

**SHORT NOTE*****Scolia hirta* (SCHRANK, 1781) (Hymenoptera: Scoliidae)  
– a new family and species in the fauna of Latvia****UGIS PITERĀNS**

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*Scolia hirta* (SCHRANK, 1781) is one of 22 species of Scoliid wasps found in Europe and has northernmost distribution of all species (Mitrou 2015). In central and northern Europe *S. hirta* is rare species and is protected by law in several countries – Czech Republic (Straka 2005), Germany (Kroupa et al. 2012), Lithuania (Budrys 1992), Norway (Hansen et al. 2010), Poland (Banaszak 2004), and Sweden (Westling 2015). There is evidence that the range of *S. hirta* might be expanding and this species now has been found also in northern part of Belarus (Шляхтенок 2013) and Estonia (Selin 2015), so findings in Latvia are not unexpected.

In summer of 2014 *S. hirta* and the family Scoliidae recorded from four localities in Latvia for the first time.

1. Daugavpils district, near Rimši village, 55°58'17"N, 26°27'48"E, 10.07.2014 (2 specimens) inland dunes, sandy, xerothermic habitat under powerlines, feeding on *Thymus serpyllum* blooms, together with *Bembix rostrata* wasps, photographed, not collected by U.Piterāns.

2. Saulkrasti district, 3 km N of Saulkrasti railway station, 57°16'46"N, 24°25'49"E, 13.07.2014 (1 specimen) dry railway embankment, on *Epilobium* sp. flowers, photographed (Fig. 1), not collected by I.Mārdega.

3. Daugavpils district, E of Putaniški village, 55°54'04"N, 26°40'26"E, 10-20.07.2014 (1 specimen) 3 year old clear-cut, flight interception trap, leg. M.Balalaikins.

4. Daugavpils district, Daugavpils city, near Lake Rugeļi, 55°52'20"N, 26°37'10"E, 03.08.2014 (1 specimen), xerothermic meadow (Fig. 2), leg. U.Valainis.

The larvae of *Scolia hirta* are parasitoids of beetle larvae of the family Scarabaeidae (for example, genera *Cetonia*, *Potosia*, *Anomala* etc.) (Klausnitzer et al. 2013). *S. hirta* prefers dry and open habitats - grasslands, inland dunes, slopes of southern exposition and xerothermic habitats of early succession (Budrys 2007; Marczak et al. 2012). Such habitats are vulnerable to disappearance due to lack of disturbance that create these habitats (for example, fire or grazing), afforestation and other factors (Budrys 2007).

Further research is needed to find if there are established local populations of *Scolia hirta* in Latvia or all aforementioned observations are of wandering individuals from more southern populations. In case such local, self sustaining populations were to be found in future, *S. hirta* recommended for inclusion to the list of legally protected invertebrates of Latvia.

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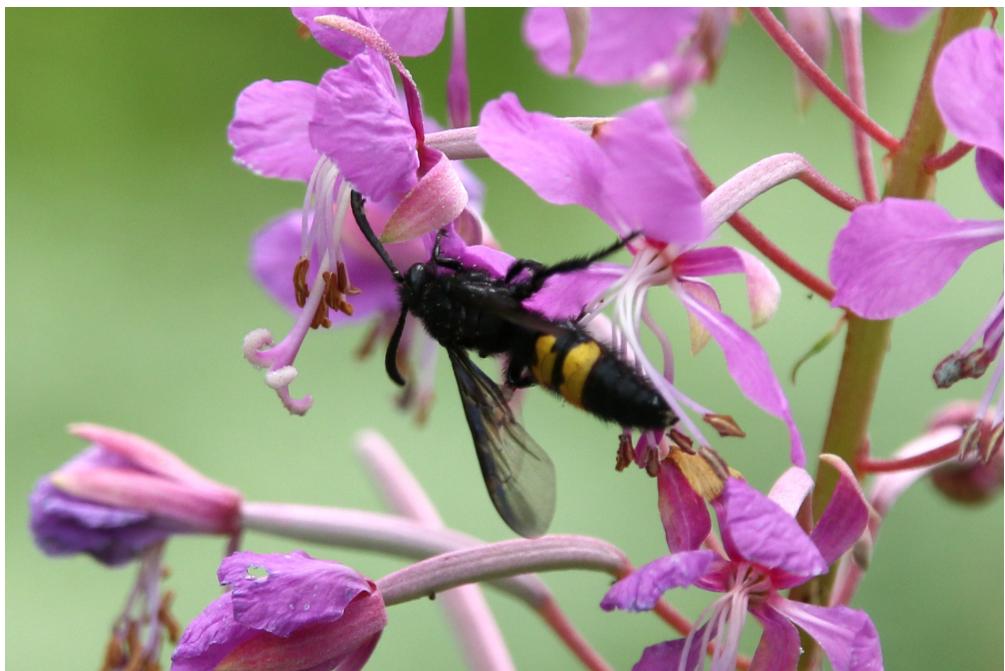


Figure 1. Observed individual of *Scolia hirta* (SCHRANK, 1781), specimen from Saulkrasti, Central Latvia (photo: I. Mārdega).



Figure 2. Habitat of *Scolia hirta* (SCHRANK, 1781) in Eastern Latvia, Daugavpils (photo: U. Valainis).