

NEW OBSERVATIONS ON THE DISTRIBUTION AND BEHAVIOR OF *TACHOPTERYX THOREYI* (HAG.) (ANISOPTERA: PETALURIDAE)

I have for the past year been studying in detail the various habitats of Bergen County, North New Jersey. It has been my intent to develop a

thorough list of the Odonata species residing in this highly urbanized County.

During the winter months of 1990, I discovered several localities in the remote Ramapo Mountains which seemed to possess ideal characteristics for *T. thoreyi*. The ideal habitats for this ancient species are sunny hillside seepages

that are barely a trickle. In these seepages, the flat larvae live among wet leaves.

While performing ordinary field work on June 2, 1991, I was delighted to observe several individuals at one of the seepage areas I had found during the previous winter. While this is by no means a significant range extension for the species, it is the first tangible record of *Tachopteryx* for the state of New Jersey. Historical records indicate that populations also exist in New York State in the Ramapo Mountains.

I observed much of the behavior this species is well noted for. Several individuals were seen perched on tree trunks at and around the seepage. Others were seen flying up and down tree trunks, presumably in search of females. Also observed on two separate occasions was behavior I have not heard described for this species. Directly adjacent to the seepage is a small stagnant pond. At this pond I observed two *Tachopteryx* feeding on swarms of small insects. The individuals were at opposite sides of the pond and quite wary of each other. These individuals were seen to fly in a slow, droning "figure-eight" pattern, disturbed only by an intruder or the pursuit of prey. Several intrusions by *Plathemis lydia* and *Libellula pulchella* were observed, and on each occasion the *Tachopteryx* swiftly and aggressively chased the invader away, followed by a slow return to its lazy feeding flight. The flight behavior and aggressiveness witnessed is quite similar to that displayed by the aeshnid, *Nasiaeschna pentacantha*. To be absolutely certain that the individuals observed were *Tachopteryx* and not *Nasiaeschna*, I captured specimens for positive identification.

I will continue to observe this interesting species, its habitat and behavior. Of the two specimens I have collected here, one will be retained for my reference collection, and the other will be installed in the State collection at Rutgers University.

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