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SPHENARCHES ANISODACTYLUS (WALKER) (PTEROPHORIDAE),
NEW TO NORTH AMERICA

Additional key words: Louisiana, Florida, Texas, pantropical distribution, long-distance dispersal.

During a visit to the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) in New York City, I sorted from the miscellaneous Pterophoridae collection all specimens that I thought would be either *Sphenarches ontario* (McDunnough), *Geina periscelidactyla* (Fitch), or *Geina* sp. Of the series of specimens sorted, there were only three for which I could not provide an immediate determination. After dissection, one of those specimens proved to be a male of *Sphenarches anisodactylus* (Walker) when compared with a photograph of the male genitalia of the type provided by S. Adamczewski (1951, Bull. B.M. (N.H.) Ent. 1:303–387). This rather worn specimen from Louisiana had been collected by A. H. & S. K. Rindge in New Orleans, on 29 September 1953. No more information could be obtained from the collectors. It is pale yellowish-brown with a wingspan of 15 mm. It has the same wingspan as an average-sized *Sphenarches ontario* (McDunnough) but does not show the contrasting dark brown markings on the forewings. Moreover, the dark brown scales in the fringe of the third hindwing lobe are subapical in this species instead of apical as in *S. ontario* and the similar (although larger) *Geina periscelidactyla* (Fitch).

After this paper had been submitted for publication, D. L. Matthews, Florida State University, kindly sent me a manuscript reporting this species from Florida and describing its life-history (Cassani, J. R., D. H. Habeck & D. L. Matthews, Life history and immature stages of a plume moth *Sphenarches anisodactylus* (Lepidoptera: Pterophoridae) in Florida, Florida Entomol. 73:257–266). In addition, Matthews informed me that a series of "about" 12 specimens had been collected in October and November 1983, October 1984, and December 1984 in Bellaire (Harris Co.), Texas, by E. C. Knudson. These specimens are in the United States National Museum, Washington, D.C. (D. L. Matthews, pers. comm. 1990).

Sphenarches anisodactylus (Walker) is widely polyphagous and has a pantropical distribution. K. Yano (1963, Pac. Ins. 5:849–871) reported it from Japan, India, Ceylon (the type locality), Thailand, New Guinea, Bismark Archipelago, Solomon Islands, New Hebrides, New Caledonia, Fiji, Samoa, Australia, West Indies, South America, North Africa, and Madagascar. Its broad distribution has been explained by cyclones (Fletcher, T. B. 1910, Trans. Linn. Soc. Lond. Zool. 13:265–323) and human activity (Fletcher, T. B. 1921, Mem. Dep. Agric. India Ent. 6:1–9) which favor long distance dispersal. It is possible that the species was introduced into the United States with one of the following host-plants (listed by Adamczewski, *op. cit.*): *Hibiscus mutabilis* L. (Malvaceae); *Lageraria vulgaris* Ser. = *siceraria* (Mol.) Standl. (Cucurbitaceae); *Dolichos lablab* L., *Cajanus indicus* K. Spreng. = *C. Cajan* (L.) Huth, *Mimosa pudica* L., *Phaseolus vulgaris* L. (Fabaceae); *Averrhoa bilimbi* L. (Oxalidaceae). These are all tropical plant species that have been imported into the United States to be cultivated mostly for ornament (Bailey, L. H. & E. Z. Bailey, 1949, Hortus Second, MacMillan Co., New York). It is interesting to note that Cassani et al. (*op. cit.*) found *S. anisodactylus* feeding on an indigenous plant species unrelated to those mentioned above.

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