



NEWSLETTER of the Wisconsin Entomological Society

Volume 14, Number 1

February 1987

NEXT MEETING TO BE IN MADISON ON MARCH 21

The next meeting of the Wisconsin Entomological Society will be held on Saturday, March 21, beginning at 3:00 P.M. in Room 150 Russell Laboratories, on the U. W. Campus. Short presentations will be given on the following topics: New Insects Invading Wisconsin (Phil Pellitteri), A Computer Program for Generating Specimen Labels (Dan Young), Highlights of the 1986 Lepidoptera Season (Les Ferge), and Collecting Trips to Mexico (Mark Evans). Anyone wishing to give an informal presentation will be most welcome to do so. After the meeting, an informal meal at a nearby restaurant is planned.

SOCIETY FUNCTIONS PUT BACK ON SCHEDULE

Due to our inability to organize the annual meeting last December, the election of officers will be held at the March 21 meeting. The nominees are: Phil Pellitteri (President), Jim Parkinson (Vice-president), Glenn Esenther (Secretary) and Bob Borth (Treasurer). Also, in view of the fact that no newsletters were published in 1986, the executive council felt that collection of dues should be suspended this year. All members in good standing for 1986 will receive Society publications in 1987.

MICHIGAN ENTOMOLOGICAL SOCIETY MEETING JUNE 5 IN UPPER PENINSULA

Mo Nielsen sends advance word that the Michigan Entomological Society's Annual Meeting will be held Friday, June 5, at the Ford Forestry Center in Alberta, MI, just south of L'Anse. Field trips to nearby bog and pine barren habitats are planned. Sleeping accommodations and meals are available at the Center. This is an excellent opportunity for W.E.S. members to meet new people and enjoy the scenic upper peninsula of Michigan. The driving distance is 330 miles from Milwaukee or Madison. If interested in attending, please contact the Michigan Ent. Soc., Dept. of Ent., Michigan State Univ., East Lansing, MI 48824.

The Newsletter of the Wisconsin Entomological Society is published three times a year, at irregular intervals. It is provided to encourage and facilitate the exchange of information by the membership, and to keep the members informed of activities of the organization. Members are strongly encouraged to contribute items for inclusion in the Newsletter. Please send all news items, notes, new or interesting insect records, season summaries, research requests etc. to the editor: Les Ferge, 7119 Hubbard Ave., Middleton, WI 53562.

FROM THE EDITOR

Les Ferge

The importance of a newsletter to link together widely scattered members of a group is obvious. Approximately 80% of our membership cannot, for various reasons, attend our meetings. To improve communication with the membership as a whole, it is necessary to give more emphasis to the Newsletter, and strive to have it appear at more regular, predictable intervals. Given the current level of contributed material, plus planned features, a goal of three issues per year (winter, spring, fall) seems practical and attainable.

A framework of regular features is a standard method of operation in most other newsletters. Ideas for such features include: summaries of presentations given at meetings (a short written abstract submitted by the speaker would be excellent); season collecting summaries, with listings of rare and unusual species; a letters column, providing a forum for the exchange of ideas and information among the members; research requests and want ads; new books and publications available, and so on. Membership input along these or similar lines is especially solicited.

Since I am a dyed-in-the-wool Lepidopterist, my personal input into the Newsletter is likely to be largely confined to that group of insects. In order to maintain a balanced content in the Newsletter, I will need to rely heavily on others to provide articles or information on non-Lepidopterous subjects. Any comments or suggestions regarding the Newsletter will be most welcome.

1986 FIELD TRIP REPORT

Les Ferge

The Cedarburg Bog field trip, planned for 11-12 July, was once again hampered by poor weather. Rain and severe storms passed through southern Wisconsin that weekend, undoubtedly keeping a number of people from taking part. Although at least two members attempted to collect, not much of interest was reported. We have had the worst luck possible in scheduling this trip, having experienced below-average cold or rain for three years in a row.

The second trip of the season, to Prof. Dicke's property near Ladysmith on 1-3 August, was most enjoyable. The gracious hospitality extended by the Dicks was very much appreciated by the few members that were able to take part. Again, the weather forecast possibly kept more people from participating. Despite rain showers and cool nights, blacklight trapping of Lepidoptera was quite successful. A short bait trail yielded a few nice underwing moths.

