

Armyworms of the Netherland East-Indies (Dipt.)

by

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In 1927 Dr. Leefmans published a short article on two javanese army-worms in the periodical *De Tropische Natuur*, 1927, p. 21—25. They both belong to the same genus as the European armyworm (*Lycoria* (= *Sciara*) *militaris* Now.). One of them was observed by Mrs. Kruisbrink in a garden at Bandoeng. The larvae formed a procession of about 1 m length and some cm breadth, which consisted of certainly some hundreds of specimens. They crawled rather quickly over one another, the last ones moving forwards and being then in their turn walked upon by those left behind.

The second species was found by Dr. Leefmans himself in the forest near Tjibodas (W. Java). He met three processions, each consisting of about one- to two hundred specimens. They moved in the same way as described above, the undermost layer being wholly motionless, the other creeping over one another, the upper layers with the greatest rapidity. As soon as these have reached the head of the procession and the forest soil, they stop and serve as a slide for the hinder ones. The larvae are 12—14 mm long (those of the European species being 11 mm.). They are transparent yellowish, internally showing several orange lobes of the fatbody, the gut being filled up with a grayish black matter. So the colour of the procession is especially orange-yellow and grayish, speckled by the shining black heads. The larvae are not afraid of light, only they don't love direct sunshine; in the evening they spread and eat the rotten leaves, spinning very loose glistening threads on the leaves.

Some of them contain internally larvae of a parasitic Phorid of white colour, only showing in their guts yellowish parts of the fatbody of the army worm. This Phorid has been described by Dr. H. Schmitz S. J. in the *Natuurhistor. Maandblad v. Zuid-Limburg* 21, 1932, p. 130 as *Megaselia* (*Aphiochaeta*) *sciarina* n. sp.

Leefmans sent me also some midges, reared November 1926 from the first species, but in general *Sciarae* are difficult to determine. Now in 1933 I received from Dr.

Betrem from Malang (East Java) specimens of apparently the same midge, reared from army worms he found behind the laboratory for plant-diseases, where he is working. As in later years Mr. Edwards has published several new oriental species of this difficult and extensive genus, I sent them to him for identification. He informed me, that they look in almost every respect as *Sciara lygropis* Edw., described by him from the Malay Peninsula¹⁾, only they are considerably smaller, so that he might consider them as a variety.

Sciara lygropis Edw. has also been recorded bij Mr. Edwards from Fort de Kock (Sumatra) in one ♀, Tijdschr. v. Ent. LXXIV, 1931 p. 274).

The larvae of Malang are about 11 mm long, the pupae 4—4.5 mm. A wing of the midge is shown in Fig. 1, the prothoracic stigma of the pupa in Fig. 1b.

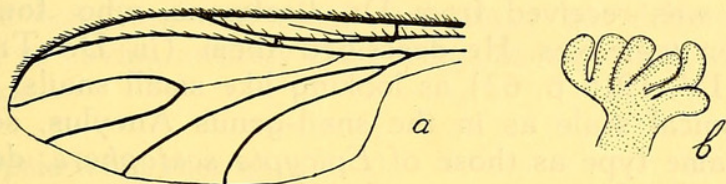


Fig. 1. *Sciara lygropis* a wing of the female; b prothoracic stigma of the pupa.

According to Leefmans the males from Bandoeng are 3 mm long, the females $2\frac{1}{2}$ mm.

¹⁾ Diptera Nematocera from the Federated Malay States Museums, Fed. Mal. Stat. Mus. Journ., Kuala Lumpur, 14, 1928, p. 30.



Meijere, J. C. H. de. 1935. "Armyworms of the Netherland East-Indies (Dipt.)." *Tijdschrift voor entomologie* 78, 184–185.

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