

# A NEW *ECTAGA* WALSINGHAM (LEPIDOPTERA, OECOPHORIDAE) FROM SOUTHERN SOUTH AMERICA

Vitor O. Becker<sup>1</sup>

ABSTRACT. *Ectaga garcia*, sp.n., related to *E. promeces* Walsingham, 1912 is described. Larvae were reared on *Lantana camara*, *L. griesebachiana* and *L. montevidensis* (Verbenaceae) in Argentina and Brazil.

KEY WORDS. Lepidoptera, Oecophoridae, *Ectaga*, *Lantana*, Verbenaceae, South America

The material on which this article is based was reared by Dr Cesar Garcia on *Lantana camara*, *L. griesebachiana* and *L. montevidensis* (Verbenaceae) as part of a project on the biological control of *Lantana* and other weeds in collaboration with Dr. Brian Wilson, Alan Fletcher Research Station, Queensland, Australia. Plans are to introduce the moth into Australia to control *Lantana*. The illustration of *E. promeces* is based on material prepared from a male collected by the author in Mexico: Veracruz, Huatusco, and later compared with the type at The Natural History Museum, London.

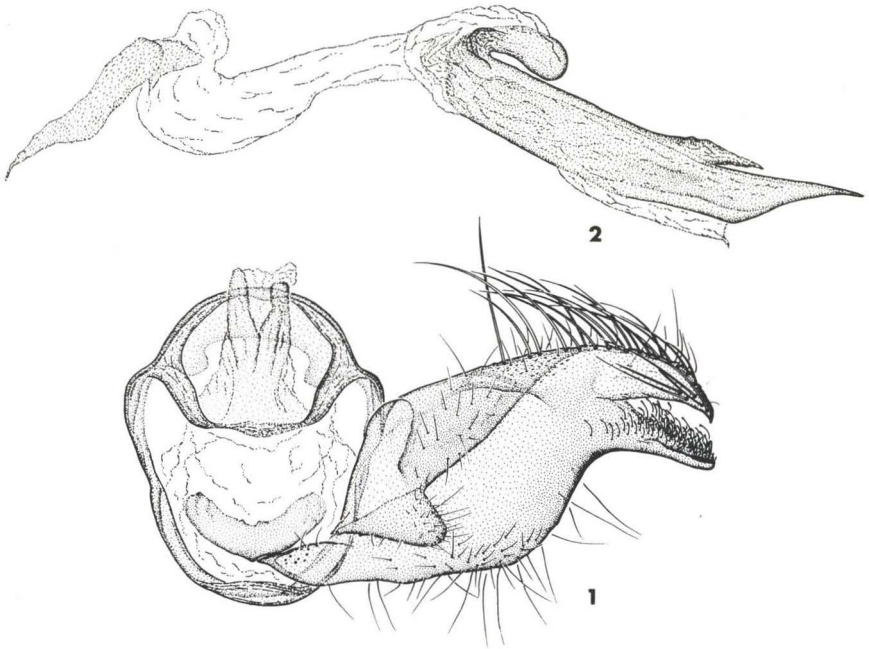
## *Ectaga garcia*, sp.n.

Figs 1-2

Forewing 6-7 mm. Fuscous, irrorated with dark grey and whitish-tipped scales. Second segment of labial palpus grey with three dark grey areas forming ill-defined bands, long scales dark grey with whitish-tipped apex; third segment dark grey with basal and median pale bands. Head and thorax fuscous, frons paler; scales whitish-tipped. Antenna filiform in both sexes, fuscous annulated dark grey. Forewing fuscous, irrorated with dark grey and whitish-tipped scales, scale tufts dark grey. Hind wing fuscous, slightly paler than forewing. Legs dark grey banded pale. Abdomen shining pale fuscous, pale ventrally.

Male genitalia (Figs 1, 2). Uncus absent. Tegumen rounded, vinculum less so. Gnathos of two inwardly directed arms connected medially by membrane. Juxta a broad V-shaped arch. Valva broad, basal process triangular, basal two-thirds of costa nearly straight, distal third arched, distal half with strong, long setae; its apex divided to form two strong, nearly triangular lobes, approximately of equal size; sacculus not differentiated, saccular margin with basal two-thirds nearly straight, distal third strongly falcate. Aedeagus with apex very obliquely truncate, sharply pointed ventrally.

