

# NEWSLETTER

of the *WISCONSIN ENTOMOLOGICAL SOCIETY*

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Volume 25, Number 2

November 1998

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## **ANNUAL MEETING TO BE HELD DECEMBER 12 IN MADISON**

The next meeting of the Wisconsin Entomological Society will be held on Saturday, December 12 at Russell Labs on the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus. Russell Labs is located at the corner of Babcock and Linden Drives (see map on back page). Ample parking should be available in the new Russell Labs ramp, entered from the driveway off Observatory Drive. The meeting will begin at 1:30 PM. The program will feature our annual photo salon. Any members having slides of entomological subjects are encouraged to participate. Each entrant may submit up to five slides, labelled with the subject and name of photographer. The slides will be evaluated by the audience, which will vote to select the winning entries. The winner's name will be added to the William E. Sieker Memorial Plaque, and a print of the first place slide is added to the display in the Entomology Department office, and is also awarded to the photographer. Short presentations are tentatively scheduled. Also on the agenda is the election of officers for 1999. Nominations are welcome, and can be made at the meeting. Volunteers may contact Phil Pellitteri at the Department of Entomology, 1630 Linden Drive, Madison, WI 53706, or phone (608) 262-6510.

## **FROM THE EDITOR:**

This is my last issue as Newsletter editor. After serving for the past twelve years, I feel that it is time for someone new to take over, and inject some new life into this publication. Because of a number of other obligations, I simply have too many things that need to be done and not enough time to do justice to it all. I will remain active in the Wisconsin Entomological Society, and will contribute what I can in ways less demanding of time.

We are most fortunate that Janice Stiefel has agreed to be our new editor. Janice is an accomplished naturalist and photographer. She has done a considerable amount of Lepidoptera rearing, and is a popular speaker on moths and butterflies. Best of all, she is a professional editor, retiring from the Depot Dispatch paper of Elkhart Lake, WI.

As always, we depend on our members to provide news items or articles of interest for the Newsletter. Please help out by continuing to contribute whenever you can.

*Les Ferge, editor*

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*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 the 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, and report any address changes to the editor: Les Ferge, 7119 Hubbard Avenue, Middleton, WI 53562. e-mail [lesferge@juno.com](mailto:lesferge@juno.com)*

## INSECT NOTES FOR 1998

Now I know what it would be like to be an entomologist in Missouri. After a southern winter it is not surprising that we saw more insect pressure this year. I am running about 15% ahead of last year's totals in the lab. I don't believe in blaming everything on El Nino, but this type of year was expected, considering the weather. Lots of galls on tree leaves, foreign grain beetles, and cherry scallop moths. Deer tick numbers are up. Gypsy moth larvae are starting to come into the lab, and the traps by my house each contained 15-20 males this summer. A small bright green weevil *Polydrusus impressifrons* had a great year. It is a leaf feeder on birch, apple and poplar.

European earwigs continue to move north and westward in the state. Aside from the recurring problems in the southern half of the state, the pinching plague came in from, Antigo, Rhinelander and Eau Claire. Earwigs are just starting to surface in Minneapolis. Wait until next year. This is the hardest insect for people to warm up to, and even one earwig indoors can send a house into an uproar. I usually expect the first calls around the 10th of June, but I saw my first earwig in Madison on the 22 of May. The only thing that will stop them is very dry weather in early June.

I saw my second case ever of Brown Recluse Spiders. The first was out of downtown Racine last year. This year's problem was in Dodge County. A woman had a sister move up from Kansas, and she brought a number of boxes of clothing that were stored in a closet. Five spiders were captured within one week's time in that room. It will be interesting to see if they survive until next spring.

For the third year, the multicolored Asian lady beetles started to swarm in October. This year they exploded on October 16. Last year it was October 30. Both days were sunny and mid 60's. This species was released in the southern states to control yellow pecan aphids. Its main claim to fame here is the tremendous overwintering aggregations. As the name implies, it is a very variable species. The classic form has 19 spots on the back, but you will find some with no dark spots, or various arrangements of small spots that give the impression of different species. The base color runs from pumpkin orange to deep red to almost yellow. I am told there is a form in China that is black with orange spots. There is an aggregation pheromone, but it has not been isolated yet. After congregating on sunny days, most individuals overwinter in leaf litter.