RESEARCH REQUESTS

Correspondence wanted with anyone interested in Tabanidae. Information and/or specimens are needed for use in compiling a list of Wisconsin Tabanid records. Mark Evans, Dept. of Entomology, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin 53706.

Records of Wisconsin Catocaline Noctuidae (underwing moths and relatives) wanted, for inclusion in state faunal survey. Data from northwestern counties of Wisconsin especially needed. Les Ferge, 7119 Hubbard Ave., Middleton, Wisconsin 53562.

NOTES ON TABANIDAE COLLECTED IN WISCONSIN

Mark H. Evans

Since 1983 I have made a special effort to collect horseflies and deerflies while doing fieldwork around the state. In the last three years, over 3000 specimens, collected by aerial net or malaise traps by Dan Young or me, have been sent to Cornell University in New York. Dr. L. L. Pechuman, professor emeritus and former curator at Cornell, is a world authority on the Tabanidae and is always eager to see new material sent in by collectors.

In an effort to fill in geographic areas poorly represented in collections, I have checked specimens at the Milwaukee Public Museum (thanks to Allen Young, Sue Borkin and Gary Noonan) and in the U.W.-Madison collection (thanks to Jane Harrington and Steven Krauth). From these collections I have generated a list of county records and collection dates for Wisconsin Tabanidae. I will provide a summary of these records for a future Newsletter. It is hoped this may stimulate more interest in this group of Diptera by more collectors in the state.

I thought I would share parts of some past correspondence from Dr. Pechuman and some of his comments regarding material I've sent:

letter of 30 April 1984:

"There were a number of new county records for Wisconsin but the most interesting are as follows:

Chrysops pudicus, previously recorded for Wisconsin from a single specimen from Walworth County reported by Roberts and Dicke (1958).

Chrysops celatus, not previously known from Wisconsin."

[Both are single specimens from Cedarburg Bog, Ozaukee County, collected with an aerial net - M. Evans.]

letter of 21 January 1986:

"The collections in Ozaukee County were of special interest. The collection of 12-16 June [malaise trap - Dan Young] caught the end of the emergence of the early spring species such as H. affinis, lurida and zonalis. Also there was an interesting mixture of northern species and southern species - C. mitis, excitans, Hybomitra affinis, lurida and zonalis (northern) versus C. celatus, Tabanus pumilus and trimaculatus (southern). You got a single C. celatus earlier and I found one more. The T. pumilus record is new for the state, but no big range extension since it is found in the northern counties of Illinois.

The collection of T. sparus milleri from Sauk County [aerial net - Larry Phelps and M. Evans] was also of interest. T. sparus sparus has been occasionally taken in a few southern Wisconsin counties. Subspecies milleri, which seems to differ from the nominate form only in the presence of an eye band, has been regarded as a southern subspecies but in recent years it has spread north into New England, New York, Michigan and now Wisconsin.

The material from Chequamegon Nat. Forest was also of interest. Note the difference in the number of C. frigidus collected. This species does not attack man readily. In the past I have collected in the field for hours without seeing any frigidus but on my return to my car, found several on the windshield.

I ran into a very interesting problem. Hybomitra arpadi is a northern form taken only once before in Wisconsin - in Price County. In addition to 'good' arpadi. I found possible hybridization with H. affinis. I have put these aside for now but when time permits I will make a more detailed study of your specimens.

Other collections of interest include Stonemyia rasa, Hybomitra criddlei, hinei, lurida and Tabanus sackeni - all reported from Wisconsin but not commonly taken. Chrysops geminatus is rarely taken as far west as Wisconsin.

Species I would have expected at one locality or another were not present in your material although rather widespread in Wisconsin. These include Chrysops aestuans, callidus (you have one), shermani, Hybomitra astuta, microcephala, miniscula, sodalis, Tabanus marginalis and novaescotiae. However, Tabanids, in spite of strong flight ability, are quite precinctive and are often restricted to a specific area."

1986 WISCONSIN SEASON SUMMARY OF LEPIDOPTERA

A sudden onset of mild weather conditions in March caused the unusually advanced emergence of several species of spring-emerging Noctuidae, which first appeared around the month's end, over two weeks earlier than usual. This trend of early emergences continued into the beginning of summer, with a record 12 species of Catocala recorded in Grant County during the last week of June. Moth collecting at lights and bait was quite good through much of July, but cool or rainy conditions were present in much of August and September.

