

OXYSTYLA FROM WESTERN MEXICO

BY THOMAS L. MCGINTY

A magnificent series of West Mexican *Oxystyla* was taken near Acapulco by Dr. Blenn R. Bales of Circleville, Ohio, during the past winter season. Acapulco, in the State of Guerrero, is located on the Pacific some 200 miles by motor from Mexico City. Dr. Bales's enthusiastic letters from Mexico gave us the first hint of the surprise that was in store for us. Later when a large series of the *Oxystyla* arrived, they presented a problem as complex as our own Florida *Liguus*. There are some hybrids, as can be expected among these arboreal snails, living as they do in close proximity to each other. The Doctor enlisted the help of natives in collecting, and hence a much finer series of specimens was obtained. It is interesting to note that the natives fear the snails, believing that the "horns shoot poison." All snails brought in had the apertures carefully packed with leaves to prevent such a catastrophe.

A plate illustrating these shells has been prepared, and will appear in the next Nautilus, with descriptions of new color races of *O. ponderosa* Strebel, and others. Meantime the discoverer and the author join with pleasure in naming this distinctive *Oxystyla* for Doctor Carlos de la Torre, eminent Cuban naturalist.

OXYSTYLA TORREI, new species. Pl. 8, figs. 7 and 8.

Habitat: vicinity of Acapulco.

Shell elongate-conic or ovate conic, rather thick and strong with convex whorls; the second whorl has a decidedly *swollen appearance*, almost to the extent of deformity in some specimens. The last whorl is *very small* and is pinched in at the suture between the two final whorls. Apical mark minute, reddish-brown, earliest $2\frac{1}{2}$ whorls light pink. Ground color of shell brown, yellowish or cream in light shells if the cuticle has been removed. Flammulations brown, irregular, often with a violaceous tinge and not present on the final whorl in light colored shells. A tawny yellow *cuticle* covers the two final whorls. There are three bands on the last whorl. Varices prominent, black-brown, often bordered behind by an olive stripe, and usually four to five on the whole shell. Aperture *very small*, peristome broadly bordered inside with black-brown fading into the white of the interior, other varices bordered outside with light blue-gray;

columella *very heavy* and *twisted*, generally white; parietal callus dark brown.

Holotype: Height 63.5 mm., diam. 29 mm., whorls 7. ANSP. No. 173342.

Paratype: Height 57 mm., diam. 27 mm., whorls $6\frac{1}{2}$. ANSP. No. 173343.

Paratypes in the Bales and McGinty collections.

(*To be continued*)

A SNAIL "TAXI"

BY GORDON K. MACMILLAN

Carnegie Museum

The larvae of certain Neuropterous insects of the family *Hemeroptidae* have the peculiar habit of covering themselves with a protective mat of empty insect skins, bits of bark, fibers of plant and animal origin, pieces of lichens, and spiders' webs. The larvae are furnished at the sides with projections, which serve as pedicles to elongate divergent hairs, and these help to keep the mass in place on the back of the insect. Some fine threads are distributed through this curious mantle and serve to keep it from disintegrating. These threads may be fragments of spiders' webs or threads spun by the insect themselves. The larvae either place small bits of these materials upon their backs with the jaws, or they crawl under them and then shift them in place by body movements assisted by the jaws.

During my four months' collecting trip this past summer throughout West Virginia I came upon six of these snail "taxis" under layers of leaves or between piles of fallen bark. Not only were the mantles constructed of the materials mentioned above but they also had numerous of the smaller snails attached to them. At first it appeared that the shells were just massed together but when I went to pick them up the shell mass began to move.

The snails found on the mantles of these Neuropterous larvae were as follows:—

Helicodiscus parallelus (Say)

Gastrocopta pentodon (Say)

Vertigo gouldii (A. Binney)

Punctum pygmaeum minutissimum (Lea)



Mcginty, T L. 1939. "Oxystyla from western Mexico." *The Nautilus* 52, 93–94.

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