There was lots of concern about the Asian long horn beetle. No confirmed infestations were found in Wisconsin, but lots of Cerambycids (especially pine sawyers), leaf footed bugs, and even giant water bugs were submitted to the lab. It is a little early to tell, but one of the infestations in the northern suburbs of Chicago has over 15 sq. miles of activity. The beetle will only travel one kilometer per year on its own, but can easily hitch a ride on a car or truck. If it does become established, it will be as damaging to maple trees as Dutch elm disease was to elms.

The biggest surprise came to the lab the day before Halloween. Small ants from a motel in Wisconsin Dells turned out to be ghost ants (*Tapinoma melanocephalum*). It is a small ant with a dark head and almost clear abdomen and legs and is closely related to the odorous

WISCONSIN ENTOMOLOGICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP LIST (November 1998)

BALOGH, GEORGE	1998-P	6275 LITEOLIER	PORTAGE	MI	49002
BARINA, TOM	1998-I	15050 VERA CRUZ	NEW BERLIN	WI	53151
BEHNKE, CHARLES	1998-I	2760 S HERMAN ST	MILWAUKEE	WI	53207-2239
BENJAMIN, DANIEL	1998-I	1656 CHADWELL DR	SANTA MARIA	CA	93454-3400
BOLLES, J. CRAIG	1997-I	3934 MANITOU WAY	MADISON	WI	53711
BORKIN, SUSAN S	1998-I	2119 E WOOD PL	SHOREWOOD	WI	53211
BORTH, ROBERT	1998-I	6926 N BELMONT LN	FOX POINT	WI	53217
BOSSERT, FREDERICK	1997-I	3392 SILVER LAKE DR	WEST BEND	WI	53095
BRUST, MATHEW	1998-I	1717 E KANE PL APT 22	MILWAUKEE	WI	53202
BRYANT, ROBERT	1998-I	522 OLD ORCHARD RD	BALTIMORE	MD	21229
BUCHLI, BYRON	1998-F	3055 FADNESS RD	DEERFIELD	WI	53531
CARPENTER, ANITA	1998-I	304A SCOTT AVE	OSHKOSH	WI	54901
CONWAY, PATRICK	1998-I	17053 N 290TH AVE	GALVA	IL	61434
COPPEL, HARRY	1998-I	5025 SHEBOYGAN AVE APT 212	MADISON	WI	53705-2815
DAUB, ED	1998-I	4258 MANITOU WAY	MADISON	WI	53711
DERNEHL, NANCY	1998-I	UW-WAUKESHA, 1500 UNIVERSITY DR	WAUKESHA	WI	53188
DICKE, ROBERT	1999-I	3717 COUNCIL CREST	MADISON	WI	53711
DITTL, TIMOTHY	1998-I	1721 BOB-O-LINK CT	WISCONSIN RAPIDS	WI	54494
DRECKTRAH, GENE	1997-S	BIOLOGY DEPT UW - OSHKOSH	OSHKOSH	WI	54901
DUNFORD, JIM	1998-I	2120 UNIVERSITY AVE APT 219	MADISON	WI	53705-2344
EBNER, JIM	1998-I	BOX 556	OKAUCHEE	WI	53069
EVANS, MARK	1997-I	217 ISLAND DR	MADISON	WI	53705
FERGE, LES & CAROL	1998-F	7119 HUBBARD AVE	MIDDLETON	WI	53562
GRIMEK, HERBERT	1997-I	1101 TEMKIN AVE	MADISON	WI	53705
GRIMSTAD, PAUL	1997-I	UNIV. OF NOTRE DAME, DEPT. BIOL. SCI.	NOTRE DAME	IN	46556-0369
HAINZE, JOHN	1998-I	4747 N LAKE DR	MILWAUKEE	WI	53211-1257
HANSEN, DEAN	1998-I	402 SOUTH 6TH ST	STILLWATER	MN	55082
HENDERSON, RICH & KATHY	1997-F	2845 TIMBER LN	VERONA	WI	53593
HILSENHOFF, WILLIAM	1998-I	DEPT OF ENTOMOLOGY, 1630 LINDEN DR	MADISON	WI	53706
HOFFMAN, RANDY	1998-I	305 5TH ST	WAUNAKEE	WI	53597
HOGG, DAVID & SUSAN	1996-S	DEPT OF ENTOMOLOGY, 1630 LINDEN DR	MADISON	WI	53706
