

NOTE

Trichoptera do exist on Curaçao!

Recent efforts to identify and curate various collections of Neotropical caddisflies (Trichoptera) uncovered a small lot of micro-caddisflies (Hydroptilidae) collected on Curaçao by W. E. Steiner and J. M. Swearingen. The specimens were identified and put aside for incorporation in the collection; as I was unaware of any species being known from the island, I thought the record interesting. Most remarkably, within two weeks I received a reprint of a paper by Botosaneanu (1990, *Bulletin de l'Institut Royal des Sciences Naturelles de Belgique, Entomologie* 60: 39–48) in which the statement is made “After making sure that Curaçao supports no Trichoptera even in the (very rare) more promising habitats . . .” This brought to mind the aforementioned collection, which was soon retrieved, its identity verified and the collector contacted. It also recalled the old adage—never say never!

Mr. Steiner, an avid collector and employee of the Department of Entomology, Smithsonian Institution, did clearly remember both the site of the collection and having taken caddisflies that night as he, too, thought their presence unusual. He very generously made his field notes available to me, from which the following data are extracted. They visited Playa Santa Cruz on the evening of February 14, 1987, and found a mangrove inlet nearby that looked undisturbed. A desertic hill with scrubby *Acacia* and tree cacti came right down to the water's

edge next to the mangroves. Cut off from the mangroves by the elevated road bed were mud flats that might have been flooded by heavy rains or very high tides (and from which were swept series of several species of salt-loving Ephyridae, W. N. Mathis, pers. com.). The black light that evening attracted more insects than at other sites on the island, perhaps because of the diverse habitat and protection from the usually steady winds. It is unknown where the caddisflies might have been breeding: on the mud flats or on the mangrove roots (both saline or at least brackish), or from some other area on the island from which they were blown to the protected site.

The collection consists of 1 male and 7 females of *Oxyethira circaverna* Kelley. The male was compared directly to the holotype, with complete agreement of the genital parts in the two examples. The associated data are: “Curaçao[,] Boca Sta. Cruz[,] 14 February 1987[,] W. E. Steiner & J. M. Swearingen,” “At black light in mangrove inlet and desert scrub” and the material is deposited in the National Museum of Natural History. The species was described from the Canal Zone of Panama and the Amazonian area of Ecuador.

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