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Scientific activity of József Szőcs (1908–1987): list of his publications with documenting the taxa he described

Zs. Bálint & G. Katona

Department of Zoology, Hungarian Natural History Museum,
H-1088 Budapest, Baross utca 13.
E-mails: balint@nhmus.hu, katona@nhmus.hu

Abstract – Complete list of 59 publications with natural history interest written by the late József Szőcs (1908–1987), technician and assistant curator of Lepidoptera in the Hungarian Natural History Museum is presented, with a thematic breakdown of the papers. The primary type specimens of the six taxa proposed by J. Szőcs are fully documented. One species he unintentionally described and the material served for description is reported. With 12 figures.

Key words – József Szőcs, bibliography, Lepidoptera, Aves, holotypes, Hungarian Natural History Museum.

INTRODUCTION

József Szőcs (7.VII.1908, Budapest – 20.XII.1987, Budapest) served as a technician and assistant curator for a quarter of century beside the late Dr László Gozmány, the renowned Microlepidoptera specialist. As an entomologist during his life he focused on the nepticulid micromoths. The lepidopteran family Nepticulidae belongs to the invertebrate groups with high economic and scientific interest. The tiny nepticulid caterpillars mine between the epidermises of leaves of their host plants causing severe alteration in the quality and quantity of the biomass the plant produces. As they mine the caterpillars leave characteristic pattern which is also preserved in dried or fossilized leaves. So nepticulids offer the hitherto known earliest records of Neolepidoptera for the great interest of entomologists working on insect classification (Grimaldi & Engel 2005: 572). Because of their

special life history, large diversity and microscopic size the expert of these micromoths has to be a remarkable personality with a good botanical knowledge and talented with extreme patience, good eyes, and selfless devotion. Such a person was JÓZSEF SZŐCS (Fig. 1).

Fig. 1. Portrait of JÓZSEF SZŐCS in the time of his retirement (from the archive of the Lepidoptera Collection, HNHM)

The SZŐCS family run an enterprise based on a small estate situated at the southern slopes of Márton-hegy (Márton Hill), Budapest; just nearby the type locality or classical collecting site of many legendary Lepidoptera species, *Erannis ankeraria* (STAUDINGER, 1861) (Geometridae); *Jolana iolas* (OCHSENHEIMER, 1816) (Lycaenidae); *Ocnogyna parasita* (HÜBNER, 1790) (Arctiidae); *Perigrapha i-cinctum* (DENIS et SCHIFFERMÜLLER, 1775) (Noctuidae) and *Pyrrhia purpurites* (TREITSCHKE, 1825) (Noctuidae), just to mention a few. In the site the family had green houses and horticultures, and the family lived there in their own buildings. Because JÓZSEF's right leg was lame as a consequence of poliomyelitis, it was not easy to find a vocation for the young lad. First he was serving as a clockmaster's apprentice, but subsequently he got involved in the family enterprise and with his brother run a successful business.

As it turned to be obvious via his scientific publications JÓZSEF SZŐCS was an ardent observer of nature. He started to record systematically his findings when he was young. His first report was published at the age of 22. The series of accounts he wrote, on the behaviour of vertebrate animals, especially on birds, appeared in the periodicals *Aquila* and *A Természet*. Already in those times invertebrates were also in his interest, most probably not only because of obvious economic reasons of the family enterprise and his father's collecting activity (SZABÓKY 2007: 21), but also his love of nature. In 1942 a short paper he wrote on interesting Lepidoptera was published in the journal *Folia entomologica hungarica*, and in 1955 a longer work followed which summarized the faunistic records he collected at the family estate between 1940 and 1952.

