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A Pleasing Lacewing, *Nallachius americanus* (McLachan), from Southwestern Virginia (Neuroptera: Dilaridae)

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During 1994 I operated a Malaise trap in a tract of mixed hardwoods near my home in Blacksburg, Virginia, to collect asilid and syrphid flies. One of the most exciting captures, however, was neither of these flies, but a peculiar little moth-like neuropteran. This insect is about 6 mm in length with a wingspan of about 13 mm; the body is reddish-brown except for the abdomen which is bright green. The antennae are pectinate and the membranous wings rather hairy like those of caddis flies.

With the assistance Dr. Kevin Hoffman (Clemson University) I was able to identify the specimen as a male of *Nallachius americanus* (McLachan), family Dilaridae. This species is one of only three dilarids known from North and Central America, and is the only one recorded from eastern United States (Table 1).

Dilarids ("pleasing lacewings") are a group of rarely collected planipennian Neuroptera most easily recognized by the distinct pectinate antennae of males, a feature that is uncommon in this order. Adults are most often collected on or in close proximity to dead trees. For many years most of what was known about the biology of dilarids came from collection data associated with captured specimens. Although the group is still poorly known, *N. americanus* is probably one of the most thoroughly studied of its species. Like most other dilarids,

it is found in woody habitats. The life cycle is completed in one year. Adults, which emerge during spring and early summer, are known to engage in mating swarms. Steyskal (1944) captured over 20 adults, mostly males, flying around a dead tree in Michigan. Females of *americanus* possess a well-developed, flexible, ovipositor and lay their eggs in crevices in dead trees, most frequently tulip poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*) and several species of oaks (*Quercus*) (MacLeod & Spiegler, 1961). Larvae are often found in the galleries of wood-boring beetles, and were noted by MacLeod & Spiegler (1961) to feed on larvae of the cerambycid *Elaphidion* sp. and the cucujid *Cucujus clavipes* Fabricius, and eggs and larvae of the ant *Camponotus castaneus* (Latreille). Larvae of *americanus* have also been found in close proximity to numerous other wood-inhabiting insect larvae (and potential prey) such as buprestids, curculionids, xylophagids, and cerambycids.

The recently collected specimen carries the data: Virginia: Montgomery Co.: Hethwood woods at Blacksburg, 10 July 1994, Malaise trap (T. P. Kuhar, 1 male). It has been deposited in the Virginia Tech branch of the Virginia Museum of Natural History, Blacksburg, Va. This record represents the first reported capture of *N. americanus* in southwestern Virginia. Other collections

Table 1. Distributional records of the genus *Nallachius* Navas in North and Central America

Species	Geographic distribution
<i>N. americanus</i> (McLachlan)	Puerto Rico; Venezuela; United States: District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Maryland, Michigan, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia (Gurney 1947, MacLeod & Spiegler 1961, Adams 1970, Lawson & McCafferty 1984, Hoffman 1990)
<i>N. championi</i> (Navas)	Guatemala (Adams 1970)
<i>N. pulchellus</i> (Banks)	Cuba; Costa Rica; United States: Arizona (Alayo 1968, Adams 1970, Hoffman 1990)

from the state (all USNM) are from: **Clarke Co.:** 6^UXr Experimental Farm, 1 male, 1-14 July 1993; 1 female, 25 June-5 July 1994; 1 female, 6-19 July 1994 (all from Malaise trap, D. R. Smith). **Essex Co.:** 1.6 km SE Dunnsville, 1 male, 10-23 June 1993; 3 males, 10-27 June 1993; 1 male, 11-21 1994; 1 male, 2-15 July 1994 (all Malaise trap, D. R. Smith, Fairfax Co. : 6.4 km NE of Falls Church, 1 male (allotype), 24 May 1939, W. H. Anderson; Langley, 1 larva with bark of tree, 1 November 1939, W. H. Anderson.

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