



Wisconsin Entomological Society Newsletter

Volume 29, Number 2

June 2002

SUMMER 2002 INSECT FIELD TRIPS BY THE MADISON AUDUBON SOCIETY

(NOTE: These are not collecting trips.)



Saturday, June 29
BUTTERFLIES OF
CHEROKEE MARSH
Dane County
10:00 A.M. to Noon



On this morning trip we'll observe and learn about butterflies, those small but exquisitely beautiful creatures that dance about our ankles in summer. Butterfly enthusiasts Karl Legler and Dave Fallow will lead this two-hour hike at Cherokee Marsh on the northeast side of Madison. We will observe a variety of butterflies as they take nectar from wildflowers, and learn about their identification, behavior, and lifestyle.



Bring binoculars if you have them (close-focusing ones work best) or just get close! It's best to wear long pants and a hat for protection from the sun.

DIRECTIONS: Meet at 10:00 A.M. On the north side of Madison take Northport Drive (Highway 113) then turn north on Sherman Ave. Meet at the Cherokee Marsh parking lot at the north end of Sherman Ave. The trip will last until noon. Call Karl Legler only if you have a question about the trip, at (608) 643-4926 (Sauk City). 🦋

Saturday, July 6
MADISON BUTTERFLY COUNT
Dane County
9:00 A.M. to Noon

Our 12th annual count! Mark this hike and census on your calendar! The leader, bird and butterfly enthusiast Jon Sutton, will provide identification expertise. Each year within a few weeks of the Fourth of July, butterfly enthusiasts all over North America participate in a census of butterfly species. Each count is conducted at several sites within a 15 mile diameter circle and the same circle is surveyed each year.

These censuses help to monitor the health of our butterfly populations and the results of more than 400 North American counts are published in an annual report. Last year on the Madison census, in spite of rain, 20 people in 3 groups counted for a combined total of 9.2 hours and found 792 butterflies of 37 species. This year's group will have an enjoyable time finding, observing and counting butterflies. Counters are needed. If you can identify butterflies, or can help spot butterflies, or just want to see and learn about butterflies, join us on this count. Observe with eye or close-focusing binoculars. Dress for protection from the heat and sun; a hat is recommended. Bring a lunch as the trip will last until noon.

(Anyone who wants to continue counting in the afternoon at another site can do so.)

The organizer (North American Butterfly Association) requires a \$3.00 fee from each count participant (similar to the Christmas Bird Count) to cover administrative and publishing costs.

Meet at the parking lot at the McKay Center in the UW Arboretum at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, July 6. We will count until noon.

DIRECTIONS: Heading west on the Beltline (Hwy 12), take the Seminole Highway exit and go north. After several blocks you will see the sign at the Arboretum entrance. Turn right into the Arboretum and continue until the road ends at the McKay Nature Center parking lot.

Call the leader, Jon Sutton, at (608) 238-7676 only if you have a question about the butterfly count or if you would like to count at your own favorite site. 🦋

Saturday, July 13
DRAGONFLIES OF THE
UW ARBORETUM



Dane County—9:30 - 11:30 A.M.

This two-hour walk at the UW Arboretum (we may go to a second site) will focus on dragonflies, those magnificent "living flashes of light". There are 111 species in Wisconsin. Although dragonflies occupy a prominent place in the web of life in

Please see **FIELD TRIPS**, Page 2

The Wisconsin Entomological Society Newsletter 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, and research requests to the editor:

Janice Stiefel, 2125 Grove Road, Bailey's Harbor, WI 54202, e-mail: jstiefel@itol.com

NOTE: Please report any address changes to Les Ferge, 7119 Hubbard Ave., Middleton, WI 53562. e-mail: ferge@chorus.net

FIELDS TRIPS, from Page 1

our aquatic ecosystems, they have, until recently, been one of the most neglected of nature's beauties. This trip will give dragonflies the attention and respect they deserve and we'll learn about the identification, biology, behavior, beauty, and life-style of the various species we encounter. Observe with binoculars if you have them, (the closer your binoculars can focus the better). Or just get close!

Leader will be dragonfly and butterfly enthusiast Karl Legler (author of a color photographic guide to *Common Dragonflies of Wisconsin*.) Dress for protection from the heat and sun—a hat and long pants are recommended.

Meet at the parking lot at the McKay Center in the UW Arboretum at 9:30 A.M.

