

## A new genus, a new species and two taxonomic treatments in the *Ancylosis* group from South-Eastern Africa (Lep.: Pyralidae).

Guillaume H. C. LERAUT<sup>1</sup> FRES

- **Abstract.** Having received from Dr. Wolfram Mey various Phycitinae from the Republic of South Africa, I undertook to identify and study in detail the Phycitinae of the MNHN coming from Southern Africa. I had, before 2019, studied the MNHN general collection as well as the "de Joannis" collection, but primarily about Madagascar. The MNHN only has few South African material, often in poor condition and usually collected before 1914. I first postponed species of uncertain or too complex identification (in particular when the types of neighbouring species have not been known to me, or when no comprehensive publication can allow a reliable identification). The study of insects from the Graaff-Reinet district (Asante Sana farm) in the Republic of South Africa, along with the examination of various materials of the MfN collections, allow me to go further with some material previously left behind. The anatomical study of *Laodamia polygraphella* de Joannis, 1927 allows me to distinguish a new genus, while the study of the taxon *Staudingeria mimeugraphella* Balinsky, 1989 finally leads me to place it in the genus *Ancylosis*. In addition, a new species from Tanzania is described, on two historical females collected in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the Singida arid savannah region; and a new synonymy is established.
- **Résumé. Un genre nouveau, une espèce nouvelle et deux modifications nomenclaturales dans le groupe *Ancylosis* en Afrique du Sud-Est (Lepidoptera : Pyralidae).** Ayant reçu du Dr. Wolfram Mey du matériel d'étude de Phycitinae d'Afrique du Sud, j'ai entrepris d'identifier et d'étudier en détail le matériel de Phycitinae du MNHN provenant d'Afrique australe. J'avais, avant 2019, étudié la collection générale ainsi que la collection dite « de Joannis », mais prioritairement sur le périmètre de la faune de Madagascar. Le MNHN ayant des ressources limitées en termes de matériel sud-africain, souvent en état médiocre et fort ancien (collections Ragonot, de Joannis, C. Dumont, Viette), j'avais écarté les espèces d'identification incertaine ou trop complexe (notamment lorsque les types des espèces voisines ne me sont pas connus, ou lorsqu'aucune publication de synthèse ne permet d'affiner la détermination). L'étude du récent matériel africain de la région de Graaff-Reinet (ferme d'Asante Sana) dans la République d'Afrique du Sud, ainsi que l'examen des collections du MfN (Berlin), me permettent d'affiner la détermination de certains exemplaires laissés pour compte. L'étude anatomique de *Laodamia polygraphella* de Joannis, 1927 me permet de distinguer un genre nouveau, tandis que l'étude du taxon *Staudingeria mimeugraphella* Balinsky, 1989 me conduit finalement à le placer dans le genre *Ancylosis*. En outre, une espèce nouvelle de Tanzanie est décrite, sur deux femelles historiques collectées au début du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle dans la région de savanes arides de Singida et un synonyme nouveau est proposé.
- **Zusammenfassung. Eine neue Gattung, eine neue Art und zwei taxonomische Änderungen von der *Ancylosis*-Gruppe in Südafrika (Lepidoptera: Pyralidae).** Nachdem ich von Dr. Wolfram Mey Studienmaterial zu Phycitinae aus Südafrika erhalten hatte, machte ich mich daran, das Phycitinae-Material des MNHN aus dem südlichen Afrika besser zu untersuchen. Vor 2019 hatte ich die « collection générale » von dem MNHN sowie die sogenannte « de Joannis-Sammlung »