The main distinction of this season was the notable influx of migratory species and/or southern strays. Euptoieta claudia (Varigated Fritillary) was the most widespread of these, being recorded in six counties this year. Other migrant butterflies noted were Eurema lisa (Little Sulfur), Libytheana bachmanii (Snout Butterfly), and Junonia coenia (Buckeye). A number of southern moths were recorded, with Jim Parkinson's capture of Ascalapha odorata (Black Witch) certainly being the highlight of his season. The Noctuid Magusa orbifera, usually a rare find this far north, was found in three counties. Larvae of this moth were found defoliating Buckthorn trees (not native to Wisconsin) in a nursery near Waterloo (L. Lovett and P. Pellitteri).

The nomenclature and arrangement used in the list of noteworthy records appearing below follow the Checklist of the Lepidoptera of America North of Mexico, Hodges et al. 1983. New county records are indicated by capitalized county names; new state records have the species names capitalized plus the STATE notation. A number of the moths included may represent new county or state records, but are not indicated as such, since the background work necessary to determine their status has not yet been completed.

Contributors: George Balogh (GB), Robert Borth (RB), Les Ferge (LF), Irwin Leeuw (IL), Jim Parkinson (JP), Russell Rahn (RR), John Wilterding (JW).

BUTTERFLIES: Thymelicus lineola, 28 June, GREEN Co. (JP); Hesperia ottoe, Polites origenes, 28 June, Grant, Green Cos. (JP); Euphyes dion, 20 July, DOOR Co. (JW); Euphyes conspicua, 13 July, RICHLAND Co. (JP); Amblyscirtes hegon, 6 June, Marathon Co. (JP); Papilio cressphontes, 13-31 July, Green, Richland Cos. (IL, JP); Eurema lisa, 13 July, DODGE Co. (LF); Gaeides xanthoides dione, 28 June, Grant Co. (JP); Epidemia epixanthe, 1 July, Marathon Co. (JP), Incisalia irus, 9 May, Adams Co. (JP); Strymon melinus, 9 May-13 July, ADAMS, Grant Cos. (JP); Lycaeides melissa samuelis, 14 July-1 Aug., Adams, Burnett, Wood Cos. (LF, JP); Plebejus saepiolus, 13 June, Lincoln Co. (RR);

Libytheana bachmanii, 10 May-28 June, Grant, Rock Cos. (LF, JP); Euptoieta claudia, 28 June-17 Aug., Grant, Green, Lincoln, Marathon, Oneida, TREMPEALEAU Cos. (JP, LF); Speyeria idalia, 28 June-28 Aug., Green Co. (IL, JP); Nymphalis vau-album, 13 July, CRAWFORD Co. (JP); Junonia coenia, 17 Aug., TREMPEALEAU Co. (JP); Oeneis chryxus strigulosa, 10 May, Langlade Co. (JP).

