Annona liebmanniana and A. cherimola x A. reticulata (Magnoliales: Annonaceae): Two New Host Plant Species of Anastrepha ludens (Diptera: Tephritidae) in Mexico

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ANONNA LIEBMANNIANA AND A. CHERIMOLA X A. RETICULATA (MAGNOLIACEAE: ANNONACEAE): TWO NEW HOST PLANT SPECIES OF ANASTREPHA LUDENS (DIPTERA: TEPHRITIDAE) IN MEXICO

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Fruit flies (Diptera: Tephritidae) from the genus Anastrepha are endemic to subtropical and tropical areas in the Americas (Stone 1942; Aluja 1994), and collectively infest a wide variety of economically important hosts (Hernández-Ortiz 1992; Norrbom 2004). In Mexico and northern Central America, Anastrepha ludens Loew, the Mexican fruit fly, is the most common and most damaging insect pest of perennial fruit crops such as citrus (Rutaceae) and mango (Anacardiaceae). This polyphagous species also attacks fruit species belonging to the plant families Myrtaceae, Fabaceae, Rosaceae, and Sapotaceae, among others (Baker et al. 1944; Bush 1962; Aluja & Martínez 1984; Aluja et al 1987; Aluja 1993, 1994).

Several species of Anastrepha have been reported to infest Annona spp. For example, in Mexico several authors have reported A. ludens feeding in Annona cherimola Mill., A. reticulata L., A. squamosa L., and A. muricata L. (Baker et al 1944; Aluja et al 1987; Hernández-Ortiz 1992; White & Elson-Harris 1992; Vidal 1994). In the state of Veracruz, Piedra-Rodríguez & Zuniga-Anell (1993) reported A. ludens infesting A. cherimola fruits in the locality of Llano Grande, Municipality of Teocelo. Here, we provide the first report of A. ludens feeding in two new host plants: Annona liebmanniana Baill. (= A. scleroderma S., USDA 2007) and A. cherimola × A. reticulata, a plant that is presumed to be a natural hybrid (R.V. Ortega-Ortiz, pers. comm.), from Chiapas and Veracruz, Mexico, respectively. Also we confirm previous reports indicating that A. ludens infests fruits of A. reticulata.

Fruits were collected in 2010 and 2012 in different agro-ecosystems in the communities of Francisco Sarabia, Municipality of Tuzantan, Chiapas, Mexico (N 15°09’ 6” W 92°28’08”, 513 m asl, and N 15°11’13” W 92°21’41”, 1074 m asl); Tejería (N 19°22’ 24” W 96°54’90”, 938 m asl) and Llano Grande (N 19°22’05” W 96°52’79”, 851 m asl) Municipality of Teocelo, Veracruz, Mexico. Three fruit collections were made for each Annona species at each locality. In all, 23.1 kg of A. liebmanniana fruits were collected (15 kg in Feb 2010 and 8.1 kg in Feb 2012); 3.2 kg of A. reticulata fruits were collected in Apr 2010; and 1.6 kg of A. cherimola × A. reticulata fruits were sampled in Oct 2010. Collections focused on fruit that appeared to be physiologically mature. After sampling, all fruit was labeled and transported to the laboratory. The collected fruit were placed in individual trays labeled with the name of the host species and covered with mesh netting to prevent the emerging insects from escaping (Borrón & White 1970; Peña et al 2002). Pupae were collected and kept in plastic containers with moist (50-70%) vermiculite until the emergence of the adult insects. Emerging fruit flies were collected and placed in vials containing 70% alcohol. Keys provided by Hernández-Ortiz (1992) were used for insect taxonomic identification. Voucher specimens of A. ludens were deposited at the Instituto de Investigaciones Forestales, Universidad Veracruzana, in Xalapa, Veracruz, Mexico. Voucher specimens of A. liebmanniana and A. cherimola × A. reticulata were deposited in the herbarium XALU of Faculty of Biology of Universidad Veracruzana (Xalapa, Mexico).

