



IMMATURE STAGES OF *ESTIGMENE ACREA* FROM GUATEMALA (LEPIDOPTERA: ARCTIIDAE)

JACK HARRY

47 San Rafael Court, West Jordan, UT 84088

ABSTRACT: The immature stages of *Estigmene acrea* Drury are described and figured. The larval host is *Brassica oleracea* L. var. *botrytis* (cauliflower).

KEYWORDS: Guatemala, Chimaltenango Department, fasciated inflorescence, agricultural pest.

Estigmene acrea Dury, 1773 is a well known Tiger Moth that ranges from southern Canada to Honduras. It's common name, Saltmarsh Caterpillar, disguises the fact that it is a well known polyphagous agricultural pest. Nonetheless, it is found very sporadically over this wide range and is generally not often thought of as a "pest species" among lepidopterists. <http://www.npwrc.usgs.gov/resource/distr/lepid/moths/usa/1824.htm> is the link to its USGS range map.

The immature stages in this study are from the southwest side of the town of Tecpan, Chimaltenango Department, Guatemala. This location is an agriculture area with many farms at an elevation of 2330 meters. A farmer gave the author two cluster of ova – one had 54 eggs and the other had 36 eggs. The eggs had been oviposited on leaves of cauliflower (*Brassica oleracea* L. var. *botrytis*) which was then utilized in rearing the larvae for this study.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Rearing: Cauliflower is easy to obtain in grocery stores and markets. Most of the leaves of the cauliflower were cut from the stem. The stem of the cauliflower was placed into a small container with some water and the gaps between the stem and the container were plugged with wads of plastic. The cauliflower was then placed into a gallon size plastic container. The container had a lid of chiffon material to allow for some air circulation and avoid moisture accumulation.

The leaves the ova were on were trimmed to nearly the size of the egg cluster. When the eggs began to hatch the clusters were placed on the cauliflower. The larvae could easily find the fresh plant. When the larvae were small, a container of cauliflower was used for each cluster. When the larvae were large, about 15 were put into a container. They appeared to be somewhat crowded but that didn't seem to be a problem. From the second instar on, each time the larvae molted they were transferred to a fresh head of cauliflower. Those larvae utilized for measurements were measured for length before being disturbed, then they were placed in a separate container to molt. This made the head capsule easy to find, especially during the small instars.