MOTHS: Atteva punctella, 30 July-4 Aug., Door Co. (JW); Carmenta anthracipennis, 10 Aug., Green Co. (IL); Acoossus centerensis, 6 July, Door Co. (JW); Itame andersoni, 3 July, Vilas Co. (GB); Itame abrupta, 28-30 June, Grant Co. (GB); Euchlaena milnei, 28-30 June, Grant Co. (GB); Sphingicampa bicolor, 13 July-8 Aug., CRAWFORD, Grant Cos. (JP); Sphinx canadensis, 1-13 July, CRAWFORD, Marathon Cos. (JP); Notodonta scitipennis, Schizura concinna, 3 July, Oneida Co. (LF); APANTESIS CARLOTTA, 18 July-19 Sept., GRANT Co., STATE (LF, JP); Idia majoralis, 29 June-16 July, Grant, Sauk Cos. (GB, LF); Idia denticulalis, 8 July, Sauk Co. (LF); METALECTRA DISCALIS, 28 June-19 July, GRANT, SAUK Cos., STATE (GB, LF, JP); Cissusa spadix, 25 Apr., TREMPEALEAU Co. (LF); Ascalapha odorata, 9 Aug., GRANT Co. (JP); Catocala innubens, 28 June-13 July, CRAWFORD, Grant, RICHLAND Cos. (GB, RB, LF, JP); Catocala obscura, 9 Aug., Grant Co. (JP); Catocala subnata, 13 July-17 Aug., Grant, RICHLAND, TREMPEALEAU Cos. (JP); Catocala briseis, 4-10 Aug., Door Co. (JW); Catocala meskei, 28 June-19 July, Dane, Grant, Sauk Cos. (GB, RB, LF); Catocala illecta, 13 July, CRAWFORD Co. (JP); Catocala abbreviatella, 27 June-8 July, Grant, Sauk Cos. (GB, LF, JP), Catocala nuptialis, 17 Aug., Trempealeau Co. (JP); Catocala amestris, 28 June-16 July, Grant, Sauk Cos., more common than usual (GB, RB, LF, JP); Catocala clintoni, 28-29 June, Grant Co. (GB, JP); Catocala minuta, 28 June, Grant Co. (GB, JP); Catocala connubialis, 29 June, GRANT Co., second STATE record (GB); Chrysanympha formosa, 14 July, Door Co. (JW); Autographa mappa, 3 July, VILAS Co. (GB); Thioptera nigrofimbria, 25 Sept., DANE Co. (LF); AMYNA OCTO, 19 Sept., GRANT Co., STATE (LF); Tarachidia binocula, 1 Aug., BURNETT Co. (LF); Colocasia flavicornis, 29 June, Door Co. (JW); Acrionicta betulae, 30 May-19 July, Dane, Sauk Cos. (LF); Crymodes relicina, 19 Sept., Grant Co. (LF); Oligia chlorostigma, 29 June, Grant Co. (GB); Oligia bridghami, 2-7 Aug., Door Co. (JW); Papaipema cerina, 6 Sept., RICHLAND Co. ((LF); Conservula anodonta, 22 July, Door Co. (JW); Enargia mephisto, 14 June-5 July, Dane, Oneida, Vilas Cos. (LF, JP); Magusa orbifera, 15 Aug., -11 Oct., Dane, Grant, Jefferson Cos. (LF, L. Lovett, P. Pellitteri); STIRIODES OBTUSA, 12 July, GRANT Co., STATE (JP); Psaphida thaxteriana, 29 March, IOWA Co. (LF, JP); Heliothis borealis, 9 May, Adams Co. (JP).

NEW CRITTERS FOR WISCONSIN

Phil Pellitteri

Sometimes it amazes me how quickly things can change. It even works that way with insects. In the ten years that I have been involved with the Insect Diagnostic Lab, there have been a number of new invaders into the state. It keeps things from getting boring, but unfortunately these new residents are usually pest species and not welcome guests to our fauna. I guess it is too much to ask for a new Papilio or Saturniid to grace our borders.

There are three insect species that have become established in enough places by 1986 that it looks like they are here to stay. They are all foreign imports and, sorry to say, they will make life a little less pleasant from now on.

PHARAOH ANTS are native to Africa, but have been spread by commerce to nearly every part of the world. They are extremely small (1.5-2.0 mm long), light yellow to reddish in color. They love to nest indoors, and eat practically anything. They will feed on toothpaste, soap, jelly, peanut butter, pet foods and freshly-mounted insects. In hospitals foraging ants are attracted to open wounds.

Pharaoh ants nest indoors in dark warm areas such as wall voids, floors, light fixtures, heat ducts, and even such unusual places as in electric irons, in furniture, between sheets of stationery, and in trash containers. Colonies have up to 300,000 workers with many queens. The main problem with this ant is that standard treatments of spraying baseboards cause the colonies to "bud" and move into inaccessible areas. Rather than having one nest, the treatment forces the colony to split into multiple nests. Suggested treatment is to bait the ants with mint-apple jelly and boric acid, or with a combination of peanut butter, honey and an insect growth regulator called methoprene. The problem is that it takes up to six months to get an infestation under control.

We had some old records of Pharaoh ants in the early 1920's from Madison and Milwaukee, but they disappeared until three years ago. In the last nine months, I have received specimens from Dane, Racine, Langlade, Outagamie, Rock, Milwaukee, Waukesha and Fond du Lac Counties.

