

# **BAGISARA LAVERNA FROM SOUTHEASTERN ARIZONA: A NEW UNITED STATES RECORD (LEPIDOPTERA: NOCTUIDAE: BAGISARINAE)**

**JAMES K. ADAMS**

Dept. of Natural Science and Math, Dalton State College,  
213 N. College Drive, Dalton, Georgia 30720, USA



Fig. 1. *Bagisara laverna*, female; Arizona, Cochise Co., Portal, 2 Aug 1999 (FW length = 17mm) (James K. Adams).

The Bagisarinae is a relatively small subfamily of the Noctuidae, with 19 described species known from the New World, all in the genus *Bagisara*. Eleven of these species occur within the borders of the United States (Franclemont and Todd, 1983:134; Ferguson, 1997). *Bagisara laverna* is reported in this paper for the first time from southeastern Arizona, bringing the total number of *Bagisara* species recorded in the United States to 12 species.

*Bagisara laverna* Druce occurs from at least central Mexico to Honduras (Ferguson, 1997). There are specimens in the United States National Museum (USNM), Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, from several states in Mexico, including Nayarit, Jalisco, Morelos, Veracruz, and San Luis Potosí. The specimens that were collected closest to the United States in the USNM are those from San Luis Potosí at El Naranjo, south of El Salto Falls and west of Antiguo Morelos (Tamaulipas). *Bagisara laverna* seems to occur in a broad variety of habitats, as the Mexican records are from both xeric and mesic habitats. There are additional specimens in the USNM indicating that the range of this species extends southward at least to Costa Rica (Ferguson, pers. comm.).

On the night of 2 Aug 1999, a female specimen of *Bagisara laverna* (Figure) was collected in Portal (at the Portal Lodge), Cochise Co., Arizona. The specimen was attracted to a sheet illuminated by a 1000-watt, frosted mercury vapor bulb. The habitat surrounding the lodge is relatively dry scrub, but Portal lies just east of the Chiricahua Mountains, which generate some of their own rainfall during the summer months and are significantly more lush than the area immediately around Portal. If there are established populations of *B. laverna* in southeastern Arizona, which would seem likely since the specimen I collected is relatively fresh, then investigation of areas near potential larval foodplants could prove fruitful. Larval foodplants are known for very few of the *Bagisara*

species, however, though in all cases the larvae have been recorded from plants in the Malvaceae (Ferguson, 1997).

It is likely that other specimens of *Bagisara laverna* are in collections of material from Mexican states (Coahuila, Chihuahua, Sonora) along the border of the United States and even from southern Arizona, New Mexico and Texas. Figure 1 should help investigators identify the species. Particularly characteristic of *B. laverna* are the tricolored, transverse lines on the forewing. As can be seen in Fig. 1, the outside of the two outer transverse lines is grayish-white, with yellow-orange to the inside, and highlighted with darker gray (compared with the ground color) medially. The species is also large relative to most other species of *Bagisara* found in the United States (forewing length: 16-19mm [Ferguson, 1997]; figured specimen = 17mm).

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to acknowledge Douglas Ferguson of the Systematic Entomology Laboratory for confirming the identity of *Bagisara laverna*, as well as providing locality information from specimens in the USNM. I would also like to thank Ed Knudson for initially suggesting, after seeing the specimen, that it could be a new United States record.

## REFERENCES

- Ferguson, D. C.**  
1997. Review of the New World Bagisarinae with description of two new species from the Southern United States (Noctuidae). *J. Lepid. Soc.* (Los Angeles), 51:344-357.
- Franclemont, J. G., and E. L. Todd**  
1983. Noctuidae. In R. W. Hodges *et al.* (eds.), *Check List of the Lepidoptera of America North of Mexico*, 120-159. London: E. W. Classey. 284pp.