

Notes and Comments

## ***Oxytenis modestia* (Cramer, 1780) (Saturniidae: Oxyteninae): first record for the Cerrado of Northeast Brazil**

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The genus *Oxytenis* Hubner, 1819 (Saturniidae: Oxyteninae), exclusively neotropical, is widely distributed from Guatemala to southeastern Brazil, probably occurring in Mexico and northeastern Argentina. The holotype of this species is from Suriname, with individuals of dark or brown colour, similar to dry leaves and a proboscis more developed than other insects of this family (Jordan, 1924; Aiello and Balcázar-Lara, 1997; Balcázar-Lara and Baigts, 2000). A total of 44 species of this genus have been described worldwide (Bold Systems, 2022). A report of twenty-four described species of *Oxytenis* demonstrated that this genus is poorly studied in some areas (Smith et al., 2016). *Oxytenis bicornis* Jordan, 1924, *Oxytenis leda* Druce, 1906, *Oxytenis maranhensis* Brechlin & Meister, 2014, *Oxytenis modaustralis* Brechlin & Meister, 2014, *Oxytenis modbahiana* Brechlin & Meister, 2014, *Oxytenis modestia* (Cramer, 1780) and *Oxytenis zerbahiana*, Brechlin & Meister, 2014 have been reported for Brazil (Marinoni et al., 1997; Camargo and Schmidt, 2009; Brechlin et al., 2014; Mielke et al., 2020). The importance of the genus and the low knowledge on *O. modestia* justifies its record for this area of the Cerrado is the main objective of this research.

The Cerrado biome occupies 22% of the Brazilian territory with 5% of the world's biodiversity, but agricultural activities, fire and deforestation reduce its area, with only 8.21% protected in Conservation Units representing approximately 1.8% of those of Brazil (Cunha and Bravo, 2022). About 46% of the native Cerrado forest is degraded, compromising the biodiversity of this biome, and increasing the extinction risks of endemic species (Ferro et al., 2010; Freitas et al., 2021). The Cerrado includes areas of the Bahia, Maranhão and Piauí states in the Northeast region of Brazil (Bolfe et al., 2020).

*Oxytenis modestia* was collected in the State Park of Mirador (06°10'S, 044°43'W and 06°42'S, 045°54'W), in two locations within this park, at the Base da Geraldina (06°37'48"S/45°52'49"W) and at the Posto Avançado do Mel (06°39'44"S/45°01'37"W) (Figure 1). The vegetation of this park is of the Cerrado type with a sub-humid climate, annual rainfall of 1,200 to 1,400 mm and average

maximum and minimum temperatures of 33°C and 19°C, respectively (Silva et al., 2022).

*Oxytenis modestia* specimens were collected using a light trap with a white sheet (3×2 m) and a 250-watt mercury vapor (UV) lamp powered by a generator during waning or new moon nights, between 06:00 P.M. and 06:00 A.M., from February to March 2009 and April and June 2011 and deposited in the Zoological Collection of the Maranhão state, Brazil (CZMA).

Three specimens of *O. modestia* (Figure 2) were collected in the State Park of Mirador, being two specimens (males) at the Base da Geraldina 22.ii-01.iii.2009, 02-08. iv.2011 and one specimen (female) at the Posto Avançado do Mel 01-05.vi.2011, being the first record of this moth to the Cerrado of the Maranhão state and Northeast region of Brazil. This insect has been reported in the Midwest (Federal District and Goiás), North (Rondônia) and South (Paraná) regions of Brazil (Camargo and Schmidt, 2009; Diniz et al., 2001; Marinoni et al., 1997). The collection of *O. modestia* confirms that the distribution of Saturniidae is still poorly known in the cerrado, partly due to the reduced sampling effort, as reported for new records of species of this family in this biome (Camargo, 2004). The Cerrado occupies 65% of the Maranhão state, but with 20% deforested (Silva Junior et al., 2018; Silva Junior et al., 2021). This can reduce the reproduction and survival of *O. modestia*, whose host plants are of the Rubiaceae family, such as *Alibertia concolor*, *Alibertia edulis*, *Genipa americana* and *Tocoyena formosa* (Diniz et al., 2013; Diniz et al., 2001; Mejia et al., 2020). Furthermore, the description, in the Cerrado of Maranhão state and Northeast region of Brazil, of new species of *Oxytenis*, such as *O. maranhensis*, *O. modbahiana* and *O. zerbahiana*, demonstrates a high and, still, poorly known diversity of Oxyteninae for this state and region (Brechlin et al., 2014).