JAVOREK, JEFF	1998-I	886 S COUNTY ROAD X	MOSINEE	WI	54455
KAISER, KURT & BARRETT, C.	1997-F	1320 W WASHINGTON AVE	CLEVELAND	WI	53015-1429
KAHITSUN, ANDREW	1998-I	409 EAU CLAIRE AVE APT 207	MADISON	WI	53705-2846
KIRK, KATHRYN	1998-S	DNR - ENDANGERED RESOURCES, BOX 7921	MADISON	WI	53707
KLEIN, MICHAEL	1996-P	1520 SILVER RD	WOOSTER	OH	44691
KMENTT, WALDEMAR	1997-S	4330 E WOOD TR	BELOIT	WI	53511-7828
KRUSE, JAMES	1998-I	1305 SOLANO AVE APT B	ALBANY	CA	94706-1845
KUGLER JR, WALTER M	1998-I	525 PIPER DR	MADISON	WI	53711
LEARY, ROBERT	1998-I	612 S WESTFIELD ST	OSHKOSH	WI	54901-5540
LEGLER, KARL & DOROTHY	1998-F	429 FRANKLIN ST	SAUK CITY	WI	53583
LIBRARY REFERENCE	1998-I	MILWAUKEE PUBLIC MUSEUM, 800 W WELLS ST	MILWAUKEE	WI	53233
LILLIE, RICHARD A	1998-I	8609 SCHOEPP RD	SAUK CITY	WI	53583
LINTEREUR, LEROY J	1998-I	1428 MARY ST	MARINETTE	WI	54143
MACARTHUR, KENNETH	1997-S	15900 W MONTEREY DR	NEW BERLIN	WI	53151
MARTIN, ROBERT	1998-I	1310 ORANGE ST	RACINE	WI	53404-2932
MATZKE, CURTIS	1998-I	1817 WESLEY AVE	JANESVILLE	WI	53545
MAXWELL, JUDI	1997-I	5834 BALSAM RD APT 3	MADISON	WI	53711-4248
MERKHOFFER, RICHARD	1996-S	39 PARKVIEW DR	APPLETON	WI	54915
MERTINS, JAMES	1998-I	3028 NORTHRIDGE PKWY	AMES	IA	50010
NIELSEN, MOGENS C	1998-S	3415 OVERLEA DR	LANSING	MI	48917
PARKINSON, JAMES C	1998-I	1951 JAMES ST	MOSINEE	WI	54455
PEACOCK, JOHN W	1998-I	185 BENZLER LUST RD	MARION	OH	43302-8369
PELLITTERI, PHIL	1999-I	DEPT OF ENTOMOLOGY, 1630 LINDEN DR	MADISON	WI	53706
PFUTZENREUTER, MARY A	1998-I	E2249 ROCKLEDGE RD	LUXEMBURG	WI	54217-9702
PHELPS, LAURENCE	1998-S	6472 WILSON RD	ROCK SPRINGS	WI	53961
RABE, MARY	1998-I	MI NATURAL FEATURES INV., PO BOX 30444	LANSING	MI	48909-7944
RADKE, DAVID	1998-P	1076 W MURRAY LN	HUBERTUS	WI	53033
ROCHELEAU, TOM & NINA	1998-F	DEPT OF ENTOMOLOGY, 3100 BUENA VISTA	MADISON	WI	53704
ROMEYN, RICHARD	1998-I	W5306 EMERALD CT	LACROSSE	WI	54601
SCHABEL, HANS G	1997-I	COLL OF NATURAL RESOURCES, U WSP	STEVENS POINT	WI	54481-3897
SHEBESTA, ANN L.	1998-I	427 BUCHANAN ST	MISHICOT	WI	54228
SIEKER, KATHERINE T	1997-P	P O BOX 1032	MADISON	WI	53701-1032
STIEFEL, JOHN & JANICE	1998-F	W6311 MULLET LA	PLYMOUTH	WI	53073
SULLIVAN, RAYMOND	1998-I	125 N 123RD ST	MILWAUKEE	WI	53226-3809
SWENGEL, ANN B & SCOTT	1998-F	909 BIRCH ST	BARABOO	WI	53913
THRELFALL, ANNA M	1998-I	N3438 WOOD LAWN RD	KENNAN	WI	54537-9476
TRICK, JOEL A	1998-I	351 CLEMENT ST #6	GREEN BAY	WI	54302-6000
TURNBULL, JAY	1997-S	N1632 SUGARBUSH RD	ANTIGO	WI	54409
VOGEL, THOMAS	1998-I	522 WISCONSIN AVE	KEWAUKEE	WI	54216
WATERMOLLEN, DREUX	1998-F	PO BOX 302	MADISON	WI	53701-0302
WEISMAN, KEN	1999-I	2893 HUMBOLDT RD	GREEN BAY	WI	54311-5746
WESTOVER, DAVE	1997-I	324B N. MONROE ST	WATERLOO	WI	53594
WILLIAMS, ANDREW H	1998-F	413 COLUMBIA AVE	DEFORREST	WI	53532
YOUNG, ALLEN M	1998-I	MILWAUKEE PUBLIC MUSEUM, 800 W WELLS ST	MILWAUKEE	WI	53233