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<sup>1</sup> Société Entomologique de France, 45 rue Buffon, F-75005 Paris – ghcleraut@gmail.com

untersucht, jedoch hauptsächlich am Rande der Madagaskar-Fauna. Trotz dieser Untersuchung, da das MNHN nur über begrenzte Ressourcen an südafrikanischem Material verfügt, das oft in schlechtem Zustand und sehr alt ist (Sammlungen von Ragonot, de Joannis, C. Dumont, Viette), musste ich Arten, deren Identifizierung zu komplex war (insbesondere wenn mir die Typen benachbarter Arten nicht sehen könnte, oder wenn keine zusammenfassende Artikel eine genauere Bestimmung ermöglichen), beiseite lassen. Die Untersuchung auf dem Material aus der Graaff-Reinet Distrikt (Asante Sana Farm) in der Republik Südafrika sowie die Untersuchung der Sammlungen des MfN (Berlin) ermöglichen mir heute die genauere Bestimmung bestimmter zurückgebliebener Exemplare. Die anatomische Untersuchung von *Laodamia polygraphella* de Joannis, 1927 ermöglicht mir die Abgrenzung einer neuen Gattung. Untersuchung des Taxons *Staudingeria mimeugraphella* Balinsky, 1989 führt mich auch zu seiner Einordnung in die Gattung *Ancylosis*. Darüber hinaus wird eine neue Art aus Tansania beschrieben, mit zwei historischer Weibchen, die zu Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts in der trockenen Savannenregion von Singida des früheren Deutsch-Ostafrika gesammelt wurden. Außerdem wird eine neue Synonymie wird begründet.

- **Key-words.** Pyraloidea, Phycitinae, Afro-tropical ecozone, South Africa, Tanzania, new genus, new species, taxonomic changes, species revisions.
- **Mots-clefs.** Pyraloidea, Phycitinae, écozone afro-tropicale, Afrique du Sud, Tanzanie, genre nouveau, espèce nouvelle, changements nomenclatureaux, révision d'espèces.
- **Schlüsselwörter.** Pyraloidea, Phycitinae, Afro-tropische Ökozone, Südafrika, Tansania, neue Gattung, neue Art, Nomenklaturänderungen, Artenrevisionen.

## Introduction

Despite some targeted works on some genera of Phycitinae such as *Ematheudes* (J. C. SHAFFER, 1998), *Ancylosis* (BALINSKY, 1987, 1989), or *Nyctegretis* (YANG, ZHOU & REN, 2025), our knowledge about Phycitinae fauna from South-Eastern Africa remains uneven both qualitatively and quantitatively. Qualitatively, most species described in the last decades of the XIX<sup>th</sup> Century or in the first half of the XX<sup>th</sup> remain poorly known, with types lost in some cases, and possibly many synonyms among the most common species. Quantitatively, on the contrary, many countries have remained unstudied and only few species have been described until now in some areas where biodiversity might be widely more important. Southern Kenya, Ethiopia, Tanzania or even Botswana account for such countries.

I recently had the opportunity to complete my knowledge of species from South-Eastern Africa by visits at the Museum für Naturkunde Berlin, and thus, could finally name, review or distinguish some taxa present in the historical collections of the Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle (Paris). This, in addition to the study of recent materials collected by Prof. Dr. Wolfram Mey in the Republic of South Africa (Asante Sana project), allows to add one species new to science for the fauna of Tanzania, as well as one new genus, one new taxonomic combination and one new synonym.

## Conventions and abbreviations

MfN: Museum für Naturkunde Berlin

MNHN: Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle, Paris

RSA : Republic of South Africa

Rec.: collector; prep.: genitalia slides; coll.: collection

The n° in brackets before each species name is the species number given in the author's checklist (LERAUT, 2021). New taxa receive a number in continuity with those of this list (ending at n°3452).

## Material and methods

This work primarily uses the study of types of African Phycitinae of the MNHN collection (imagos and genitalia when available), completed by a study of some types and historical material present in MfN collections – where South-Eastern African Phycitinae are more represented. I also used bibliographical sources especially RAGONOT (1888, 1893); HAMPSON *in* RAGONOT & HAMPSON (1901); WARREN (1914); HAMPSON (1910, 1926, 1930); BALINSKY (1987, 1989, 1994); DE JOANNIS (1900, 1927) and LERAUT (2019). Biotopes of South-African species can be seen in various works, mainly in Asante Sana and in the Brandberg massif (MEY, 2007, 2011, 2019).

When necessary, genitalia have been prepared as well as the abdomen, and placed in Euparal balsam between a microscope slide and a glass cover, after heating and colouring with Chlorazol-E black.