Overall, 55 A. ludens individuals emerged from A. liebmanniana (5 adults, 9.1% of the total recovered), A. reticulata (48 adults, 87.3% of the total) and A. cherimola × A. reticulata (2 adults, 3.6% of the total) fruits (Table 1). This is the first report documenting the emergence of A. ludens from A. liebmanniana (Tuzantan, Chiapas) and A. cherimola × A. reticulata (Llano Grande-Veracruz). This fly species was also found infesting A. reticulata fruits (Tejería-Veracruz) thus confirming previous reports from Hernández-Ortiz (1992) and White & Elson-Harris (1992), who indicated that A. cherimola, A. reticulata and A. squamosa serve as hosts to A. ludens in México; however, they provided no specific information as to the location of the infestations.
This report increases to 22 the number of plant species serving as hosts of *A. ludens* (Eskafi & Cunningham 1987; Norrbom & Kim 1988; Hernández-Ortiz 2007). We emphasize the importance of the presence of *A. ludens* in *A. liebmannianna* (Fig. 1b) in particular because fruits of this host plant, a type of custard fruit cultivated from Southern Mexico down through western Guatemala to Honduras, possesses a hard and leathery peel on the fruit, previously thought to be resistant to pests (EAC 2010).

*Annona cherimola × A. reticulata* has particular morphological features not found in any other kind of *Annona* previously identified. For instance, its fruits are similar to those of *A. cherimola*, but the axillary shoot and leaf shape is similar to that of *A. reticulata* (see Fig. 1c.). Furthermore, flowering and fruiting periods of this species are synchronous with those of *A. cherimola* and *A. reticulata* in the study site in Llano Grande, Veracruz. Owing to these characteristics, it is presumed that this plant is a natural hybrid between *A. cherimola* and *A. reticulata* (R.V. Ortega-Ortiz, pers. comm.).

Overall, our results highlight the need to continue assessing other *Annona* species potentially

**Table 1. Number of *Anastrepha ludens* individuals recovered from fruits from 3 species of *Annona* collected in the states of Veracruz and Chiapas, Mexico (2010, 2012).**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Host Species</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>♀</th>
<th>♂</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Annona cherimola × A. reticulata</em></td>
<td>Veracruz</td>
<td>Teocelo</td>
<td>Llano Grande</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Annona liebmannianna</em></td>
<td>Chiapas</td>
<td>Tuzantan</td>
<td>Francisco Sarabia</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Annona liebmannianna</em></td>
<td>Chiapas</td>
<td>Tuzantan</td>
<td>Francisco Sarabia</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Annona reticulata</em></td>
<td>Veracruz</td>
<td>Teocelo</td>
<td>Tejería</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>55</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 1. (a) Side and aerial view of *Anastrepha ludens*, both male and female, recovered from fruits of *Annona liebmannianna*, *A. reticulata* and *A. cherimola × reticulata*, collected in the localities of Francisco Sarabia, Tuzantan Chiapas, and Llano Grande and Tejeria, Municipality of Teocelo, Veracruz, Mexico, (b) Morphometry of leaves, fruits, and seeds of *A. liebmannianna* collected in Tuzantan, Chiapas, Mexico, (c) *Annona cherimola × reticulata* fruits collected in the community of Llano Grande, Municipality of Teocelo, Veracruz, Mexico. A fruit of *A. cherimola* and leaves of *A. reticulata* are shown for comparative purposes.
serving as alternate host plants for *A. ludens*, because populations building in *Annona* fruits may represent a potential reservoir for populations of this pest that can in turn attack citrus, mango and other commercial fruits within and outside Mexico.

**Summary**

The presence of Mexican fruit fly, *Anastrepha ludens* Loew, (Diptera: Tephritidae) in fruits of *Annona liebmanniana* (= *A. scleroderma*) and *A. cherimola × A. reticulata* (Magnoliales: Annonaceae) is reported for the first time in Central Veracruz and Southern Chiapas, Mexico, respectively. This report provides evidence of an increasing number of *Annona* species acting as hosts for this pestiferous fruit fly.

**Acknowledgments**


**References Cited**


