

fauna — than in the fact that it is the first instance of a new species being differentiated and described on the tympanic characters. It was generally thought that those characters, unlike the genitalia, were of a superspecific value, and of use for generic and supergeneric differentiation only. The case of *Psalis africana* shows that it is not so, and it opens new perspectives for the students of the Lepidoptera.

There is, however, a second point of interest, although it is not supported by positive evidence. The larva of *P. pennatula* (including *P. africana*) is polyphagous, feeding on various plants and grasses. Mr. COLLENETTE kindly sought out for me the following informations:

"Larva feeds on a variety of cultivated plants, including cereals, grasses and cruciferous plants" (H. MAXWELL LEFROY, 1909, *Indian Insect Life*, p. 460). "Grasses" (SEVASTOPULO, 1946, *Journ. Bombay N. H. Soc.*, 46 : 62). "Various grasses" (TOWNSEND, 1942, *E. Afr. N. H. Soc.*, 16 : 200).

The larva feeding on a number of cereals, there is more than a bare possibility of its being introduced into Africa by man together with e.g. rice culture. The eventuality has been mentioned to me by Mr. COLLENETTE who in turn had been told by someone that an artificial spread of the species appeared likely. As Mr. COLLENETTE points out, this is not evidence. It seems to me, however, that the case deserves a more close investigation — if possible. For, if positive evidence of artificial distribution could be found, that would mean that the "tempo" of the evolutionary process can at times be truly amazing: just a few centuries would suffice to differentiate the tympanic structures of the new populations in the way described above, not to speak of the smaller yet distinct genitalic differences. Could it be that the selective value of the size of the counter tympanum is so high? Or is it just the other way: that this character has a small or negligible selective value, but that it is dominant, which assures a quick spread in favourable environmental and other conditions. That such a spread can occasionally be very quick, we know from the calculations by LUDWIG; but, as in so many cases, concrete instances thereof are rather scanty. Anyway, I thought the possibility worth mentioning.

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Laboratorium voor
Dierkundige Systematiek,
Rijksuniversiteit Gent.
Bestuurder: Prof. Dr. P. VAN OYE.

Vroege (of late?) aanwezigheid van *Pyrrhocorus apterus* L. Op 3 januari 1956 inspecteerde ik bij zonnig koud weer ($\pm 0^\circ$) een mij bekend terreintje, waar *P. apterus* L. voorkomt. Dit terreintje, waarop ik het vorige jaar langvleugelige exemplaren aantrof, ligt op 't oosten onder Halsteren N.B. Tot mijn verrassing behoefde ik niet naar overwinterende exemplaren te graven. Eén zat open en bloot, negen andere zaten zichtbaar dicht bijeen in de rand van een graspol. Zij konden zich alle voortbewegen.

B. J. J. R. WALRECHT, Biezelinge.