Pictures of genitalia slides have been taken using a macro-photographic device; other pictures used a Canon G12 standard.

Type material of the new species are deposited in the MNHN general collection. Genitalia slides are deposited in the MNHN, in the author's slides collection. In other cases, the place of conservation of the specimens is listed in the section "material examined" (MfN, MNHN or author's collection, Autun, France).

## Results

Genus *Therpsicora* G. Leraut, **gen. nov.**

**Type species.** *Laodamia polygraphella* de Joannis, 1927.

*Derivatio nominis.* The name alludes to the graceful habitus and flight ability of the type species, in reference to the muse of dance and chorus. – the name is Neutral.

*Diagnosis.* *Habitus.* Male and female of medium size, with narrow forewings (but broader than *Ancylosis* species) ending with a rounded termen; male with moderately dilated scape, antenna ciliate, the first antennomeres after the scape fused and wearing a brush of setiform scales; female with filiform antennae; maxillary palpi reduced, labial palpi long, thin, upturned and reaching the

level of the vertex. Genitalia. Male. Genital structure broad, tegumen U-shaped with a flat saccus, narrowed below the uncus which is globally square-shaped; gnathos hook-like, simple, sclerotised and well-developed. Transtilla without sclerotised arms. Valvae thin, reaching the saccus. Aedeagus straight and stout, spatula-shaped, with thin sclerotised spicules forming a small rounded group of cornute. Setae of the culcita are well-developed, as for *Paralaodamia*, *Tephros* and other *Phycita*-related genera, and unlike *Ancylosis*. Female. Papillae anales and last segment short and thick, ostium bursae weakly sclerotised, ductus bursae elongated (nearly 2 times the corpus bursae), inflated in its proximal part and wearing spine-like signa like for some *Ancylosis* species; corpus bursae ovoid, with two opposite groups of spicules.

Taxonomic note. This genus could be related to *Ancylosis*, with the distinctive global shape of female genitalia, as well as by global morphology. Male genitalia however show significant differences, as well as female genitalia that show short and stout papillae anales and a number of additional spicules within the medial broadening of the ductus bursae, and the modified setae of the culcita are quite faraway from typical *Ancylosis* and mostly evoke some *Tephros* (*Pseudotephros*). Female genitalia also evoke those of the genus *Phycitodes*, in which Pr. Patrice Leraut (*comm. pers.*) proposed to insert this species; but male genitalia and habitus are distinct.

[1636] *Therpsicora polygraphella* (de Joannis, 1927), **comb. nov.**

*Pseudotephros polygraphella* (de Joannis, 1927) (LERAUT, 2021: 149)

*Laodamia polygraphella* DE JOANNIS, 1927: 216

Type locality. Mozambique, Makulane.

Material studied. 1 male, RSA, Eastern Cape province, Graaff-Reinet district, Asante Sana Game farm, Waterkloof (light trap), 24-I-2012 (W. Mey rec.), prep. G. Leraut n°1324 (coll. G. Leraut, MNHN); 1 male, same locality, Sneeuwberg, 2/6-IV-2011 (W. Mey rec.), prep. G. Leraut n°1327 (coll. G. Leraut, MNHN); 1 female, same locality, Sneeuwberg, 22/26-I-2012 (W. Mey rec.), prep. G. Leraut n°1259 (coll. G. Leraut, MNHN); 1 female, same locality, 22/26-XI-2013 (W. Mey rec.) (MfN).

Diagnosis. See DE JOANNIS, 1927: 216 and VII n°7; BALINSKY, 1994: 28. On forewings, the medial band with transverse black stripes on a pale grey ground colour, as well as the distal area with longitudinal scattered black stripes along the veins are quite recognisable on fresh individuals, but some greyish forms exist that can be difficult to recognise without a careful analysis.

Taxonomic note. I previously placed the present species within the genus *Pseudotephros* Slamka, 2019 (LERAUT, 2021: 149; note 46 p. 314). However, despite some similitudes, and after a careful analysis, it appears that (i) the spicules (signa) in the corpus bursae of female genitalia have a distinctive palissadic structure; and (ii) the inflated proximal end of the ductus bursae does not contain any spicules in *Pseudotephros* species. Moreover, the genital structure of males clearly shows morphological proximity with *Ancylosis* species and differentiates with *Tephros* species.

