

## MECISTOGASTER (p. 55).

**Mecistogaster ornatus** (p. 55).

To the localities given, add:—MEXICO, Sayupa in Durango (*Batty, A. M. N. H.*: 1 ♀), Arroyo del Muerte (*Beebe* \*) in Jalisco, very near the Colima line and about ten miles from the Volcan de Colima; GUATEMALA, San Felipe in Retalhuleu (*Maxon & Hay, U. S. N. M.*: 1 ♂, 1 ♀), Escuintla (*Mr. & Mrs. Deam, coll. Wllmsn.*: 2 ♀); HONDURAS, Puerto Cortez (*W. H. Vogel, Milwaukee Publ. Mus.*: 1 ♀); COSTA RICA, Bebedero (*Underwood*: 1 ♂, 1 ♀), Surubres [1 ♂], Rio Machuca [1 ♂, 2 ♀] (*Biolley, colls. A. N. S., Wllmsn.*).

Mr. C. W. Beebe, Curator of Ornithology of the New York Zoological Park, has given an account of this insect in life which is worth repeating here, as it occurs in a work \* not likely to be consulted by entomologists. With his permission we quote as follows:—"While walking up the dark ravine I saw, to my amazement, four flecks of sunshine dancing slowly ahead of me, although, at that moment, not a breath of air stirred the branches. I could make nothing of it, until I enclosed the flickering spots in my net. Only then did I see that they were four yellow and white markings, one at the tip of each wing of a large dragonfly. In the dim light of the ravine, the rest of the wings, transparent and colourless, and the long attenuated body, were absolutely invisible, leaving to the eye only four small golden spots, which would ordinarily be lost among the myriad dots of sunlight. For an insect of its size ( $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches in spread of wings, and with a body 4 inches in length) the protection was the most perfect I had ever seen. To photograph the dragonfly I had to pose it in the brightest sunlight, thus giving no idea of the wonderful illusion which a deep shadow produced—when the wings vanished, the body became a slender twig, and only a single spot of yellow, where the wings overlapped, told of its position; a hint so intangible that it must be safe, even in this land of keen-eyed, insect-eating birds, mammals and reptiles." Mr. Beebe's photograph is reproduced in his book (p. 240) and renders the identification of the dragonfly certain.

Of the examples taken at San Felipe, Mr. Maxon wrote me:—"The two collected were the only ones seen [Feb. 23, 1905]. They lacked the usual dragonfly ability of dodging and getting away quickly, and their flight was otherwise very peculiar. They were, moreover, so slight that it was difficult to see them, in the partial shade, well enough to sweep, or to follow them in their movements, which were at all times extremely deliberate. Their flight was very slow and weak, and often they would remain nearly stationary for ten or fifteen seconds, very much as when a dragonfly hovers before ovipositing." On one of the Escuintla females Mr. Williamson sent this note:—"Collected by C. C. Deam in a dry ravine. Flight like that of a *Morpho*."

\* 'Two Bird-Lovers in Mexico' (Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin, & Co., 1905), pp. 239-241.