

## SCIENTIFIC NOTES

A PAPER WASP NEST INSIDE A PLANT OF  
*BROCCHINIA HECTIOIDES* (BROMELIACEAE)JORGE M. GONZÁLEZ<sup>1,2</sup> AND JOHN E. LATTKE<sup>2</sup><sup>1</sup>Universidad Simón BolívarDepartamento de Biología de Organismos  
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Paper wasps usually construct nests beneath horizontal substrates (Hermann et al. 1985, Krispyn & Hermann 1977) and this is particularly true for wasps of the genus *Mischocyttarus*. Rarely do wasps construct nests on vertical substrates of a short-lived nature such as a plant leaf. Bernon (1969) reports a nest of *Polistes fuscatus pallipes* Lepelletier in the inside of a tubular leaf of *Sarracenia purpurea* L. (Sarraceniaceae) as unique after reviewing all the associated insects of this plant.

During an expedition to the summit of Auyan Tepui (1,800 m.), Estado Bolívar, Venezuela, a nest of *Mischocyttarus cf. commixtus* Richards was found attached to a leaf within the tubular rosette of a *Brocchinia hectioides* (Bromeliaceae). The nest was constructed at 6 cm. below the apex of the vertical leaves and contained 3 eggs, 2 larvae of different instars, 2 pupae, 1 empty cell, and 1 cell under construction. It also had 3 adults, one of which escaped. After collection, one pupae emerged.

The petiole leaned 30° from the leaf before expanding in the vertically hanging nest cells. This situation is analogous to observations made by Downing & Jeanne (1988) in *Polistes fuscatus* (F.).

The occurrence of a paper wasp nest inside the rosette of the above mentioned *Brocchinia* species is also a rare finding since such a construction site does not correspond to the cues that seem to regulate nest construction behavior in these wasps as stated by Downing & Jeanne (1988).

Two other nests, apparently also of *M. cf. commixtus*, were observed constructed on a stone substrate within small concave depressions of the rock surface. The petioles also made an angle before the nest started hanging vertically, but we could not measure them through our binoculars.

The collected nest and wasps have been deposited in the Colección Entomológica "Dr. Francisco Fernández Yépez" of the Instituto de Zoología Agrícola, Maracay, Aragua.

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