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HOST PLANT OF ANASTREPHA PULCHRA (DIPTERA: TEPHRITIDAE) IN CENTRAL AMAZON, BRAZIL—MISTAKEN IDENTITY RESOLVED

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Anastrepha pulchra Stone, 1 of the 11 species in the serpentina group of Anastrepha, is not considered to have economic significance or to be a pest species (Norrbom et al. 1999; Norrbom 2002). This species has been reported only in Panama, Venezuela, and Brazil. In Brazil, A. pulchra was first reported in Iranduba, state of Amazonas, and collected in traps (Ronchi-Teles 2009). Previous reports of the occurrence of A. pulchra had been restricted to its type-locality in Panama (Stone 1942) and in Venezuela at Aragua and Bolivar (Caraballo 1981; Norrbom 2002).

Knowledge of the biology of A. pulchra is very scarce. Caraballo (1981) was the first to report a host association for A. pulchra, i.e., a host plant in the family Sapotaceae in Venezuela; however, no information on the host plant species was available. In his revision of the Anastrepha serpentina species group, Norrbom (2002) stated that the “only reported host plant” for A. pulchra “is an undetermined species of Sapotaceae” and cited Caraballo (1981) as the information source. In Brazil, Ronchi-Teles (2009) reported infestation by A. pulchra in fruit identified as being in the family Sapotaceae at the Reserva Florestal Adolpho Ducke, in the state of Amazonas; however, neither the genus nor the species of the purported host were known.

Our most recent attempt at investigating potential hosts and associated parasitoids of A. pulchra was through fruit collection at the Reserva Bucke (RD) of the Instituto Nacional de Pesquisas da Amazônia (INPA), located northeast of Manaus (02°53’S and 59°59’W) in the state of Amazonas, Brazil. The reserve comprises an area of 100 km² of primary forest, and the fruit were collected inside the forest from Mar to May 2010. The results of those collections were 108 pupae from which 59 adults of A. pulchra and 18 specimens of Doryctobracon areolatus (Szépligeti) (Hymenoptera: Braconidae) emerged. The host plant was identified from fruit, leaves, and stems as Pouteria oblanceolata Pires (Sapotaceae) a native tree locally known as “tutarubá” or “abiurana-preta”. P. oblanceolata fruit are yellow, fleshy, fibrous, and with some latex, about 4-4.5 cm in diameter, with a yellow smooth pericarp.

The fruits of both P. oblanceolata and M. collocarpa are very similar in size and appearance (shape, size, color, and texture). Moreover, both species when mature are part of the Amazon forest canopy (around 40 m above ground level) and both have a tall straight trunk. Because of the high canopies of both tree species the collection of leaves and flowers is very difficult, and these are needed to establish and verify their identities.

We conclude confidently that P. oblanceolata has been shown to be the host plant of A. pulchra, and not M. collocarpa as stated in Ronchi-Teles et al. (2011). Further our results corroborate the
preference of the *Anastrepha serpentina* group of species for host plants in the Apocynaceae, Sapotaceae and Myrtaceae (Norrbom 2002).

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**SUMMARY**

*Pouteria oblanceolata*, the true natural host of *Anastrepha pulchra*, is reported in the state of Amazon, Brazil. Parasitoids attacking *A. pulchra* are also reported. Comments on a previous erroneous identification of the host plant of *A. pulchra* are also included.

**REFERENCES CITED**