From this point his interest was focused on Lepidoptera. One of the reasons of this was most probably that the family enterprise with all the real estates was confiscated by the state of the people's republic sometime between 1948 and 1952. Consequently JÓZSEF SZŐCS had to look after another way of living. According to the museum files in June of 1952 he joined the staff of the Hungarian Natural History Museum. At the side of Dr GOZMÁNY (see BÁLINT *et al*. 2011) he started working on micromoths, especially Nepticulidae and other leaf mining families. In the very beginning of his museum career he laid down the corner stones for his scientific endeavour by publishing two important papers: (1) a technical guide how to collect and prepare nepticulids and (2) a review of Nepticulidae species recorded from Hungary. With this approach J. SZŐCS was able to convert his handicaps inherited from his childhood into the source of high scientific concentration and systematic labour as during his field work the slow motion did not allow him to pass even the smallest detail actually he was interested in. (Fig. 2).

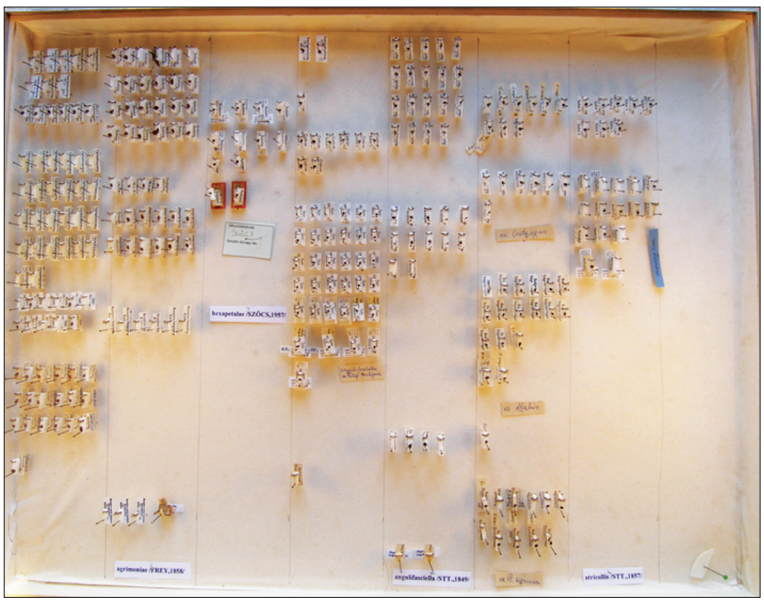
He remained on this narrow path for his entire scientific activity. During his service in the Hungarian Natural History Museum he reared several thousands of micromoths; he prepared, identified, labelled and curated tens of thousands Lepidoptera specimens (Figs 3–4). Still with Dr GOZMÁNY in the 1950s he established the herbaria strictly connected to their rearing activities; and it constantly received new material during his years of service (Figs 5–6). Just to show how magnificent was his work, in the time of this writing according to the most recent inventories the Nepticulidae collection of the Hungarian Natural History Museum comprises 3422 specimens curated in 15 drawers, and the leaf mine herbaria contains 3772 sheets in

262 files from the Carpathian Basin. Besides his lepidopterological works mentioned and discovering and describing mining moth species unknown for science, he published a series of papers dealing with Lepidoptera larval host plans, faunistic records collected by light traps and rearing results, plus the parasitoids he got from Lepidopteran caterpillars during his rearing experiments.

JÓZSEF SZŐCS did not work in isolation, he corresponded widely with colleagues and fellow lepidopterists who dedicated to him the following micromoths: *Elachista szocsi* PARENTI, 1979 (Elachistidae), *Nepticula szocsi* KLIMESCH, 1956 (Nepticulidae), *Nepticula szoecsiella* BORKOWSKI, 1972 (Nepticulidae), *Parornix szocsi* GOZMÁNY, 1952 (Gracillariidae), *Taleporia szocsi* SIEDER, 1955 (Psychidae) and *Tischeria szoecsi* KASY, 1961 (Tischeriidae). His remarkable contribution to entomology was also honoured by hymenopterologists who named the following species after him: *Apanteles szoecsi* PAPP, 1973 (Ichneumonoidae) and *Geniocerus szoecsi* ERDŐS, 1958 (Eulophidae).

JÓZSEF SZŐCS was an important person not only for the science of lepidopterology in national level, but for entomology and natural history in general. He died 25 years ago. We keep his memory alive.

