The many faces of the tulip tree moth *Epimecis hortaria* Fabricius

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The tulip tree beauty, *Epimecis hortaria* Fabricius is a highly variably marked large geometridae species occurring over much of the eastern United States. Both Forbes (1948), and Covell (1984) mention three different forms occur. I have found the species to be highly variable even at a single location with an infinite number of macular forms and shades of white, brown, gray, and black. Fig. 1 depicts just a small sample of the many variations.

It appears there are at least four annual broods occur in Louisiana with adult specimens found in all 12 months (Fig. 2.). Covell (1984) lists food plants as pawpaw, poplars, sassafras, and tulip tree.

In Louisiana, *hortaria* has been collected in the following parishes: Ascension, East Feliciana, Evangeline, Iberville, St John the Baptist, St. James, Tangipahoa, and West Feliciana.

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**Fig. 1.** Phenotypes of *Epimecis hortaria* taken at sec.24T6SR12E, 4.2 mi. NE Abita Springs, Louisiana, males a - g, females h - l.

**Fig. 2.** *Epimecis hortaria* collected at sec.24,T6SR12E, 4.2 mi. NE Abita Springs, Louisiana. n = 942

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**Literature cited**
