

Record of Parasitoids on the Mango Defoliator, *Lymantria marginata* Wlk. (Lepidoptera : Lymantriidae)

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An epidemic eruption of *Lymantria marginata* Wlk. was observed on mango (*Mangifera indica* Linn.) in 1983 in Western Uttar Pradesh (Singh and Goel, 1987). Heavy infestation by these hairy caterpillars resulted not only in total consumption of the foliage but also loss in yield. This paper deals with three parasitoids recorded from the field-collected caterpillars and pupae of *L. marginata* which may be used in biological control. These are new records on *L. marginata*.

Two larval parasitoids, *Carcelia* sp. and *Exorista* sp. (Diptera : Tachinidae) parasitize the final instar caterpillars of *L. marginata*. About 35 per cent of the field-collected caterpillars were found parasitized during the postmonsoon period. One or two parasitoids were observed to emerge from one caterpillar. The larva of each parasitoid came out by rupturing the ventral soft skin of the mature caterpillar and prepupa. The maggot pupated after leaving the caterpillar's body, within 2 to 4 hours inside the soil. The parasitoid adult emerged out of pupae after 10 to 12 days. The parasitized caterpillar was easily recognizable by its dullness. The parasitized caterpillar died after the emergence of the maggots.

Brachymeria lasus (Wlk.) (Hymenoptera:Chalcididae) was recorded as a pupal parasitoid of *L. marginata*. About 30.2 per cent pupae were found parasitized in the field. Only one parasitoid was recorded from each pupa. The parasitoid emerged by making a rough round hole on the anteriodorsal or anterioventral side of the thoracic segments of the host pupa. In the present study, *B. lasus* was

observed as a primary parasite on *L. marginata*. According to Joseph *et al.* (1973), it is a polyphagous species and attacks pupae of many Lepidoptera, though sometimes parasitise Hymenoptera and Diptera secondarily. Narendran and Joseph (1976) while describing the biology of *B. lasus* (Wlk.) assigned it a parasite status and reported it to be significant in biological control. It is a very useful parasite, keeping *Anodevidia peponis* (Fab.) (Noctuidae) a serious pest of snakegourd under control in Malabar (Narendran, 1989).

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Key Words : *Lymantria marginata* Wlk., mango, *Carcelia* sp., *Exorista* sp., *Brachymeria lasus*

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