house ant. It is normally found only in central and southern Florida, and with multiple queens and multiple colonies it can be a challenge. I do not have all the details, but this ant most likely came in on tropical plants.

If this keeps up I may have either become a tropical entomologist or move to Canada to get above the evolving tropical rain forest.

*Phil Pellitteri - University of Wisconsin (?) Insect Diagnostic Lab*

## WISCONSIN MOTH SURVEY: PROGRESS REPORT

The Wisconsin macro-moth fauna (superfamilies Drepanoidea, Geometroidea, Mimallonoidea, Bombycoidea, Sphingoidea and Noctuoidea) currently stands at a total of 1203 verified species, not including six uncorroborated literature records. This total is estimated at 98-99% of the species possibly occurring here, based on published information from neighboring and similar areas. The largest families are the Geometridae, with 280 species, and the Noctuidae, with 726 species. A checklist, based on specimens collected or examined by the authors, has been compiled by Les Ferge and George Balogh, and is nearly ready for publication. Its purpose is to establish the framework upon which a comprehensive survey of Wisconsin's moths is being built. Information on distribution, status, flight period and habitat association continues to be gathered, with the intention of producing a detailed publication on the moths of Wisconsin. However, many years of field work remain to be done in a variety of habitat types to determine the status of many infrequently encountered species, and much distributional data remains to be gathered from collections.

*Les Ferge*

## NOTICES

**1998 Wisconsin Lepidoptera records are wanted** for inclusion in the season summary which is to appear in the next W. E. S. Newsletter. Things to report include new distributional data, uncommon species occurring in your area, records of stray or migrant species, early or late occurrences, unusual abundance or scarcity, rearing or host plant data, or flowers utilized by adults. Please indicate county, locality, and date of capture or observation, and also note if records are sight only, or documented by voucher specimens or photos. Specimens whose identities are uncertain may be brought to the December meeting for verification, or arrangements to view specimens or photos at another time may be made individually. Please send reports by January 1 to:

**Les Ferge, 7119 Hubbard Avenue, Middleton, WI 53562. e-mail [lesferge@juno.com](mailto:lesferge@juno.com)**

**Monarch Watch** is a cooperative network of students, teachers, volunteers and researchers dedicated to the study of the biology and migration of the Monarch Butterfly, *Danaus plexippus*. Monarch Watch participants are involved in tagging of migrating Monarchs, maintaining migration journals, rearing Monarchs for classroom projects and planting milkweed and butterfly gardens. Tagging is the principal activity, with an estimated 49,000 Monarchs tagged by members in 1996. For more information or membership application, contact:

**Monarch Watch, c/o O. R. Taylor, Dept. of Entomology, Haworth Hall, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS 66045 phone toll-free 1 (888) TAGGING e-mail: [monarch@ukans.edu](mailto:monarch@ukans.edu)**

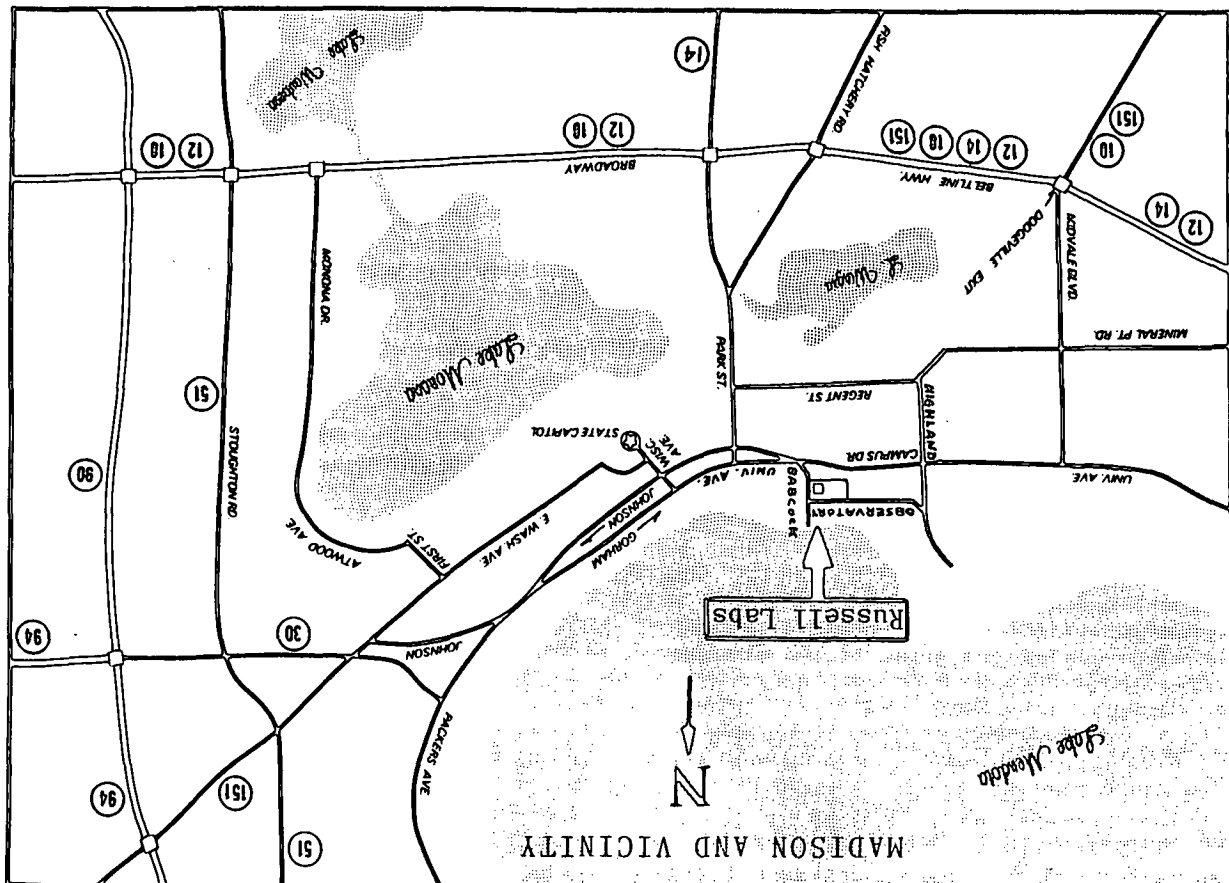
**Wisconsin Records of Sphingidae, Saturniidae, Lasiocampidae and Mimallonidae are wanted** for inclusion in an atlas of distribution records of Wisconsin moths, to be published in the W. E. S. Special Publication series. Records should be documented by specimens or photographs. As the records are also being entered into a Wisconsin moth database, complete label data is needed, including county, locality, date and collector/photographer.