DIRECTIONS: Heading west on the Beltline (Hwy 12), take the Seminole Highway exit and go north. After several blocks you will see the sign at the Arboretum entrance. Turn right into the Arboretum and continue until the road ends at the McKay Nature Center parking lot. Call the leader, Karl Legler, at (608) 643-4926 (Sauk City) only if you have a question about the trip. ☘

**Friday, July 19
THE SECRET NIGHTLIFE
OF MOTHS
Sauk County
8:00 P.M. to 11:00 P.M.**

Les Ferge, Wisconsin's foremost field Lepidopterist, will lead this evening trip to Ferry Bluff State Natural Area along the Wisconsin River near Sauk City. After many years of surveying throughout the state Les has co-authored the Milwaukee Public Museum's *Checklist of Wisconsin Moths* (2000) summarizing the distribution and seasonal occurrence of 1,209 species. Les will use sugar baiting and black light to attract a variety of moths for observation and discussion. Bring a flashlight and mosquito repellent.

DIRECTIONS: We will carpool and leave at 8:00 P.M. from the parking lot of Kohl's Food Store in Middleton at the intersection of Allen Blvd. and

Century Avenue. If you prefer to meet us at Ferry Bluff, call Karl Legler, (608) 643-4926 (Sauk City), to get directions and leave your phone number so we can notify you if there are any changes to the trip. Call Les at (608) 836-9438 only if you have questions about the trip. ☘

**FIRST DOOR COUNTY
INSECT
FIELD TRIP**



**Saturday, June 15
Butterflies, Moths, Dragonflies
and Miscellaneous Insects
Door County
9:00 A.M. to Noon**

Join naturalists Janice Stiefel and Joan Berkopce for a morning of insect intrigue. We will look for butterflies, day-flying moths, dragonflies, eggs and caterpillars—whatever we can see and discover. This fun-filled morning will be spent in the Mud Lake Wildlife Area north of Bailey's Harbor. Water-proof footwear is essential for this trip. We will meet at 9:00 A.M. at the end of Lime Kiln Rd.

Limited to 15 participants.
Please register by calling
Janice at (920) 839-9796 or
E-mail, jstiefel@itot.com
by June 7, 2002.

DIRECTIONS: From Bailey's Harbor, go north on Hwy. 57 for 4½ miles to Lime Kiln Rd. Turn right (or east) and go all the way to the end of the road, where you will see the Mud Lake Wildlife Area sign. ☘

**Color Guide to Common
Dragonflies of Wisconsin
Revised Edition 1998**

by Karl & Dorothy Legler
Dave Westover

A well-organized, colorful and informational book on Wisconsin dragonflies. It contains 76 species, 167 color photos and drawings, 64 line illustrations. To obtain a copy, contact:

Karl Legler
429 Franklin St.
Sauk City, WI 53583
(608) 643-4926

E-mail: karlndot@chorus.net



**Are you interested in
taking a different kind
of vacation?**

The Clearing offers week-long classes in the arts and fine crafts, humanities and natural sciences. Classes are informal, and there's ample time to enjoy quiet forest trails, and beautiful sunsets.

Located in Door County, Wisconsin, The Clearing is on the National and State Registers of Historic Places. For more information, or to request a class schedule, please call (920) 854-4088/toll free (877) 854-3225, or write The Clearing P.O. Box 65 Ellison Bay, WI 54210-0065. Or visit The Clearing on the web at www.theclearing.org

**Upcoming Entomological
Summer Events**

**The Mysterious World of
Butterflies and Moths
Saturday, August 3
9:00 A.M.—4:00 P.M.**

Instructor Janice Stiefel

Delve into the fascinating, secret world of butterflies and moths, including their immature phase—the caterpillars. Through slides, stories, live specimens and a meadow walk (depending on the weather), you will come to appreciate these often misunderstood members of the insect world. You will learn the plant requirements for various species, and how to rear them from their egg stage, through the caterpillar phase, and finally to the beautiful adults that you see flying through your gardens and around your lights at night. Photographing butterflies and moths will also be discussed.

Participants are encouraged to bring and share live specimens, chrysalides and cocoons. ☘

Caterpillars are fascinating creatures in their own right and represent a vital stage in the life cycle of some of our most remarkable insects. The long and short of it is that

caterpillars range in length from about one-fourth to five inches long. Diversity in size is rivaled only by their vast array of colors and patterns. Black, brown, green, red, orange, yellow, and blue among others, combine to form bands, rings, dots, and patches on caterpillars. If this weren't enough, projections of all sorts including hairs, spines, bumps, and horns lend to the distinctive look of caterpillars.