EUROPEAN EARWIGS: When I first started here we saw an occasional specimen from the lake shore area of Milwaukee. We suspected that the "milder climate" close to the lakeshore was just mild enough to allow this insect to overwinter in Wisconsin. The past two years have given us mini-plagues in Beloit, Janesville, Madison, Fond du Lac and Milwaukee. So much for the "Blessed Wisconsin Winter" theory.

Earwigs are omnivorous and feed on both plant material and other insects. They are nocturnal insects that hide in damp, dark sheltered areas during the day. By far the biggest problem with earwigs is their habit of migrating into people's homes. They do no breeding indoors, but can be a big nuisance. Earwigs are interesting in that the females exhibit an instinct that is very rare among insects: maternal care of eggs and young. The pincer-like forceps on the abdomen of both sexes give them a scary appearance, and we all know what happens if they climb into your ear (ha-ha).

The last import has the potential of being the most serious. There is strong evidence that the JAPANESE BEETLE (Popilia japonica) has become established in the Madison area. Well over 200 adults were trapped by Wisconsin Department of Agriculture entomologists this past season on the west side of the city. A small infestation in the Kenosha area died out on it's own during the 1960's, but I am not so sure that we will be so lucky this time. The mild winter is not helping the situation. Japanese beetles have a difficult time surviving when soil temperatures drop below 15°F. With so little frost in the ground and such a mild winter, I think they will not suffer.

The only way to summarize the problem with Japanese beetle is that this insect is a real headache. The larvae are serious pests of turfgrass and can really tear up a lawn. The adults give us a double whammy in that they feed on over 275 different fruits, vegetables and ornamental plants.

Beetles often congregate in mass on ripening fruit and feed until nothing edible remains. Although we have some scarabs that look similar, we have no insect that even comes close to doing such extensive damage on a regular basis. The first indication that the Japanese beetle was here was when a junior high student from a local entomology club reported she had collected specimens in the summer of 1985. There are other scarabs that look similar, such as Stigoderma arboricola, and I was suspicious that she may have misidentified the beetle, but when she produced a specimen it was indeed the Japanese beetle. I hate to wish for a cold open winter for next year, after enjoying our "tropical" one this year, but in the long run it may be worth it.

NEW MEMBERS (1986)

BYRON BUCHLI, 6 Goodland Ave., Deerfield, WI 53531. Coleoptera, collecting and taxonomy.

JAMES KNUDSON, 6417 Landfall Drive, Madison, WI 53705. Coleoptera, Cerambycidae, collecting & taxonomy, life history, biology, behavior.

STUART M. McILRAITH, Dept. of Biology, Univ. of Wisconsin - LaCrosse, LaCrosse, WI 54601. Aquatic insects, collecting & taxonomy, life history, biology, behavior.

WAYNE R. PAULY, 2919 Turbot Drive, Madison, WI 54901. Life history, biology, behavior, photography, 4-H/Scouts.

CLARK SCHULTZ, 448 Jefferson St., Apt. 204, Oshkosh, WI 54901. Lepidoptera, (especially butterflies), life history, biology, behavior, distribution, population dynamics.

RICHARD TOPALSKI, 317 Center Avenue, Mt. Horeb, WI 53572. Collecting and taxonomy.

ADDRESS CHANGES

WALT GOULD, 10923 SW 78th Avenue, Miami, FL 33156.

JAMES C. PARKINSON, 1951 James Street, Mosinee, WI 54455.

MARK SCRIBER, Dept. of Entomology, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48823.

WISCONSIN ENTOMOLOGICAL SOCIETY

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Last Name First Name

Street address City State Zip

_____ Individual Membership (\$4.00/year)

_____ Sustaining Membership (\$10.00/year)

_____ Patron Membership (\$25.00/year)

GENERAL AREAS OF INTEREST

_____ Aquatic Insects _____ Collecting/Taxonomy

_____ 4-H or Scouts _____ Photography

_____ Extension work _____ Physiology

_____ Life History _____ Apiculture
Biology, Behavior

_____ Other _____

SPECIFIC INTEREST (Order, Family, Genus)

If you are familiar with certain insect taxa,
would you be willing to identify specimens for
members? _____ Yes _____ No

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