

PICTINUS AURIVILLII BERG. IN ILLINOIS

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On September 16, 1943, while collecting insects from decaying debris in holes in trees, I found an adult female of *Pictinus aurivillii* Berg. This specimen was taken from a tree hole 12 feet above the ground in a living soft maple (*Acer saccharinum* L.) on the bluff near Edgemont, Illinois. The debris consisted of decayed leaves, wood, and mammal pellets.

The collection of this specimen in the St. Louis area provides a new distributional record for this species, proving its occurrence in Illinois and giving a much more northern extension than had previously been recorded. Other specimens of this species have been taken in the extreme south, at Crescent City, Florida, at Bayou Sara, Louisiana, and in Georgia, according to de la Torre Bueno (1939). Of the eight species in the genus, this is the only North American representative, the others occurring in South and Central America. Blatchley (1926) states that *aradids* have become strongly adapted by dorso-ventral flattening

for life beneath closely fitting bark or in narrow crevices of wood. They are for the most part gregarious, living in small colonies composed of both nymphs and adults in various stages. When uncovered, they remain quiescent for a long time. In the northern states they hibernate both as adults and as nymphs, often sheltered only by bark. Although sometimes frozen for weeks, they revive when spring comes. Their food consists of minute fungi which occur within bark and in wood of trees and stumps. The tree hole, I believe, also may be important in the development of this species because fungi are abundant in tree hole debris and provide abundant food. The tree hole would also serve as an ideal shelter for hibernation in this latitude.

The female possesses a sharp well developed ovipositor which aids in the insertion of eggs beneath bark.

The fact that this hemipteran is so rarely encountered is due not only to its hidden position but also to its dusky color.