A NOTE ON TERRITORIAL AND MATING BEHAVIOUR IN THE DRAGONFLY PSEUDO-LEON SUPERBUS (HAG.) (ANISOPTERA: LIBELLULIDAE)

One of the families whose sexual behaviour has been most thoroughly investigated is the Libellulidae. However, due to their scarcity, some species have remained little studied. This is the case of *P. superbus*, a dragonfly that rarely gives the opportunity for observations of sexual interactions. Here I provide a short report on this species' sexual behaviour which was observed in Plan del Río, Veracruz on June 9, 2002, from 13:00 to 15:00 h. Individuals of both sexes were seen in the river that surrounds this locality. Five males were seen patrolling each of five different ponds of varying diameter (3-20 m) and shallowness (0.30-3.0 m) which were fed by the river.

Common to other dragonflies (CORBET, P.S., 1999, *Dragonflies: behaviour and ecology of Odonata*, Harley Books, Colchester), males were overtly aggressive against conspecific males:

whenever these appeared on the pond, they were chased over distances as long as 30 m. Males also showed fidelity for concrete sites on the ponds. Given these activities, this species seems to exhibit territorial behaviour. During observations, two females were seen arriving to two ponds at different times (13:30 and 13:56 h resp.). They were taken with no apparent pre-copulatory courtship by the territorial male. Copulation was in the air and took 5 and 7 seconds for each pair. Soon after this, females went directly to sites with submerged vegetation and started an in-flight oviposition. Unlike other libellulids (reviewed by CORBET, 1999, op. cit.), mating males showed non-contact guarding during oviposition. During this, copulating males chased approaching males (number of males chased for each male: 3 and 5, resp.). In one occasion, a male chased a conspecific male and while this pair was some metres away from the pond, another male took the ovipositing female in copulation which lasted 5 seconds. The female continued oviposition even when the previous copulating male came back after 58 seconds, but no copulation ensued.

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