**Les Ferge, 7119 Hubbard Avenue, Middleton, WI 53562. e-mail [lesferge@juno.com](mailto:lesferge@juno.com)**



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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



# Secrets of the Southeastern Wisconsin Red-Haired Bumblebee

by Babette Kts

**W**hen Purple Prairie Clover starts to bloom on a southeastern Wisconsin remnant tall grass prairie, Red-haired Bumblebees (*Bombus ternarius*) appear and collect its pollen and nectar. When the prairie clover blooms fade, the bees seem to disappear. Where are these bees during the rest of the year? And in spring, when the queens emerge from hibernation to seek pollen and nectar, what flowers do they frequent? Although I had observed what I called "Orange-haired Bumblebees" since I was a child, it wasn't until spring of 1997 that I began to seek the answers to these questions.

On every weekend, beginning in May, I looked for Red-haired Bumblebee queens on a ten-acre prairie remnant where I had seen these bees in past years. I never found a queen, but in July the workers were out on Purple Prairie Clover flowers. After the prairie clover faded, I looked for these bees on other prairie plants: wild rose, *lespedeza*, *stachys*, goldenrod and aster. I didn't find any.

In spring of 1998, I continued my search for *Bombus ternarius* on both the prairie remnant and the nearby 20-acre degraded oak opening. The oak opening contains numerous clumps of Gray Dogwood, several clones of Smooth Sumac, American Hazelnut and scattered Buckthorn. At the low east edge, scattered Asian Honeysuckle and clumps of Pussy Willow border a cattail marsh and pond. The pond, oak opening and prairie remnant are surrounded by plowed fields.

On May 4, 1998, I found a Red-haired queen visiting Virginia Bluebells that were growing under the oaks. During the next week, I observed two Red-haired queens on Virginia Bluebells. Although numerous Wood Violets, Bloodroot, Sharp-lobed Hepatica, White Trout Lilies, Recurved Trillium, and Wild Geranium were blooming here, I

found the Red-haired Bumblebees only on the bluebells. I did not find these bees on the Hoary Puccoon, Shooting Star, Seneca Snakeroot, and Yellow Star Grass flowers that grew on the adjacent prairie.

By May 22, the Virginia Bluebells had faded and the Virginia Waterleaf flowers were opening. One Red-haired queen bee was working on this plant's pale lavender flowers. This was the last day in spring of 1998 that I saw a Red-haired Bumblebee.

I now knew that the queen emerged in early spring when the Virginia Bluebells bloomed, but where did she make her nest? On May 1, 1999, the Virginia Bluebells in the oak opening began to bloom. On May 2, I first saw a Red-haired Bumblebee queen on these flowers. During the next few days, I followed her as she flew back and forth from the bluebells to a rock-strewn hedgerow in the oak opening. She also flew to a wet area surrounded by several species of pussy willows, but I was not able to find her when she flew to this area. On May 18, a Red-haired queen emerged from the

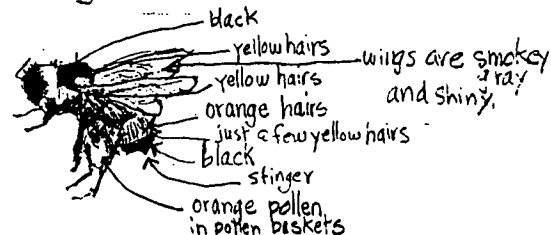
nest I had staked on May 2 and flew to and from her nest to the Virginia Bluebells and one Virginia Waterleaf, which had just started to bloom. On May 19, about 9:00 in the morning, a Red-haired queen flew to both Virginia Waterleaf and Virginia Bluebell flowers. At mid-afternoon, she returned to the hedgerow and climbed under some brown Bur Oak leaves that covered the opening to her nest. I watched and waited for several hours, but she did not emerge.

