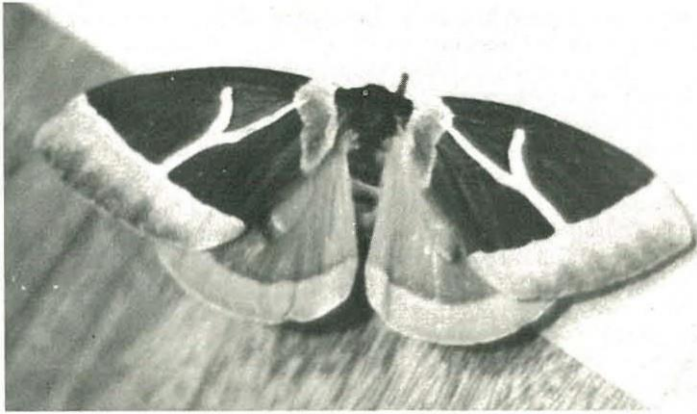




*Dirphia tarquina* at rest.

## *Dirphia tarquina* - a new moth for Trinidad



*Dirphia tarquina* in the act of laying.

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THE moth illustrated in the accompanying pictures flew into my home in Petit Valley one evening in October 1976 and because it was so beautiful I decided to photograph it. This was a fortunate decision since it now seems probable that the species is new to Trinidad. By comparing my photographs with the illustrations in Seitz's "The Macrolepidoptera of the World", I was able to identify the moth as *Dirphia tarquina* Cr., a species that is not represented in the collection at the University of the West Indies and is not listed in Kaye and Lamont's Catalogue of the Trinidad Lepidoptera, Heterocera (Moths) (Memoirs of the Dept. of Agriculture No. 3, 1927).

My specimen was a female. As the illustrations in Seitz's book show, the male is quite different with mainly grey forewings. In the female, the forewings are very dark brown, almost black, each wing being crossed by a creamy-white Y-shaped stripe and edged with paler brown. The hind wings are in shades of red-brown and each has a central darker spot. The body is banded blackish and red-brown.

My specimen began to lay while I was photographing it. The eggs hatched about 10 days later but the young caterpillars all died. Although they sampled some of the four or five different species of leaf I put for them I was not lucky enough to hit upon their food plant and they soon stopped feeding.

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