Fig. 2. JÓZSEF SZŐCS (right) on fieldwork with GYULA ÉHIK and other colleagues in 1961, Csévharaszt (from the archive of the Lepidoptera Collection, HNHM)



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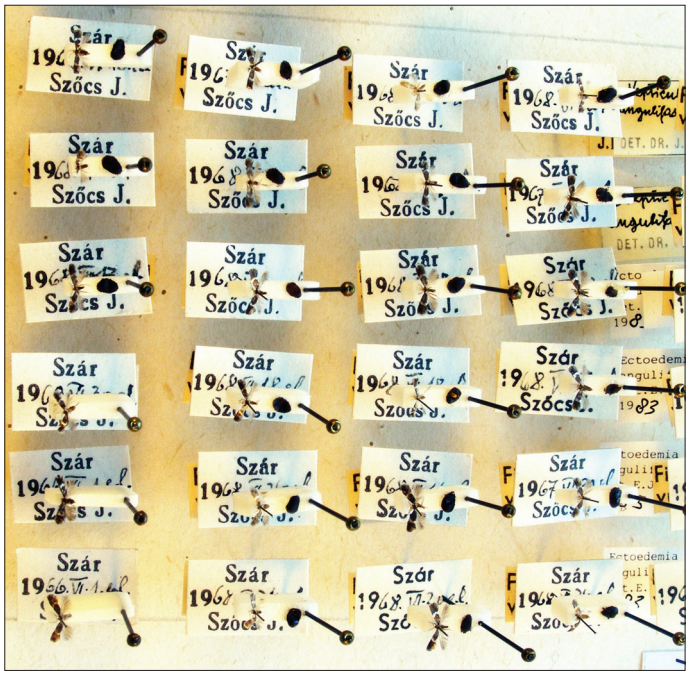

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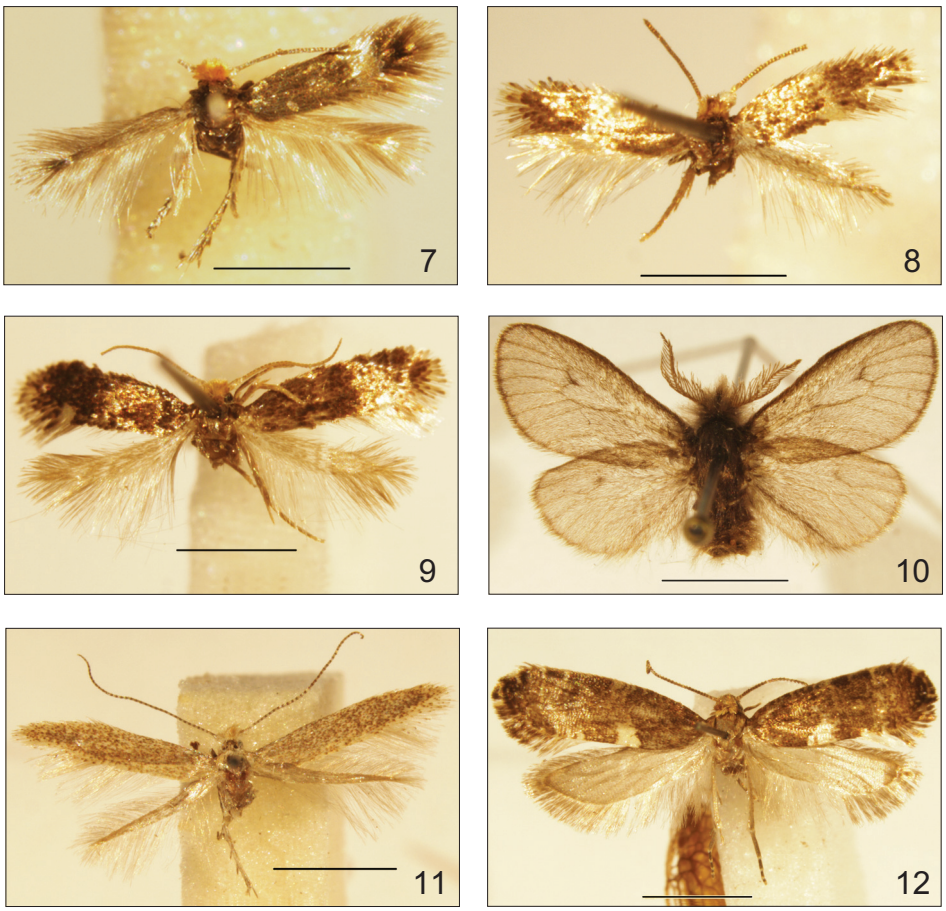
Figs 3–4. From the collection of Nepticulidae in the Hungarian Natural History Museum: 3 = General view of drawer 28 in cabinet 27A, 4 = showing details (photos: G. KATONA)

