

THE AUSTRALIAN WOOD MOTH, *Xyleutes magnifica* Roths. (COSSIDAE) IN NEW ZEALAND

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Hardwood poles arriving in New Zealand from Australia frequently serve as host material for a variety of different insects.

Perhaps one of the most unusual and striking species to be intercepted recently from this material is the moth *Xyleutes magnifica* Roth.

A live specimen was seen fluttering along the ground in the Post and Telegraph yard by the Timaru foreshore. The specimen was finally captured and forwarded to me by Mr J. D. Galletly on March 6, 1963. Unfortunately it was somewhat crushed during capture but sufficient of the moth was present for it to be identified by Mr A. N. Burns of the National Museum of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia.

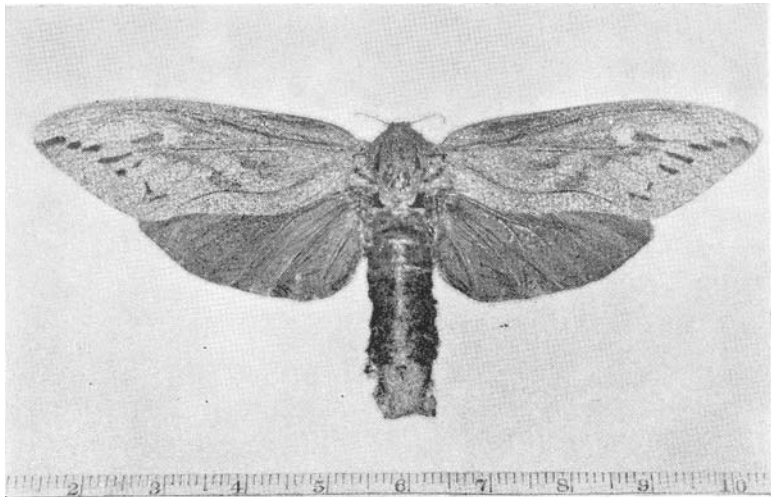
Three or four yards from where the moth was found was a pile of Australian hardwood poles, which had arrived by sea at Timaru on May 3, 1962, from New South Wales. These are thought to be eucalyptus and there seems little doubt that this moth had emerged from these poles. Further evidence to support this occurred subsequently when a pupal case was found and forwarded by Mr Galletly. This was taken by the hardwood poles and is undoubtedly that of *Xyleutes magnifica* Roth.

This moth immediately attracts attention by its large size being far bigger than any species we have in New Zealand. The expansion of the wings is $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches and the body length about $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

Mr Burns reports as follows:—

“This fine large moth is not regarded as a common species in Australia, and it ranges along the coast from eastern Victoria through New South Wales to about the latitude of Brisbane in Queensland.

“The larva of this moth is a borer in several kinds of native trees such as eucalyptus, *Tristania* and *Angophora*. Over here it is not regarded as a pest. We have only seven specimens in all in our reference collection and these are the result of some fifty years or slightly more of collecting by the late Mr George Lyell whose famous collection of Australian Lepidoptera we have.”



Xyleutes magnifica Roths. Photo: E. R. Rotherham.