



Description of the larva of *Gynacantha auricularis* Martin, 1909 (Odonata: Aeshnidae)

JÜRIG DE MARMELS¹ & ULISSES GASPAR NEISS²

¹Museo del Instituto de Zoología Agrícola “Francisco Fernández Yépez” (MIZA), Facultad de Agronomía, Universidad Central de Venezuela, Apartado 4579, Maracay 2101-A, Venezuela. E-mail: demarmjc@gmail.com

²Coordenação de Pesquisas em Entomologia, Instituto Nacional de Pesquisas da Amazônia/INPA, Caixa Postal 478, CEP 69011-970, Manaus, AM., Brazil. E-mail: ulisses.neiss@gmail.com

Abstract

The ultimate stadium larva of *Gynacantha auricularis* is described and illustrated based on exuviae of a male and a female reared larvae from Manaus, Brazil. The larva resembles that of *G. gracilis* (Burmeister) in having a small lateral spine also on abdominal segment 5, while the prementum morphology and size and distribution and number of palpal setae are similar to those species with lateral spine absent on segment 5. The larvae were found in rainwater pools with abundant leaf litter, in the interior of Amazonian lowland forest.

Key words: Amazon, Anisoptera, aquatic insect, dragonfly, taxonomy

Introduction

Garrison *et al.* (2006) list 23 species of *Gynacantha* Rambur, 1842 from the New World, of which only six are known also from their larvae. A key to neotropical larvae of *Gynacantha* published by Carvalho & Ferreira Jr. (1989) includes the five species then known. Later, Ramírez (1994) adopts their key adding the larva of *G. tibiata* Karsch, 1891. Larvae of *Gynacantha* are seldomly found, and most larval descriptions are based on single specimens. The two reared larvae of *G. auricularis* described below show some variability of the number and size of the palpal setae.

Methods

The two full-grown larvae were reared to emergence of the adult. The exuviae were stored dry and later softened in water, in order to allow manipulation, especially examination of their mouth parts. The drawings were made with the help of a camera lucida coupled to a Wild-8 stereoscope, and the photographs were taken with a Nikon D90. Abdominal segments 1–10 are abbreviated as S1–S10. All dimensions are given in millimeters.

Material examined. Two ultimate stadium exuviae (1 male, 1 female). Brazil, Amazonas State, Manaus, Ducke Forest Reserve, highway AM-010, km 26, forest trail to Aracá, 02°55'47"S, 59°58'22"W, 70 m.a.s.l., 14 March 2011, U. Neiss leg. (Adults emerged 18 and 20 March 2011, respectively). Both exuviae will be stored dry at the Invertebrate Collection of the INPA, Manaus.

Description of the exuviae

(Figures 1–15)

Clean, pale brown, with pattern of dark markings on head, thorax, wing cases, legs and abdomen. Female overall darker than male.