Figs 5–6. Original JÓZSEF SZŐCS sheets from the leaf mine herbaria in the Hungarian Natural History Museum. 5 = Type material of *Bedellia ehikella* SZŐCS, 1967 (file no. 220), 6 = mine and detailed description of caterpillar with drawings of *Elachista bedellella* (SICROM, 1848) (photos: G. KATONA)



Figs 7–12. Holotype specimens of Lepidoptera taxa described by JÓZSEF SZŐCS: 7 = *Nepticula elisabethella* SZŐCS, 1957 (scale bar 1.3 mm), 8 = *Nepticula utensis hexapetalae* SZŐCS, 1957 (scale bar 1.3 mm), 9 = *Nepticula gozmanyi* SZŐCS, 1959 (scale bar 1.3 mm), 10 = *Acantopsyche siederi* SZŐCS, 1961 (scale bar 4 mm), 11 = *Bedellia ehikella* SZŐCS, 1967 (scale bar 3.5 mm), 12 = *Acrolepia karolyii* SZŐCS, 1969 (scale bar 4 mm) (photos: ZS. BÁLINT)

The aim of the present paper is to list all the published works of JÓZSEF SZŐCS with natural science topics we could detect, to list the names of the taxa he proposed in Lepidoptera, and to document their primary type material. In the bibliography; when the language of the paper is Hungarian we provide the translation of the title in normal brackets if it was originally given, and between square brackets if we translated it. Then the biblio-

graphy of 59 items is supplemented by a thematic breakdown of these publications. Altogether there are 59 items in the bibliography. Although sometimes there are overlaps in the subjects, we tried to arrange them according to their main topics. The single short report on Mammalia and another paper, which is the sole literature review ever written by JÓZSEF SZŐCS, were put together as miscellanea. The subjects of 13 papers (22%) are connected to birds, or they are the subjects themselves. The topic of 18 (30.5%) papers is Lepidoptera faunistics, eleven (18.5%) paper strictly deal with life-history of Lepidoptera, ten (17%) papers are taxonomic, and eight papers (13.5%) focus on the family Nepticulidae. Two papers elaborate how to rear and collect leaf mining moths in general, and three papers are dedicated to their specific insect parasitoids. There are three publications that can be considered as monographs. Finally the list of the Lepidoptera taxa described by JÓZSEF SZŐCS is given where the names are listed in their original binominal combination with reference to description and type material, which are deposited in the Hungarian Natural History Museum (Figs 7–12).

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THEMATIC BREAKDOWN OF JÓZSEF SZŐCS'S BIBLIOGRAPHY

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LIST OF LEPIDOPTERA TAXA DESCRIBED BY JÓZSEF SZŐCS

Abbreviations and technical notes – HNHM = Hungarian Natural History Museum; [//] = line break in the label; italic letters indicate handwritten words in the labels.

