Bogotá, COLOMBIA

Notes and life cycle of Drymoea veliterna (Lepidoptera: Geometridae)

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1. Female laying eggs
2. Eggs
3. Eggs ready to hatch
4. First instar (L1)
5. First instar (L1)
6. Second instar (L2)
7. Second instar (L2)
8. Third instar (L3)
9. Third instar (L3)
10. Fourth instar (L4)
11. Fourth instar (L4)
12. Fifth instar (L5)
13. Fifth instar (L5)
14. Fifth instar (L5)
15. Prepupa
16. Prepupa
17. Pupa with larva exuviae on the top
18. Pupa prior to adult eclosion
19. Pupa aggregation under the estereoscope
20. Pupa aggregation. Notice the silk cocoon
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**Defensive thoracic liquid**

**Cocoon silk fibers**

**Pupa last abdominal segment**

**Notes**

Known distribution. Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, and Perú. Distribution in Colombia: Antioquia, Boyacá, Caldas, Cundinamarca, Huila, Meta, Norte de Santander, Quindío, Risaralda, Tolima, and Valle del Cauca.

Taxonomic notes. The species was described in Chancamayo, Perú as *Nelo veliterna* Druce, 1885. However, over time different synonyms have been used: *Melanoptilon veliterna* Druce, 1885, *Nelo racilia* Druce, 1899, *Sangalopsis microleuca* Dognin, 1910, and *Drymoea microleuca*. The genera *Melanoptilon*, *Nelo* and *Sangala* were synonymized by Pitkin (2002) into *Drymoea*, transferring the species into the latter genus. These changes have created confusion when using the correct and valid name of the species which is *Drymoea veliterna* (Druce, 1885).

Biology. The species can be found throughout the whole year, having the highest seasonality picks on March, June, and November. A single record of an unknown ectoparasitic wasp has been registered in Bogotá. On reared adults, a liquid came from the thorax when specimens were disturbed. This might suggest the presence of defensive glands on the thorax.

Host plants. In Bogotá city, the larvae can be found on *Croton* spp. It seems larvae and adults obtain nutrients from their host plants, giving them unpalatability as a defense strategy.

Future Research. Associations with the *Croton* species where larvae can be found might explain the different coloration found on the specimens (ex: yellow and dark-green phenotypes). Likewise, caterpillars do not feed on all *Croton* species and do not defoliate the trees equally (Fig 45-49). This could indicate how the influence of environmental and/or physiological factors from the host plant could affect the herbivore rate. It also might be interesting studying the presence of defensive glands on the thorax for Geometridae moths, and their composition (alkaloids, proteins, etc.). Future research on *Drymoea veliterna*, their host plants, and their defensive glands, will for sure open a new chapter for Ennominae moths in Colombia.

Sources: [https://www.inaturalist.org/](https://www.inaturalist.org/).

