

# FULGORA LANTERNARIA.



## CHARACTER GENERICUS.

*Caput* fronte producta, inani.

*Antennæ* infra oculos : articulis 2; exteriore globoso majore.

*Rostrum* inflexum.

*Pedes* gressorii.

*Lin. Syst. Nat.* p. 703.

## CHARACTER SPECIFICUS, &c.

FULGORA fronte ovali recta, alis lividis; posticis ocellatis.

*Lin. Syst. Nat.* p. 703.

## LANTERNARIA.

*Mex. Sur.* t. 49.

*Rösel. Inf.* 2. gryll. t. 28, 29.

*Fabr. Spec. Inf.* vol. 2. p. 313.

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Vix aliud in Insectis videtur mirabilius luce illa phosphorea, quam certæ species emittunt. Inter insecta Europæa, Lampyrides, (quæ ad *Coleoptera* Linnæi referuntur) maxime hac qualitate pollent. In America est species *Elateris*, cui multa inest vis lucem in tenebris spargendi. *Scolopendra* etiam vulgaris Europæa, (quæ *Scolopendra electrica* Linnæi) manifeste noctu lucet,



lucet, præsertim si aliquo modo sit irritata aut compressa. Præ cæteris tamen insectis eminet species in tabula depicta, quæ communiter *Lanternaria Peruviana* dicitur: lucem enim adeo vividam spargit, ut viatores noctu ambulantes iter suum commode peragere possint, ope unius vel duorum horum animalium, baculo alligatorum, gestatorumque more facis. Insectum hoc ad ordinem naturalem pertinet insectorum quatuor alas habentium, quarum exteriores sunt magis coriaceæ seu densæ in parte superiore quam inferiore. Hujus ordinis insecta *Hemiptera* Linnæi constituunt, inter quæ major pars rostrum tubulatum sub pectore gerunt, cujus ope fugendo se nutriunt. Hinc patet Fulgoram et Cicadam esse valde affines. Fulgora frequens in America calidiori reperitur, et a Domina Merian in historia sua insectorum Surinamensium nec non ab aliis Naturæ indagatoribus descripta est. Non injucunde narrat Merian metum sibi ingentem incussisse flammeas coruscationes ab insectis hisce exortas, cum adhuc facultatis quam habent lucem in tenebris emittendi ignara esset. “Cum aliquando (inquit illa) *Lanternarios* magna copia mihi attulissent Indi, scatulæ eosdem majori ligneæ inclusi, illos noctu lucere adhuc inscia; verum de nocte insolito strepitu expergefacta, et perterrita, e lecto profiliens, lumen accendere jussi, quis domi meæ insuetus esset strepitus ignara. Tum vero e scatula stridorem profectum illico nobis patuit; illam itaque cum animi quadam perturbatione aperuimus, sed adaperitam magis adhuc paventes in terram subito dejecimus, quod inter aperiendum inde velut ignea erumperet flamma, toties refulgens quoties novum  
evolaret

evolaret insectum: quo tandem animadverso, ad nos redeuntes, iterum congregavimus animalcula, splendorem in ipsis plurimum demiratae.” Ope etiam unius insecti, ut affirmat Merian commode aliquis noctu legere potest.

Non abs re sit addere quod quamvis Domina Merian figuras horum animalium pulchre et accurate depingi curaverit, tamen transformationem ipsius insecti a larva ad integrum statum describere conata, figuram, ut videtur, fictam introduxit, nempe cicadæ speciem (quæ Cicada Tibicen Linnæi) cum capite Fulgoræ.

Lux phosphorea a Fulgora dimanans, a capite concavo seu velut inflato procedit: nulla enim alia pars phosphorea est.



THE  
GREAT LANTHORN-FLY,  
OR  
FIRE-FLY.



GENERIC CHARACTER.

*Head* hollow, inflated, and produced forwards.  
*Antennæ* below the eyes, consisting of 2 joints,  
the exterior larger and globose.  
*Beak* inflected.  
*Feet* formed for walking.

SPECIFIC CHARACTER, &c.

FULGORA with large oval head; variegated  
wings; the lower pair ocellated.

LANTERNARIA.

*Merian. Sur. t. 49.*

*Rösel. vol. 2. t. 28, 29.*

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Few circumstances are more remarkable amongst insects than the phosphoric light with which some particular species abound. Amongst the European insects this quality is most conspicuous in the Glow-Worms, which are of the Linnæan genus *Lampyrus*, and belong to the Coleopterous tribe. In America a large species of *Elater*, or Springing-Beetle is possessed of this faculty  
in





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in a very high degree ; the common small Scolopendra of Europe, and which is well known in our own country, is pretty strongly phosphoric likewise, especially if pressed or irritated ; but of all insects that which is here represented, and which is generally called the Lanthorn-Fly of Peru, possesses this lucid quality in the most eminent degree, and affords a light so vivid, that travellers walking by night are said to be enabled to pursue their journey with sufficient certainty by one or two of these insects tied to a stick and carried in the manner of a torch. The insect belongs to the natural order of Hemipterous insects, or such as are furnished with four wings, of which the exterior pair on the upper part are of a stronger or more coriaceous nature than on the lower. The division in this tribe to which it strictly belongs, is that containing the rostrated insects, or such as have a tube or instrument of suction lying flat, beneath the breast. It is therefore extremely nearly allied to the genus Cicada. It is common in many parts of South America, and amongst other writers is described by the celebrated Madam Merian in her history of the Surinam insects. She gives an entertaining account of the alarm into which she was thrown by the flashing which proceeded from them in the dark, before she had been apprized of their shining nature.

“ The Indians once brought me (says she) before I knew that they shone by night, a number of these Lanthorn-Flies, which I shut up in a large wooden box. In the night they made such a noise that I awoke in a fright, and ordered a light to be brought, not being able to guess from whence the noise proceeded:



as soon as we found that it came from the box, we opened it, but were alarmed still much more, and let it fall to the ground in a fright at seeing a flame of fire come out of it; and as many animals as came out, so many flames of fire appeared. When we found this to be the case, we recovered from our fright, and again collected the insects, much admiring their splendid appearance." She adds, that the light of one of these insects is so vivid that a person may see to read a newspaper by it.

It may not be improper to observe, that though Madam Merian has given good figures of the Fire-Fly, yet, by way of explaining the change from its supposed larva into the complete insect, she seems to have introduced an imaginary figure, representing the Cicada Tibicen with the head of a Fulgora. The light emitted by the Fire-Fly proceeds entirely from the hollow part, or Lantern of the head; no other part of the animal being luminous.





Shaw, George. 1790. "The Great Lanthorn-Fly or Fire-Fly, *Fulgora lanternaria* [Pl. 37]." *The Naturalist's Miscellany* 1(XII), <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.310689>.

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