Nepticula elisabethella (Nepticulidae) (Fig 7.) – SZŐCS 1957*b*: 321; HNHM holotype male , minutia pinned with its pupal case glued to a piece of foam, in moderate condition as left forewing and antenna missing, abdomen dissected, labelled as (1) "Fót [//] *mogyoródip.*" [white label; printed, handwritten], (2) "19*56. IV. 27.* [//] Szőcs J. *e. l.*" [white label; printed, handwritten], (3) "Gen. prep. [//] No. *871* [//] dr. Gozmány [//] *Nepticula*" [white label; printed, handwritten], (4) "Holotypus [//] *Nepticula* [//] *elisabethella* [//] *Szőcs*" [red bordered yellow label; printed, handwritten]; patronym of JÓZSEF SZŐCS's wife, née ERZSÉBET (= Elisabeth) SIMONITS, who was a consant support of her husband, and described on the basis of the holotype male from "Fót, Mogyoród patak" and the paratype male and female (allotype) from the same site. The name is listed as one of the junior subjective synonyms of *Stigmella poterii* (STAINTON, 1857) by SZABÓKY *et al.* (2002: 14), on the basis of JOHANSSON *et al.* (1990) and VAN NIEUKERKEN (1986: 12).

Nepticula utensis WEBER var. biol. *hexapetalae* var. nov. (Nepticulidae) (Fig. 8) – SZŐCS 1957*b*: 321; HNHM holotype male, minutia pinned with its pupal case glued to a piece of foam, in good condition, left antenna tip missing, abdomen dissected, labelled as (1) "Budapest [//], *Sashegy*" [white label; printed, handwritten], (2) "*F. hexapat.* [//] *ü. 8.*" [white label; handwritten], (3) "Gen. prep. [//] No. *944* [//] *utensis* [//] dr. Gozmány *Nepticula*" [white label; printed, handwritten], (4) "Holotypus [//] *Nepticula utensis Web* [//] *v. biol. hexapatalae* [//] *Szőcs*" [red bordered yellow label; printed, handwritten]; named after the larval host plant *Filipendula hexapetala*, and described on the basis of the holotype male from "hill Sashegy, in Budapest", and the paratype male and female (allotype) from the same site. The name is listed as *Ectoedemia hexapetalae* (SZŐCS, 1957) [sic] by SZABÓKY *et al.* (2002: 16), on the basis of VAN NIEUKERKEN (1985: 5) and VAN NIEUKERKEN *et al.* (2010: 68).

Nepticula gozmanyi (Nepticulidae) (Fig. 9) – SZŐCS 1959*a*: 417; HNHM holotype male, minutia pinned with its pupal case glued to a piece of foam, in perfect condition, abdomen dissected, labelled as (1) "Budapest [//], Rómaif." [white label; printed], (2) "19*57. VI. 2. e. l.* [//] Szőcs J." [white label; printed, handwritten], (3) "No. *969* [//] det. Dr Gozmány" [white label; handwritten, printed], (4) "Holotypus [//] *Nepticula* [//] *gozmanyi Szőcs*" [red bordered yellowed label; printed, handwritten]; patronym of entomologist LÁSZLÓ GOZMÁNY (1921–2006), curator of Lepidoptera (HNHM); the species was described on

the basis of the holotype and three male and six female paratypes (one of them is "allotype") from "Rómaifürdő, Budapest". The name is listed as one of the junior subjective synonyms of *Trifurcula eurema* (TUTT, 1899) by SZABÓKY *et al.* (2002: 15), on the basis of VAN NIEUKERKEN (1986: 5).

Acantopsyche siederi (Psychidae) (Fig. 10) – SZŐCS 1961*a*: 478, HNHM holotype male in perfect condition (with its pupal case on its pin), labelled as (1) "Csepel [//] Uhrik [//] *927.IV.26.e.l.*" [white label; printed, handwritten]". (2) "Holotypus [//] *Acant.* [//] *siederi Szőcs*" [red bordered yellowed label; printed, handwritten]; patronym of German entomologist LEO SIEDER (1887–1980), lived in Klagenfurt, Austria; the species was described on the basis of the holotype from "Csepel" and from 140 paratypes from various localities: Budaörs: Csiki-hegyek (99), Budapest: Farkas-völgy (7), Csepel (26), Dunakeszi (1), Káposztásmegyer (1), Pest (3), Rákospalota (3). The name is listed in its original combination and status by SZABÓKY *et al.* (2002: 24).