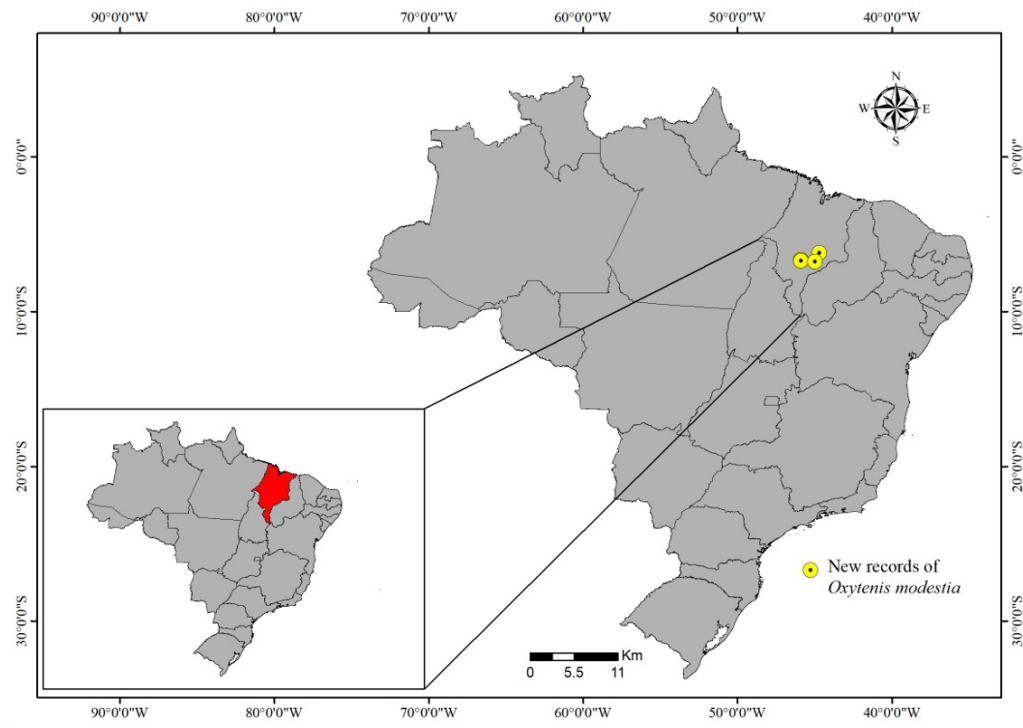
In summary this record of *Oxytenis modestia* extends the knowledge of the subfamily Oxyteninae (Saturniidae) to the Cerrado biome of the Maranhão state and the Northeast Brazil.

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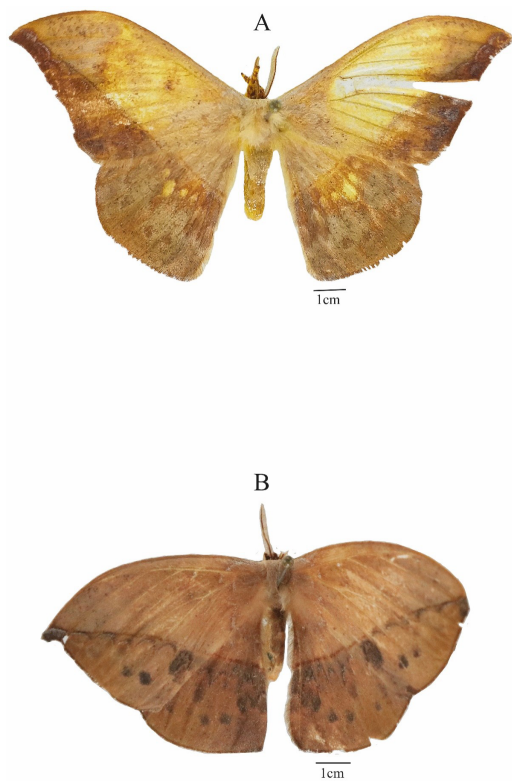
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**Figure 1.** New records of *Oxytenis modestia* (Lepidoptera: Saturniidae).



**Figure 2.** *Oxytenis modestia* (male) (A), *Oxytenis modestia* (female) (B) (Lepidoptera: Saturniidae: Oxyteninae), collected in the State Park of Mirador, Maranhão state, Brazil.

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