Distribution. South-Eastern Africa, from RSA (Eastern Cape) to the Mozambique. Probably quite widespread.

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**Figures 1-2.** *Laodamia polygraphella* de Joannis, 1927. 1 - female, habitus, RSA, Eastern Cape province, Graaff-Reinet district, Asante Sana game farm, Sneuuberg, 22/26-I-2012; 2 – female, habitus, same data, 22/26-XI-2013. Pictures : G. Leraut.



**Figures 3-5.** *Laodamia polygraphella* de Joannis, 1927. 3 - male, abdomen; 4 – female, abdomen; 5 - female, genitalia (prep. G. Leraut n°1259). Pictures : G. Leraut.



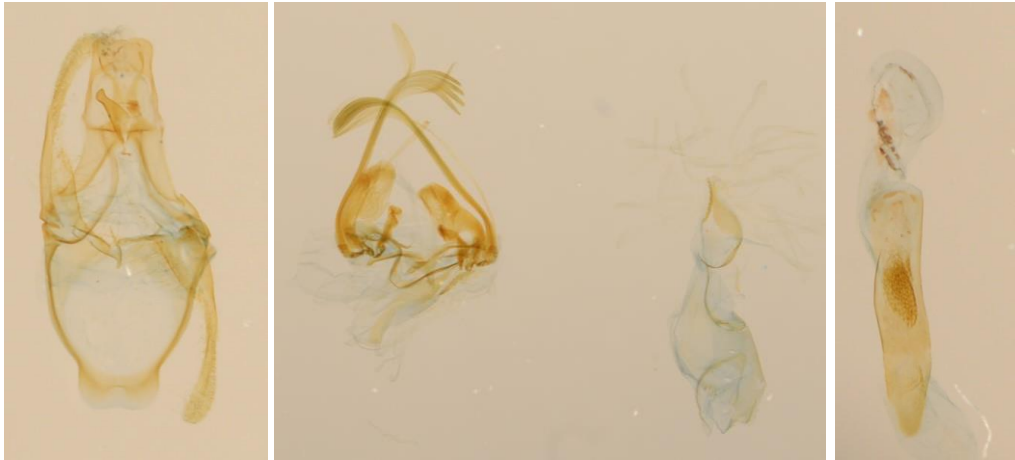
Genus *Ancylosis* Zeller, 1839: 178

Type species. *Pyralis dilutella* Hübner *sensu* Treitschke, 1832 (syn. *A. cinnamomella* Duponchel, 1836).

[3455] *Ancylosis germanosingidae* G. Leraut, **sp. nov.**

*Derivatio nominis.* Collected in Tanzania, Singida district, by German explorers of Von der Marwitz mission (1905).

**Figures 6-8.** *Laodamia polygraphella* de Joannis, 1927. 6 - male, genitalia, armature; 7 – male, anal segment, culcita and modified setae; 8 – male, genitalia, aedeagus (all prep. G. Leraut n°1327). Pictures : G. Leraut.



**Holotype.** 1 female, “D[utsch-]. O[st-]. Afrika / Mkalama [19]05 / [leg.] v[on]. d[er]. Marwitz SG” (Tanzania, Mkalama, formerly German Eastern Africa), « 3-5-[19]05 », “Muséum Paris”, MNHN general collection, prep. gen. G. Leraut n°1293. The holotype shall be deposited in the MNHN (including genitalia slides).

Paratype. 1 female, same data, prep. gen. G. Leraut n°1309.