Bedellia ehikella (Bedelliidae) (Fig. 11) – SZŐCS 1967*c*: 231, HNHM holotype male, minutia pinned to a piece of foam, abdomen dissected, labelled as (1) "Budapest [//], Hármashh." [white label; printed], (2) "Convolvulus [//] cantabricus" [white label; printed], (3) "*Convolvulus* [//] *cantabricus* [//] *59/63.*" [white label; handwritten], (4) "*Bedellia* [//] *No. 2810* [//] Gen. Prep. [//] dr. L. Gozmány" [white label; handwritten, printed], (5) "Holotypus [//] *Bedellia* [//] *ehikella*" [red bordered yellowed label; printed, handwritten]; patronym of zoologist GYULA ÉHIK (1891–1964), director of the Department of Zoology, HNHM. The species was described on the basis of the holotype male from "Hármashatárhegy, Budapest" and further 25 male and 25 female paratype specimens from the type locality, and from two male and three female paratypes from Csákvár. All these specimens were reared by J. SZŐCS. The name is listed in its original combination and status by SZABÓKY *et al.* (2002: 34).

Acrolepia karolyii (Acrolepiidae) (Fig. 12) – SZŐCS 1969*a*: 213, HNHM holotype male, minutia pinned with its pupal case glued to a piece of foam, in perfect condition, abdomen dissected, labelled as (1) "Badacsony [//], 1*968.IV.7. e.l.* [//] Szőcs J." [white label; printed, handwritten], (2) "Tamus [//] communis" [white label; printed], (3) "*Acrolepia* [//] *3727* [//] gen. prep. No. [//] Dr. L. Gozmány" [white label; handwritten, printed], (4) "Holotypus [//] *Acrolepia* [//] *karolyii Szőcs*" [red boredered yellowed label; printed, handwritten]; patronym of botanist ÁRPÁD KÁROLYI (1907–1972), collector of the type material; the species was described on the basis of the holotype from "Badacsony" plus eleven male and ten female paratype specimens all reared from the type locality. The name is listed as the junior subjective synonym of *Acrolepia tauricella* (STAUDINGER, 1871) by SZABÓKY *et al.* (2002: 33).

Nepticula thymi HERING (Nepticulidae) – SZŐCS 1965*a*: 90; HNHM lectotype male (designated by NIEUKERKEN 1986: 5), minutia pinned with its pupal case glued to a piece of foam in perfect condition, abdomen dissected, labelled as (1) "LECTO- // TYPE" (dark blue bordered white confetti-type label; printed), (2) "Budapest [//] Széchhenyi-hegy"

(white label; printed), (3) "1963.*VII.21. e.l.* [//] Szőcs J." (white label; printed, handwritten), (3) "NEPTICULIDAE ♂ [//] Genitalia Slide [//] VU no. 2506" (white label; printed, handwritten), (4) "LECTOTYPE [//] Nepticula [//] thymi Szőcs, 1965 [//] teste E. J., van [//] Nieukerken, 1984" [red label; printed]; named after the larval hostplant genus *Thymus*. Originally it was described as a species authored by "HER." (= ERICH MARTIN HERING, 1893–1967), but the name was never available under this authorship. The species was described again as *Fedalmia thymi* by BORKOWSKI (1970), who considered SZŐCS' description unnecessarily as invalid. The account of SZŐCS on *Nepticula thymi* serves as the first description, which is based on HNHM material originating from sites in the hills above Buda. The lectotype has been selected accordingly. The manuscript was received by the publishing house on "1965.III.14" as indicated in the wrapper of the fascicle. Accordingly, the following seven HNHM specimens can be considered as paralectotypes with locality labels "Budapest, Széchenyi-hegy" with dates 19, 20. and 23 (two specimens) of July 1963, and "Budapest, Hármash." with dates 19 and 24 May, and 3 August of 1964, all reared by J. SZŐCS from *Thymus glabrescens*. The name is listed as *Trifurcula thymi* (SZŐCS, 1965) by SZABÓKY *et. al*. (2005: 15) on the basis of VAN NIEUKERKEN (2006: 15).

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