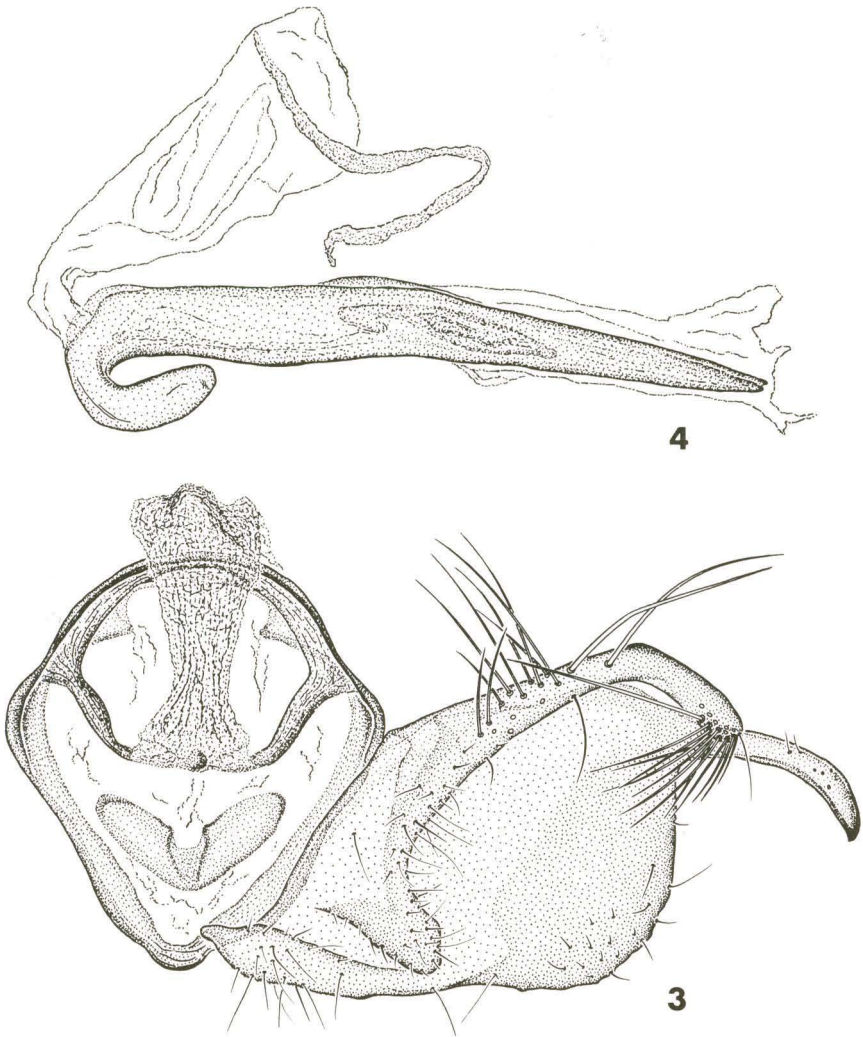
1) Centro de Pesquisa Agropecuária dos Cerrados, EMBRAPA, Caixa Postal 08223, 73301-970 Planaltina, Distrito Federal, Brasil.



Figs 1-2. *Ectaga garcia*, sp.n., holotype. (1) Male genitalia, ventral view, left hand valva omitted; (2) aedeagus, lateral view.

**Holotype** male. BRAZIL, *Minas Gerais*: Caraça, 1300m, 2.IV.1992, Becker leg., Museu Nacional do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro. Paratypes: ARGENTINA, *Tucumán*: Tafi del Valle, 1 male, 2 females, 15.I.1992, Garcia leg., ex *L. griesebachiana*; BRAZIL, *Paraná*: Curitiba, 2 males, 1 female, 13.V.1988, Garcia leg., ex *L. montevidensis*; AUSTRALIA: Sherwood, 7 males, 4 females, Willson leg., ex *L. camara*, *L. montevidensis*, Coleção Becker, Brasília; The Natural History Museum, London; National Museum of Natural History, Washington.

**Remarks.** According to colour and size this species is very similar to *E. promeces* Walsingham (1912: 140), the type-species of *Ectaga*. Their genitalia, however, are distinct. In *E. promeces* the apical lobes are thin, finger-shaped (Figs 3, 4) while in *E. garcia* they are basally strong, nearly triangular. *E. lenta* Clarke (1956: 253), reared by BOURQUIN (1957: 1) on *Verbena bonariensis*, is sympatric with *E. garcia*. However, their genitalia are very different, as shown by the figures provided by CLARKE. It is very likely that *Pyramidobela* Braun (1923: 118) and *Atopotorna* Meyrick (1932: 281) are synonymy of *Ectaga*. POWELL (1973: 23, 24), stated that, despite their being closely related, he retained them as distinct genera because "...the general form is similar, but the basal processes are retained and the valva is simple, without the accessory lobe." It is not clear whether POWELL based his deductions on specimens, on secondary information, or on a species



Figs 3-4. *Ectaga promeces* Walsingham. (3) Male genitalia, ventral view, left hand valva omitted; (4) aedeagus, lateral view.

distinct from *E. promeces*. In the latter species, as in *E. garcia*, the accessory lobe is well developed (Figs 1, 3). In the figure of CLARKE these lobes seem to be pointed ventrally, whereas the illustration here is based on a preparation with the valvae lying flat open. With regard to the basal processes it seems that they are not homologous with those of *Ethmia* Hübner, 1819. According to POWELL (1973: 11) these processes "are digitate projections that appear to originate from the lateral margins of the diaphragma near but anterior to the base of the costal margin of the valva." In *Ectaga*, as is clearly shown (Figs 1, 3), these processes are part of the

valvae themselves, being connected to the costal margin by a strongly sclerotized band. Unfortunately material representing the type-species of both *Pyramidobela* and *Atopotorna* were not available and so, to afford possible error, the three generic names are not synonymized here.

*E. garcia* is named after Dr. Cesar Garcia, who collected and reared the material.

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