Caterpillars are everywhere, consuming a great variety of plants that sustain them on their journey from egg to adult. Typically, caterpillars feed on foliage, but also eat flowers, roots, seeds, and fruits. Rarely, they may utilize wood, moss, fungi, and woolly aphids. Amazingly, some caterpillars are small enough to live within the flat layers of a leaf or actually breathe oxygen underwater! Often incorrectly referred to as worms, caterpillars are the larval stage of moths and butterflies.

Finding caterpillars is fun! Beyond observing them or snapping a photograph, why not rear one? Complete metamorphosis demonstrated by this order (Lepidoptera) is a fascinating experience that kids, in particular, won't forget. Basic principles of physiology, ecology, and insect behavior can be learned by rearing caterpillars. The life cycle may be studied in as much or little detail as you like. Rearing caterpillars also makes an engrossing low-cost science project for school.

If you find a caterpillar on a plant, do not pull it off the stem or leaf. Many caterpillars tighten their grip when threatened and damage will occur to the caterpillar. Instead, remove the leaf by the petiole or take a small section of the plant and place it in any container you may have with you. Carefully note the exact location and name (if possible) of the food plant for future use. Scoop-up a wandering caterpillar in a container. Generally speaking, smooth caterpillars may be touched. Do not handle spiny caterpillars. Fluid from the spines may cause stinging and rashes. More so, hairs found on other caterpillars can be very irritating when introduced in

You've Found a Caterpillar— Now What?

by Valerie A. Passoa



the eyes. On the way home, make sure the lid is secure and keep the container out of the sun. Many items you probably have at home make excellent rearing containers. Plastic boxes such as those used for food or shoes are ideal. There's also plastic cups with lids, glass jars, aquariums, or screened cages. All lids must have vent holes for air exchange. A steady supply of fresh food is critical to rearing the caterpillar. If you were lucky enough to find the caterpillar on its foodplant, then you already know what to feed it.

Continue to supply the same kind of leaves. If the caterpillar was on-the-move, offer an assortment of leaves from surrounding trees and other plants. Black cherry, oak, birch, willow, and plantain may be accepted. Some caterpillars are general feeders, while others are quite picky. Rinse the leaves in water and dry them before offering them to your guest. Depending on the "wilt-factor" of the leaves and how fast the caterpillar is eating them, a leaf or two may be added as needed with no special care. To keep them fresh, leaves can be pushed into a small container containing damp sand or the petiole or branch can be wrapped in moist paper towel.

Like all insects, caterpillars have an exoskeleton. As the caterpillar grows, the exoskeleton can only stretch so much. At certain intervals, your caterpillar will remain motionless for a day or two and molt. This process replaces the old skin with a new one. A molting caterpillar is very vulnerable and may appear sickly. Interfering with this process could harm the caterpillar. Startling appearance changes are common after a molt; don't miss it. The interval between each molt

is called an instar. Keep the container free of frass (caterpillar droppings), well-ventilated, uncrowded, and out of direct sunlight. Don't be

discouraged if your caterpillar dies. Diseases caused by bacteria, viruses, and other pathogens often kill caterpillars. Also, prior to collecting your caterpillar, certain species of flies or wasps may have parasitized the insect. If this is so, only a fly or wasp will be produced.

When the caterpillar matures, noticeable changes can be seen. The now sated caterpillar stops eating, excretes undigested food, shrinks slightly, and may develop a red or yellow hue. At this time, place several upright sticks in your rearing container. Also add a small amount of leaf-litter and several inches of substrate such as soil, sand, or peat moss to the bottom of the container for those caterpillars that pupate at ground level or below. After the caterpillar has pupated, there's no need to move the container. Your conscientious care should be rewarded by the emergence of a beautiful, new moth or butterfly. Enjoy the pleasure of releasing the butterfly by day or the moth by night in the area where you found its caterpillar. You can also start an insect collection. Many young people develop a lifelong interest in nature or careers in biology or entomology through insect collecting.

