonden door de Bladmijnenwerkgroep te Kluisbergen (Provincie Oost-Vlaanderen) op 22 mei 2009. Twee dagen later werd dezelfde soort talrijk in de "Kleiputten" te Niel (Provincie Antwerpen) aangetroffen. Op 06 juni 2009 werd de soort opnieuw vastgesteld in Oost-Vlaanderen, maar nu te Lembeke, ongeveer 60 km verwijderd van de eerste plaats. In 2010 was de soort in staat om zich nog meer uit te breiden; op 29 mei werden verschillende mijnen op berk gevonden te Ploegsteert (Prov. Henegouwen) en op 05 juni vond Chris Steeman zeer veel mijnen op berk te Nassogne (Prov. Luxemburg).

**Résumé.** *Eriocrania salopiella* (Lepidoptera: Eriocraniidae), une espèce nouvelle pour la faune belge

Les premiers exemplaires de Belgique furent trouvés le 22 mai 2009 par notre Groupe d'études "mineurs de feuilles" à Kluisbergen (province de Flandre orientale). Deux jours plus tard cette espèce fut rencontrée abondamment dans le domaine "Kleiputten" à Niel (province d'Anvers). Le 06 juin 2009 on a trouvé l'espèce à Lembeke (province de Flandre orientale) à une distance de 60 km de la première capture. En 2010 l'espèce a élargi son aire de distribution, le 29 mai 2010 à Ploegsteert (Prov. du Hainaut), plusieurs mines sur bouleau et le 05 juin Chris Steeman a trouvé plusieurs mines sur bouleau à Nassogne (Prov. du Luxembourg).

**Key words:** *Eriocrania salopiella* – Faunistics – First record – Belgium.

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## Introduction

On 22 May 2009, the Workgroup Belgian Leafminers, consisting that day of Dries De Vreeze, Chris Snyers, and myself, collected some tenanted mines of *Eriocrania salopiella* Stainton, 1854 on birch (*Betula* sp.) at Kluisbergen (prov. of East Flanders). This is the first record of this species for the Belgian fauna. Two days later, the species was found again, this time very plentiful in the domain "Kleiputten" at Niel (prov. of Antwerp). The mines still contained young, eating caterpillars. On 06 June, numerous mines were found in the province of East-Flanders, but this time at Lembeke, about 60 km away from the first place.

In 2010, *Eriocrania salopiella* has spread some more over the country. On 29 May, the workgroup found a few mines at Ploegsteert (prov. of Hainaut) and on 05 June, Chris Steeman found lots of tenanted mines at Nassogne (prov. of Luxembourg). The species is apparently well established in Belgium, because everywhere we found mines, it was always in high numbers. Hitherto, this new Belgian species has been found in four provinces: Antwerp, East-Flanders, Hainaut, and Luxembourg.



Figs. 1–3. Larva of *Eriocrania salopiella* Stainton, 1854. Lembeke (Belgium, East Flanders), 06.vi.2009, leg. Workgroup Leafminers. Fig. 4.– Cut in under epidermis made by the caterpillar just before pupation in the soil. (Photos S. Wullaert). Figs. 5–6.– Vacated leafmines of *Eriocrania salopiella* Stainton, 1854 on *Betula* sp., Kluisbergen (Belgium, East Flanders), 22.v.2009, leg. Workgroup Leafminers. (Photos C. Snyers).

## Biology

Mine: Typical for this *Eriocrania*-species is that the egg is never laid far away from the midrib. From there starts a short corridor that is almost completely filled with frass deposited in irregular flakes. The mine then turns into a blotch mine which crosses the mid- and sideribs, in this blotch the frass is arranged in long black threads. The caterpillar makes a cut in the under epidermis through which it leaves the mine and pupates in the ground. The caterpillars can be found in May and June. They exclusively live on birch (*Betula* sp.) (Ellis 2009). The next generation appears in April of the following year. The imago has a wing span of 09–12 mm.

## Distribution

In the Benelux, the species was hitherto only recorded from the Netherlands (Ellis 2009). In the rest of Europe *E. salopiella* is present in the British Isles, Ireland, Denmark, France, Germany and in all of the Scandinavian countries. It has not been recorded yet from large countries like Italy, Portugal or Spain. In Central and Eastern Europe the species is present in the Czech Republic and in North- and Northwest Russia (Karsholt & van Nieuwerkerken 2010).

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