

DRAGONFLY RECORDS FROM EL VALLE,
REPUBLIC OF PANAMA

During a short visit in March 1998 I had the opportunity to search for dragonflies in the surroundings of El Valle (8°35' N, 80°7' W), a village about 60 km WSW of Panama City. It is situated in an vulcano crater valley 20 km in diameter, 600-650 m above sea level. The crater edges reach up to 1173 m (Cerro Gaitál). The valley is drained by numerous small streams, tributaries of the Rio Antón. During a short trip in March 1998 I visited one of these streams and the Rio Antón at two sites, viz.: (1) Cerro Pintada, W part of the valley, stream with riffles, waterfalls, and some deep pools; 5-III-1998; — (2) Rio Antón, upper course with sandy bed; 5/6-III-1998; — and (3) Rio Antón at the outflow from the valley, ca 10 km downstream of (1), in a shady gorge, stream channel due to the dry season 10 to 20 m wide, mainly rock with some gravel and sparse aquatic vegetation; 6-III-1998.

I collected larvae and exuviae and observed adults of 13 species, viz.: *Hetaerina fuscoguttata* Sél.: adults, exuviae (1, 2, 3); — *Archilestes grandis* (Ramb.): adults, larvae (1); — *Mecistogaster ornata* Ramb.: adults (1); — *Heteragrion valgum* Donnelly: exuviae, fresh ♀ (1); — *Argia extranea* (Hag.): adults (1, 3); — *A. rogersi* (Calv.): adults, oviposition (1); — *Argia* sp.: adults, oviposition (3); — *Erpetogomphus tristani* Calv.: larva, adult reared in the lab (1); — *Erpetogomphus* cf. *sabaleticus* Wilmsn: larvae, rearing failed (1, 2); — *Phyllogomphoides litoralis* Belle: larvae, adults reared in the lab (1, 2); — *Dythemis sterilis* Hag.: adults, exuviae (3); — *Orthemis ferruginea* (Fabr.): adult (3); — *Libellula herculea* Karsch: adults (1).

Relatively few adult dragonflies, including *H. fuscoguttata*, *A. grandis*, *Argia* spp. and the libellulids were recorded, all of them in small numbers. Some exuviae of *H. fuscoguttata* and *D. sterilis* and one emerging *H. valgum* female were collected. The sampling of larvae was more successful, about 10 Gomphidae larvae were found at sites 1 and 2. In contrast, at site 3 no larvae were found. For identification the gomphid larvae were reared in the lab, yielding one *E. tristani* and two *P. litoralis*. The rearing of the second *Erpetogomphus* failed, but it was probably *E. sabaleticus*. At a pool at site 1 some 100 *A. grandis* larvae were noticed, many of them floating in the open water without any movements.

The dragonfly fauna of central Panama is well examined. However, as far as I know, no information is available on the dragonflies of El Valle. *H. fuscoguttata*, *A. grandis*, *H. valgum*, *A. extranea*, *A. rogersi*, and *L. herculea* have been recorded in the National Park Cerro Campana which is part of the same mountain range as El Valle (T.W. DONNELLY, 1992, in: D. Quintero & A. Aiello, [Eds], *Insects of Panama and Mesoamerica: selected studies*, pp. 52-90, Oxford Univ. Press, Oxford). *M. ornata*, *E. sabaleticus*, *D. sterilis*, and *O. ferruginea* are known from other locations in central Panama (DONNELLY, 1992). One red eyed *Argia* could not be identified — it may be an unknown species (S. Förster, pers. comm.). *E. tristani* was reported only once for Panama without exact locality. (D.R. PAULSON, 1982, in: S.H. Hurlbert & A. Villalobos-Figueroa, [Eds], *Aquatic biota of Mexico. Central America and West Indies*, pp. 249-277, San Diego St. Univ. Press.). *P. litoralis* was hitherto known only from the holotype male, Chiriqui province, western Panama (J. BELLE & D. QUINTERO ARIAS, 1992, in: D. Quintero & A. Aiello, [Eds], *Insects of Panama and Mesoamerica: selected studies*, pp. 91-101, Oxford Univ. Press, Oxford).

I thank NELIDA GOMEZ of Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute for support in Panama. STEFFEN FÖRSTER allowed me to use a draft of his Central American dragonfly key.

F. S u h l i n g, Zoologisches Institut, Technische Universität Braunschweig, Fasanenstraße 3, D-38092 Braunschweig, Germany; e-mail: f.suhling@tu-bs.de