

short communication / kratko priopćenje

## *DANAUS CHRYSIPPUS* (LINNAEUS, 1758) (LEPIDOPTERA, NYMPHALIDAE, DANAINAE), A NEW SPECIES IN THE FAUNA OF CROATIA

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On August 15, 2004, three specimens of *Danaus chrysippus* (Linnaeus, 1758) were caught at the mouth of the Neretva River near the town of Ploče in South Dalmatia. This is the first record of this migratory species in Croatia. A review of its zoogeographical characteristics and distribution in Europe is given. The results have been discussed and further study of this species is recommended.

**Keywords:** *Danaus chrysippus*, distribution, Neretva, Croatia

**Perković, D.: *Danaus chrysippus* (Linnaeus, 1758) (Lepidoptera, Nymphalidae, Danainae), nova vrsta u hrvatskoj fauni. Nat. Croat., Vol. 15, No 1–2, 61–64, 2006, Zagreb.**

Tri primjerka vrste *Danaus chrysippus* (Linnaeus, 1758) ulovljena su 15. kolovoza 2004. godine na ušću rijeke Neretve, blizu grada Ploča u južnoj Dalmaciji. To je prvi nalaz ove migratorne vrste za Hrvatsku. Prikazane su zoogeografske značajke i rasprostranjenost spomenute vrste u Europi. Rezultati su raspravljeni i preporučeno je daljnje istraživanje ove vrste.

**Ključne riječi:** *Danaus chrysippus*, rasprostranjenost, Neretva, Hrvatska

### INTRODUCTION

According to TOLMAN & LEWINGTON (1997) the migratory species Plain Tiger, *Danaus chrysippus* (Linnaeus, 1758), is resident on the Canary Islands and in northern Africa (western Morocco, northern Algeria and Tunisia). It is also recorded from mainly coastal districts of southern Spain, southern France, Corsica, Sardinia, Sicily, western Italy, Montenegro, Albania, western and southern Greece, including Corfu and Crete.

In the summer of 2004 three specimens of the species were caught at the mouth of the Neretva River in South Dalmatia. Although it was found in countries near the southern part of Croatia (Serbia and Montenegro, Italy and Albania) it was not recorded in Croatia before this investigation into the butterfly fauna from the mouth of the Neretva River.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Morphological and zoogeographical characteristics of the species

The fore-wing and hind-wing upperside ground colour in both sexes is light orange-brown to chestnut brown. The fore-wing upperside apex is dark brown, enclosing transverse white spots (TOLMAN & LEWINGTON, 1997) (Fig. 1).

The Plain Tiger is a wide-ranging migrant species. It is distributed from Europe (Canary Islands, coastal Mediterranean regions, Turkey) to Saudi Arabia, tropical Asia and even Australia and New Zealand. It is polyvoltine and prefers bushy, rocky places; hot, coastal gullies, usually near gardens and cultivated areas (TOLMAN & LEWINGTON, 1997).

### Locality of the species in Croatia

The first specimen was caught on August 15, 2004, at the Adriatic Coast in southern Dalmatia, at the mouth of the Neretva River, near the town of Ploče (Fig. 2). It was found on the sandy seashore, at the very mouth of the river.

The two other specimens were caught at the same locality, but some 400 m upstream. They appeared in a small group of about eight species flying over gardens and cultivated areas, under great anthropogenic influence.

In an analysis of the Dalmatian butterfly fauna, no previous record of this species was found (ABAFI-AIGNER *et al.*, 1896; ABAFI-AIGNER, 1910; GALVAGNI, 1902; 1909a; 1909b; 1934; MANN, 1969; REBEL, 1919; SCHWINGENSCHUSS & WAGNER, 1924/25). There are also no records of this species in the catalogue of the Croatian National Museum in Zagreb (MLADINOV, 1973).



Fig. 1. Plain Tiger *Danaus chrysippus* (Linnaeus, 1758) from the mouth of the Neretva River (leg. D. Perković) (photo D. Perković)



Fig. 2. Locality of the species *Danaus chrysippus* (Linnaeus, 1758) in Croatia

Since 1988, a remarkable increase in the distribution range of the species has occurred in Italy. It has been recorded in the whole of Sicily, Campania, Lampedusa, Sardinia, Isole Ponziane, and also in Emilia-Romagna and Liguria, the northernmost sightings in Europe. The diffusion of the species was linked with the warm conditions from 1986–1990 (BORGO *et al.*, 1992).

In 1992 the species was recorded for the first time in Serbia and Montenegro. It was found in Budva, Boka Kotorska and Risan (JAKŠIĆ & RISTIĆ, 1999).

In future finding of the species at other parts of the Adriatic Coast can be expected. An expansion of its area of distribution from the south to areas in the north is possible because of the warming of local climate conditions. Further study of this species is recommended, because it is not clear if the specimens found in Croatia are temporary or permanent breeding populations.

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## SAŽETAK

### *Danaus chrysippus* (Linnaeus, 1758) (Lepidoptera, Nymphalidae, Danainae), nova vrsta u hrvatskoj fauni

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U kolovozu 2004. godine na području ušća rijeke Neretve (blizu grada Ploča, južna Dalmacija) ulovljena su tri primjerka vrste *Danaus chrysippus* (Linnaeus, 1758). To je prvi zabilježeni nalaz za područje Hrvatske. Pretpostavlja se da su ulovljeni u doba migracije, te je najvjerojatnije došlo do širenja areala s juga prema sjevernijim područjima. U ovom dijelu Europe prethodno je zabilježena u Italiji, Albaniji i Crnoj Gori (TOLMAN & LEWINGTON, 1997).

U budućnosti je moguće daljnje širenje u južnom Hrvatskom primorju. Preporuča se istraživanje spomenute vrste radi utvrđivanja statusa populacija u Hrvatskoj.