

26. OBSERVATIONS ON A MODE OF FOOD-CAPTURE BY DRAGON FLIES

Dragon flies are active predators known for their habit of capturing their prey on the wing. They feed on other small insects and it is generally known that these prey-species belong to orders Odonata, Diptera, Hymenoptera and Coleoptera (Hobby 1934). In the Malabar Christian College compound, certain Aeschnid dragonflies (unidentified) are generally found resting on an extensive patch of grass, in the evening after about 6 p.m. On May 10, 1968, there was a swarm of alate termites which came out earlier than usual, before crepuscular period. The dragonflies which were resting on the grass then started capturing the termites flying over the grass one by one, in an interesting manner. The dragonfly suddenly made a swift flight, taking the course of an arc or almost a semi-circle and seized the termite, flying at a height of 1-3 metres above the grass. The position of the body of the dragonfly was nearly horizontal during the capture of prey. After food capture, the flight was continued as a deep dive back to grass on which the dragonfly rested again and ate the prey.

The above observation shows that the resting dragonflies can also capture flying prey species of insects by suddenly darting at them accurately and that order Isoptera also should be added to the list of the orders of the prey insect species of dragonflies.

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June 5, 1968.

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REFERENCE

HOBBY, B. M. (1934): The prey of British Dragonflies. *Trans. ent. Soc. S. England*. 8 : 65.

27. *DICRAEIA STYLOSA* WIGHT (PODOSTEMACEAE)—
A NEW RECORD FOR BOMBAY

The genus *Dicraeia* Thou. (= *Dicraeia* Tul.) with about 13 species occurs in parts of S. America, S. Africa, India and Ceylon. During a botanical exploration of Sakarpathar-Ambavane region on the Western Ghats of India, Poona District, Maharashtra State, in the years 1962-65, a species of *Dicraeia*, namely *D. stylosa* was collected.



Soans, A B and Soans, J S. 1968. "Observations on a Mode of Food Capture by Dragonflies." *The journal of the Bombay Natural History Society* 65, 803–803.

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