

A NOTE ON MATING AND OVIPOSITION BEHAVIOUR OF THREE ARGENTINE *LIBELLULIDAE* (ANISOPTERA)

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The field observations on *Orthemis ferruginea* (Fabr.), *Pantala flavescens* (Fabr.) and *Tramea cophysa* Hag., carried out at the Iguazú Falls, Misiones prov., Argentina, are brought on record.

INTRODUCTION

During a two and a half day's stay (April 4-6, 1974) at the Iguazú Falls, Misiones prov., Argentina, the author made a few observations on the mating and ovipositing behaviour of three libellulidan species, which seem worth being briefly recorded here.

OBSERVATIONS

Orthemis ferruginea (Fabricius)

The behaviour resembles that of European *Libellula* species. Mating is performed in flight and lasts less than one minute. Then the insects separate. The female oviposits touching the water surface with the tip of the abdomen. It prefers hidden places among vegetation, the male hovers above her.

Pantala flavescens (Fabricius)

The species was common everywhere. In the morning, we found sleeping individuals in a typical position: they hung clinging to the grass stems, the head

bent ventrally. One copula was observed for some 5 minutes. The wheel crossed rapidly in a height of some 2-4 meters above a pond, frequently attacked by other *Libellulidae* males. Then they began to oviposit in tandem position.

Tramea cophysa Hagen

Oviposition was repeatedly observed. The behaviour differs from that of *Tramea onusta* Hagen as described by NEEDHAM & HEYWOOD (1929). Tandems fly about searching for suitable sites. There they descend and inspect them thoroughly hovering between the vegetation. Then the male releases the hold of his appendages. The female descends to the water surface, strikes it once with the tip of the abdomen, and returns to the male which still hovers above her. Now the male grasps her thorax with the legs, bends its abdomen forward and anchors the appendages again on her head. Then the newly formed tandem flies away searching for another ovipositing site.

REFERENCE

NEEDHAM, J.G. & H.B. HEYWOOD, 1929. A handbook of the dragonflies of North America. Thomas, Springfield (Ill.).

Resumen

OBSERVACIONES SOBRE LA CÓPULA Y LA OVIPOSICIÓN DE TRES *LIBELLULIDAE* EN IGUAZÚ, PROV. MISIONES, ARGENTINA (ANISOPTERA). — La cópula de *Orthemis ferruginea* (Fabr.) se realiza en vuelo, dura menos de un minuto. La hembra sola pone los huevos tocando la superficie del agua con la punta del abdomen. El macho la "guarda" volando sobre ella. La cópula de *Pantala flavescens* (Fabr.) se queda volando durante más de 5 minutos a una altura de 2-4 metros. Ponen los huevos en posición de tandem. La postura de *Tramea cophysa* Hag. difiere de la de *T. onusta* Hag. (NEEDHAM & HEYWOOD, 1929) como sigue: El tandem busca volando un lugar apropiado. Los animales se separan, la hembra baja una vez tocando el agua con el abdomen. Cuando vuelve hasta el macho este coge su tórax con las patas, dobla el abdomen y asegura los apéndices en la cabeza de la hembra. Después el tandem sale buscando otro lugar.