I visited the oak opening and prairie every week during the rest of May and into June but did not see any of these bees. On June 20, 1999, Purple Prairie Clover began blooming on the prairie. I searched the entire remnant, but didn't find a single Red-haired bee on Purple Prairie Clover, Gray Dogwood, Potentilla, Spiderwort, Thimbleweed or Black-eyed Susan flowers. The next week, on June 26, the Red-haired worker bees were out. I counted six of them collecting bright orange pollen from a clump of Purple Prairie Clover. I did not see them on any other prairie flowers.

By July 11, the Prairie Clover had almost finished blooming. Compass Plant, Prairie Coreopsis, Wild Rose, Gray-Headed Coneflower, field Thistle and Leadplant were in full bloom. On that day, I found only one

Please see, **Bumblebees**, Page 8

## Orange Hair Bumble Bee



x 2 1/2

This is abt. 2 1/2 times larger than the Orange Hair Bumble Bee is.

The pollen in its baskets is exactly the same color as the orange hairs. They are only out on Purple prairie clover. This is from my collection.

Pink-purple like purple



on the prairie clover.

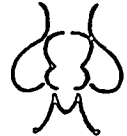
small leaves

x 2

Copy of a page from Babette's high school journal, probably about 1966.

Address Correction Requested

Janice Stefek, Editor  
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Wisconsin Entomological Society

**Wisconsin Entomological Society Newsletter — June 2000**

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**Walkingstick, from Page 5**

From birth to maturity requires about six weeks.

One of the longest insects in the world is an East Indian Walkingstick whose body is around thirteen inches long. With its legs outstretched, it measures twenty inches! I'm aware of only one species of Walkingstick in our region, fortunately considerably shorter than the one from the East Indies! One might call the Walkingstick the "Houdini of the Insect World," now you see it, now you don't. September would be incomplete without my being able to admire one of these fascinating insects, a recent reward in the raspberry patch. ☞

Roy has been writing nature columns and books for over 30 years. This essay on the Walkingstick is taken from Roy's fifth book, "Tales of the Wild," released in November 1999. Roy can be reached at (920) 823-2478 or by mail at 3962 Hillside Rd., Egg Harbor, WI 54209  
E-mail: [lukes@dcwis.com](mailto:lukes@dcwis.com)

**Bumblebees, from Page 7**

Red-haired bee busily collecting orange Leadplant pollen.

Red-haired Bumblebees in the Milwaukee Public Museum insect collection are recorded as being found on goldenrod in the north-central Wisconsin counties of Adams and Langlade. During my trips to the southeastern Wisconsin prairie remnant from July 14 through the first week in September, I found a lot of bees on early, tall, Canada, Stiff and other goldenrod species, but none of them were Red-haired Bumblebees. Red-haired Bumblebees were apparently once common to southeastern Wisconsin, as reported by Medler and Carney in "Bumblebees of Wisconsin" (January 1963, University of Wisconsin, Madison Research Bulletin 240). In 1962 I wrote of seeing "Orange-haired Bumblebees on wild purple clover" on a Racine county prairie remnant near my childhood home. In a 1970 college

survey of southeastern Wisconsin prairie remnants, I found almost three times more prairie remnants and oak savannas in Racine and Walworth County than I did when I re-surveyed this area in 1996. I recorded Red-haired Bumblebees on three sites in 1970, but at only one area in 1996. Is this *Bombus ternarius* associated with the southeastern Wisconsin prairie-savanna, which, before settlement, covered most of these counties?

Thanks to Milwaukee Public Museum staff for identifying a Red-haired Bumblebee worker I collected in 1994 as *Bombus ternarius*. ☞

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Babette is a wife, mother of three, full time project architect at the City of Milwaukee, part time naturalist, writer and artist, and a former science teacher. She has kept notes and sketches of her field observations from the time she was eight years old. She is presently working on a book which will feature her priceless field notes and detailed sketches.