Type locality. Tanzania, Singida region, Mkalama district

Diagnosis. Wing-span 20 mm. Forewings dark blackish brown with olive tinges, the antemedian band being reduced to a white chevron-shaped spot towards the anal rib, the postmedian band also being very faded and forming a whitish zigzag also towards the anal rib. Hindwings paler brown with brown fringes. Head, body and legs pale chestnut brown. Maxillary palpi reduces, three-segmented, filiform, with an aigrette. Labial palpi elongated, the first segment club-shaped, thick; the second elongated and the third short and nearly ovoid. Antennae filiform with the first antennomeres after the scape jointed and wearing a short band of bristles. Scape moderately thick. Genitalia (female). Global shape and structure as for most *Ancylosis* species. Papillae anales quite short with, on the proximal end of the anal segment, a very distinctive collar of setae and short apophyses (anterior and posterior). Ostium bursae poorly sclerotised. Ductus bursae short, straight, poorly sclerotised and without distal broadening nor spicules. Ductus seminalis inserted apically on the ductus bursae. Corpus bursae pear-shaped, with typical spine-shaped signa.

This species appears very close to *Staudingeria magnifica* (Butler, 1875) (depicted and described in detail by BALINKSY, 1989: 92). It differs by the global ornamentation, the shorter and straight ductus bursae (half the length of the corpus bursae instead of two thirds), without any group of small spicules in its broadened proximal part before the corpus bursae; the latter is pyriform and not “sausage shaped with proximal end inflated” as for *magnifica*. I have seen a quite similar specimen in the MfN collections, from Namibia (Brandberg massif), determined as “*Ancylosis* cf. *luederitzella*” but genitalia should be done to ensure a reliable determination.



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**Figures 9-10.** *Ancylosis germanosingidae* G. Leraut, **sp. nov.** 9 – female, holotype, habitus; 10 – female, holotype, habitus, ventral side. Pictures : G. Leraut.



**Figures 11-13.** *Ancylosis germanosingidae* G. Leraut, **sp. nov.** 11 – female, holotype, abdomen; 12 – female, holotype, genitalia (prep. G. Leraut n°1293); 13 – labels of the holotype (MNHN). Pictures : G. Leraut.



Biology & ethology. Unknown. Presumably living on Poaceae or other herbaceous plants of the arid savannah.

Distribution. South-Eastern Central Africa: Tanzania (in arid biotopes). Possibly vicariant to *S. magnifica* from Southern-Eastern Africa.

Note. The provenance of both specimens is from the former and short-lasting German territory of “Deutsch-Ostafrika” (ca. 1880 – 1916). They have been part of the collection of Wilhelm Ludwig Heinrich von der Marwitz (1874-1915), German military officer and zoological collector. Numerous materials, including some Phycitinae, with similar data are present in the Museum für Naturkunde Berlin collections (personal observation). Thanks to websites such as *Afromoths.be*, I found similar material in diverse European Museums, especially in Vienna, Naturhistorisches Museum Wien. Micromoths with this origin are very rare in MNHN collections. They were put together with various undetermined insects of the former “collection de Joannis” (part of undetermined old collections, mainly J. de Joannis and Dumont collections). It consists mostly of old Pyralidae from South-Eastern Asia and Northern Africa (notably Tunisia: Maknassy) but also from various African regions: “Ogruga, River Niger”; “Togo”; “D. O. Afrika”; “Makulane” etc. presumably collected by clergymen in missions or obtained through exchanges or gifts from colleagues. This material has remained poorly studied until now despite its high historical and biological interest.

[2878] *Ancylosis mimeugraphella* (Balinsky, 1989), **comb. nov.**

*Staudingeria mimeugraphella* BALINSKY, 1989: 93

Type locality. South-West Africa, Namibia: Bullspoor (Strey rec.) (Transvaal Museum).

Material studied. 1 male, RSA, Graaff-Reinet district, Asante Sana game farm (ca. 1 000 m), 2-III-2014 (W. Mey rec.), prep. W. Mey n°140/14 (MfN); 1 ex. Namibia, Brandberg massif, W. Mey rec. (MfN).

Diagnosis. See BALINSKY, 1989: 93.

