

Rediscovery of *Eratophyes aleatrix* Diakonoff (Lepidoptera, Oecophoridae)

by

A. DIAKONOFF

Rijksmuseum van Natuurlijke Historie, Leiden

and

Br. V. LEFEBER

Maastricht

ABSTRACT. — A second record of a recently discovered Oecophorid, *Eratophyes aleatrix* Diakonoff; this time the species has been reared from decaying birch logs, collected in the country, apparently proving that the species is a native of the Netherlands.

It is already six years ago that Dr. A. L. Cox, member of the Nederlandse Entomologische Vereniging, caught south of Arnhem a striking, elegant small Microlepidopteron, black with large whitish-yellow spots, that he did not know. The subsequent identification of the insect indeed gave a lot of trouble, also to the first author and his advisers, so that finally, a couple of years later, he was compelled to describe it as a new genus and new species (*Eratophyes aleatrix*); he assigned it to the group of genera of the *Borkhausenia* Hübner relationship, of the family Oecophoridae (Diakonoff, 1975).

At that time the origin of this small insect, caught at a road-side, in the heart of the overcrowded Netherlands, was a complete mystery. The first author only could express the hope that it might prove to be a native species and not an incidental introduction from who knows what remote country.

A few years passed without a word on the new species; in a way — a relief for the author, showing that apparently he did not overlook any previous description. But the species remained an enigma.

Until all at once, incidentally, the rediscovery was made: another colleague, Drs. H. W. van der Wolf, of Eindhoven, noticed and soon recognised two pinned specimens (♂ ♀) of *E. aleatrix*, reared by the second author from decaying birch logs (collected for rearing of Hymenoptera). This time the material originated from Well, in the north of the province of Limburg, 45 km SSE from the first locality.

So, in one stroke of luck, we learned that the species was indeed a native of the Netherlands, and that it had the same cryptic biology as some other members of the above mentioned group



Fig. 1. *Eratophyes aleatrix* Diakonoff, ♀, metalotype, reared from mouldy birch log from Well, emerged 8.V.1979, leg. B. V. Lefebber, genitalia, no. 10015, A. Diakonoff.



Fig. 2. *Eratophyes aleatrix* Diakonoff, ♀, metalotype, genitalia.

of genera allied to *Borkhausenia*, i.e., boring in decaying wood. Besides, both sexes were available now.

Further going was easy. Since every winter the second author, together with Mr. I. Petit of Wonck (Belgium), collects pieces and branches of decaying wood in search of Hymenoptera, he

looked out for birch logs again. And indeed the luck was with us also the last season. This spring the second author was able to rear not less than 49 specimens (about as many males as females), this time from several birch logs from the same locality, Well, and from one single branch of *Salix* from Aayen, also in North Limburg.

He presented some material to several collections and collectors, whose names may be recorded for the completeness' sake: Mr. I. Petit of Wonck, Belgium, 2 ♂, 2 ♀; Mr. B. J. Lempke, Zoological Museum Amsterdam, 7; Museum van Natuurlijke Historie, Maastricht, 2 ♂, 2 ♀; Mr. H. W. van der Wolf, Eindhoven, 1 ♂, 1 ♀; Dr. A. L. Cox, Molenhoek, 1 ♀; Mr. C. Ottenheim, Steyl, 2 ♂, 2 ♀; Lefeber collection, 3 ♂, 3 ♀.

The remainder of this series is presented to the Leiden Museum; the particulars about the rearing may be summarized as follows (emergence):

May 17: 1 ♂, 18: 3 ♂, 19: 3 ♂, 20: 1 ♂, 21: 3 ♂, 24: 2 ♂ 1 ♀, 28: 1 ♀, 29: 1 ♂ 1 ♀, 31: 1 ♂ 1 ♀, June 1: 2 ♂ 2 ♀, 2: 2 ♂ 1 ♀, 3: 1 ♂ 3 ♀, 4: 2 ♂ 3 ♀, 5: 1 ♂ 4 ♀, 7: 2 ♀, 8: 3 ♀, 9: 1 ♀, 10: 1 ♀.

This time the decaying pieces of birch wood and the single dead branch of willow (*Salix*) were collected in March, 1979. The wood was placed in plastic bags and kept on an unheated attic, before windows upon W.

It was evident, that weather conditions had little effect upon the emergence of the moths, contrary to that of Hymenoptera (as experienced by the second author). But it is noteworthy that the first week only males appeared, the second week, both sexes, and the third week there emerged only females. Most specimens between 9.30 a.m. and 12 (noon), a few in the afternoon; none appeared before 8 a.m., nor after 7 p.m.

We will be looking forward to following discoveries of this species, in the Netherlands or perhaps also abroad.

The not earlier figured female, the metalotype, hereby designated, is depicted on fig. 1.

We are greatly indebted to Mr. I. Petit, for providing help and transportation for the collecting of birch logs; Mr. J. J. A. M. Wessendorp made the drawing for fig. 2.

REFERENCE

Diakonoff, A., 1975. A surprising new addition to the Dutch Fauna of Microlepidoptera (Oecophoridae). — *Ent. Ber., Amst.* 35: 187-189, 2 figs.

A. Diakonoff, Rijksmuseum van Natuurlijke Historie, Postbus 9517, 2300 RA Leiden.
Br. V. Lefeber, Brusselsestraat 38, 6211 PG Maastricht.

BERICHT VOOR DE GEBRUIKERS VAN HET FOTOCOPIEERAPPARAAT VAN DE N.E.V. Vanaf eind januari wordt het fotocopieerwerk voor de bibliotheek van de N.E.V. verricht door een werkstudente die iedere ochtend van 8.30 tot 10.00 uur daarvoor aanwezig is. Het apparaat is dan voor anderen niet beschikbaar. Wij hopen dat de vaste gebruikers van het apparaat hiervoor begrip zullen hebben en wij danken u bij voorbaat voor uw medewerking!

De Bibliotheecresse

EDITORIAL CORRECTION TO: C. VAN ACHTERBERG (1980), NOTES ON SOME SPECIES OF BRACONIDAE (HYMENOPTERA) DESCRIBED BY HEDWIG FROM IRAN AND AFGHANISTAN. — *Ent. Ber., Amst.* 40 (2): 25-31.

The editorial board regrets that an error has been made in the composition of the issue of February, which concerns the above cited article.

The contents of page 28 as a whole should have been inserted immediately above the last two lines on page 30.

A slip has been added which should be stuck at the bottom of page 26.