

LEPIDOPTERA OF THE SIJU CAVE.

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I. PYRALIDAE.

By *T. BAINBRIGGE FLETCHER, Imperial Entomologist.*

***Pyralis manihotalis* Guénée.**

- Pyralis manihotalis* Guén., *Delt. and Pyr.*, p. 121 (1854) ♀ [Cayenne].
Pyralis vetusalis Wlk., *Cat.*, XIX, pp. 891-892 (1859) ♀ [St. Domingo].
Pyralis gerontesalis Wlk., *Cat.*, XIX, pp. 896-897 (1859) ♀ [Ceylon].
Pyralis gerontesalis Moore, *Lep. Ceylon*, III, p. 178, f. 6 (1887) [redescri.] [Ceylon].
Sacatia landatella Wlk., *Cat.*, XXVII, p. 124 (1863) ♂ [Ceylon].
Pyralis despectalis Wlk., *Cat.*, XXXIV, p. 1243 (1865) ♀ [Moreton Bay].
Pyralis ? miseralis Wlk., *Cat.*, XXXIV, p. 1244 (1865) ♂ [Moreton Bay].
Pyralis achatina Butl., *Ent. Mo. Mag.*, XIV, p. 49 (1877) [Hawaii].
Pyralis manihotalis Hmp., *Faun. Brit. Ind., Moths*, IV, p. 151, f. 87 (1896) ♂
 [Neotropical, Oriental and Australian Regions].
Pyralis manihotalis Deventer, *Tijds. Ent.*, XLVI, pp. 79-80, t. 9 ff. 1a, 1b (1903)
 [early stages].
Pyralis manihotalis Fletcher, *Trans. Linn. Soc.* (2) XIII, p. 300 (1910) [S. America ;
 W. and S. Africa ; Seychelles ; India ; Ceylon ; Nicobars ; Cocos-Keeling ;
 Java Singapore ; W. China ; Formosa ; New Guinea ; Queensland ; N. S.
 Wales ; Hawaii].

In the collection of the Agricultural Research Institute at Pusa, we have specimens of *P. manihotalis* bred, together with *P. pictalis* Curtis, from similar, and in some cases identical, lots of stored grain. *P. pictalis* was described by Curtis from a specimen taken at Poplar (East London) ; but it is not a British species and Curtis' specimen was almost certainly imported, probably from India. The form found in the Siju Cave is quite distinct from typical *P. pictalis*, but in a long series the two tend to merge together. It appears probable that *P. pictalis* and *P. manihotalis* are synonymous ; this, however, can only be proved by breeding and pending further evidence they may be kept separate.

P. manihotalis was very common in the Siju Cave in the cavern between 400-500 feet from the mouth. It was always found at rest on the walls or on the roof and was never seen to fly. No observations on its breeding habits were made but it is freely eaten by the Reduviid bugs *Bagauda cavernicola* Paiva and *Myiophanes kempi* China. On one occasion a specimen was noticed being devoured by the earwig *Chelisoches morio* Fabr.

This is not the first time that species of *Pyralis* have been found in caves. *P. pictalis* is known to inhabit the Farm caves near Moulmein¹ and the allied *P. fumipennis* has been recorded from the caves near Bisrat in Jalor.² In both localities the moths were observed resting on the walls as in the Siju Cave.³

¹ *Journ. Asiat. Soc., Bengal* (n. s.) IX, p. 406 (1914).

² Swinhoe, *Fasciculi Malayenses, Zool.* I, p. 99 (1903).

³ The larva probably feed on vegetable debris.