Taxonomic note. The taxon *Staudingeria mimeugraphella* Balinsky, 1991 shows some peculiarities compared to most *Ancylosis* species. Therefore, Balinsky placed it within the genus *Staudingeria* Ragonot, 1887. *Staudingeria* is in fact a clear synonym of *Ancylosis* (type species is the palaearctic *A. morbosella* Staudinger, 1879) (see notes in BALINSKY, 1989: 76 and P. LERAUT, 2008: 153). *Staudingeria*, as well as other subgenera of *Ancylosis*, was usually distinguished by the shape of palpi and wing venation. But these criteria revealed not being consistent especially compared with male and female genitalia structure. Compared to other *Ancylosis* species, the taxon *mimeugraphella* Balinsky shares the global shape of male and female genitalia, despite thinner and more numerous spicules within the corpus bursae in female genitalia. This is not the sole case within the genus (ex. *A. harmoniella* (Ragonot, 1887)). This species does not belong to the same genus than *Laodamia polygraphella* de Joannis (see above). I already transferred the taxon *mimeugraphella* in the genus *Ancylosis* (LERAUT, 2021: 252) but without any comment and I did not rightly mention the original genus. Thus, I formally propose here the present new combination. Distribution. Southern Africa: Namibia, RSA.

[2795] *Ancylosis albipunctella* (Warren, 1914)

*Heterographis albipunctella* WARREN, 1914: 502

*Ancylosis* (*Heterographis*) *eurhoda* BALINSKY, 1989: 90, **syn. nov.** [type locality: Natal]

Type locality. [RSA, KwaZulu-Natal] M’Fongosi, Zululand (W. E. Jones rec.).

Diagnosis. See WARREN, 1914: 502; pl. XLI fig. 23; BALINSKY, 1989: 93; fig. 21 p. 100 (under *A. eurhoda*). The species can vary but is the only one in Southern Africa to have this bright beige



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colour with crimson stripes and a white discal spot. Crimson stripes and white suffusion can vary in extension and the species varies as many *Ancylosis* species do. It can be compared with Palearctic species such as *Ancylosis hellenica* (Staudinger, 1871), but also with some forms of *A. interjectella* (Ragonot, 1888), the latter with dull colours and a strong suffusion of white scales on the whole costa and on the discal spot of forewings.

Taxonomic note. This species is quite distinctive among South African *Ancylosis*. under his diagnosis of *A. eurhoda*, B. Balinsky, who presumably did not know the publication of Warren, precised as a “remark” that “the colour pattern of *A. (H.) eurhoda* is extremely characteristic, and makes the species clearly distinguishable from Southern African and Palearctic species” (BALINSKY, 1989: 91). He did not refer to the taxon *albipunctella* Warren (described on a unique female from the Natal). Both species share the same habitus and genitalia and were described from the same region. Thus, I propose here to put the taxon *eurhoda* Balinsky in synonymy of the taxon *albipunctella* Warren. I also have to note that habitus remains close to this of *Ancylosis interjectella* (Ragonot, 1888), the latter with a broader white suffusion on the costal area and on the discal area of forewings (1 ex. examined in the MfN collection, Namibia, Brandberg massif, W. Mey rec.).

Distribution. South-Eastern Africa. RSA: KwaZulu-Natal, Transvaal; Zimbabwe (Bulawayo).

**Figures 14-15.** 14 – *Heterographis albipunctella* Warren, 1914, copy of the original illustration in Warren (1914); 15 – Original picture of the type of *Ancylosis eurhoda* Balinsky, 1989. Picture : G. Leraut.



## Acknowledgements

I heartly want to acknowledge Emeritus Prof. Joël Minet (MNHN, Paris) who let me access to the historical material of the former “de Joannis collection”.

I also sincerely thank Prof. Dr. Wolfram Mey (MfN, Berlin) and Prof. Dr. Theo Léger (MfN, Berlin) for the possibility offered to study historical collections of the MfN, and more particularly to W. Mey for the transmission of recent Phycitinae material from South Africa (Asante Sana).

I could not forget Mrs. Jocelyne Guglielmi and M. Bernard François, Librarians of the Société Entomologique de France, for the access to this Library.

Finally, I want to thank my father Patrice Leraut for providing useful advices related to the genera *Phycitodes* and *Staudingeria* as well as for lending photography devices.

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*Article soumis le 16/10/2025, accepté le 02/11/2025. Date de publication : 14/11/2025.*