© 2000 Valerie A. Passoa

Valerie is a member of WES and V.P. of The Ohio Lepidopterists. A wildlife biologist, Valerie has been rearing caterpillars for almost thirty years. Her primary interest is immatures, with an emphasis on the life history of wild silk moths (Saturniidae). She is currently co-authoring a book for the U.S. Forest Service on the oak-feeding caterpillars of Missouri. Valerie resides in Ohio with her husband, Steve, a professional Lepidopterist and her son Ethan, a born naturalist.

BEETLES and PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE

by Jaime Corbiser

Recently, more attention has been turned towards the biological and economical damages caused by invasive aggressive species. One of the more well known of these species is the wetland plant Purple Loosestrife. Many people have realized the detrimental impacts that Purple Loosestrife has in moist habitats and have been trying to control or eradicate it. But this hardy perennial offers quite a challenge as it drops 2.7 million seeds each year. Dense stands establish quickly, discouraging mechanical or hand removal and leaving chemical treatment as one of the last resorts. However, an option outside chemical control is using a biological control for purple loosestrife which has proven an effective technique for controlling this plant.

In many states and in Canada four different insects have been released to combat the plant. In Wisconsin, *Hylobius transversovittatus*, a root boring weevil and *Galerucella pusilla* and *Galerucella californiensis*, leaf-eating beetles are being used. *Galerucella* beetles, or now more locally known as Purple Loosestrife Beetles, are widely used.

Many local organizations throughout the state are cooperating to release the beetles into dense sites. The beetles defoliate the plants to such a point where the plant has to exert its energy into survival and not into seed production. After a few years, the beetles begin to impact the dense stands. Originally, it was expected that results would take ten to twenty years before visual changes could be noted. Some areas are seeing apparent results in about seven to ten years and some areas only five years. Although the self-perpetuating beetles will never fully eradicate the plants, an 80% reduction has been observed.

Brook Woods, of the Wisconsin DNR, heads the biological control program and has recently developed information for school groups to



incorporate raising the beetles into a classroom project. Public citizens are also encouraged to participate by assisting in rearing and releasing the beetles at sites near their homes. Currently, there is funding available to help local groups to start projects by offering them free equipment and some training. All you need is a 6' x 6' sunny spot to get the effort going. There is no guarantee this level of equipment support will continue, so now is the best time to start your project if you can. If your area has loosestrife problems and you've been looking for a project to build camaraderie and a real hands-on sense of environmental husbandry at your office or in your community, this could be it!

Other environmental stewardship opportunities exist in your community outside the scope of Purple Loosestrife. The Door County Invasive Species Team is involved with ongoing projects as well as developing a long-term project that will begin in July of 2002. Anyone can participate in the group activities which help to educate the public about the concerns and consequences of all invasive aggressive species. 🌱

If interested in bio-control or just looking for project ideas. You are welcome to contact Jaime Corbiser of the Door County Soil and Water Conservation Department.

jcorbisi@co.door.wi.us

Other State-wide contacts are:

Brook Woods,
DNR state-wide representative
WoodsB@dnr.state.wi.us
608-221-6349

S. Kelly Kearns
Bureau of Endangered Resources
KearnS@mail01.dnr.state.wi.us
608-267-5066

Gene Tiser
DNR North East region
tiserG@dnr.state.wi.us
920-492-5836



Iron Lion or Lepidopterist?

by Bret Rappaport

England has long had a love-affair with natural gardening. That long tradition is evidenced by gardens—both famous and not-so-famous. For example, Sissinghurst Castle in Kent is surrounded by a natural landscape planted between 1930 and 1961. Now maintained by the National Trust, it is probably the most visited garden in Britain. Another well-known natural garden is at Hidcote Manor where plants are allowed their freedom to grow and there is a wild area in the valley called "Wilderness."

Natural landscaping is being practiced today at some of Britain's most treasured landmarks. In Surrey, Sutton Place, built by Henry VIII, originally contained formal gardens, but now has a complex of gardens with natural features. There is a 25-acre lake that attracts Mallards, Tufted Ducks, Pochard, and little Ringed Plovers that nest on the banks, while Mandarin Ducks find a home among old willows. Meadows are left free to blossom each year with a startling array of wildflowers.

Perhaps England's most famous natural landscaper was Sir Winston Churchill. In the gardens of his country home, Chartwell, he created pools of water and used tons of rock to naturalize 170 acres of land which



Please see **CHURCHILL**, Page 5

Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill was born at Blenheim Palace on St Andrew's Day, November 30, 1874. His father, Lord Randolph Churchill, was a younger son of the Duke of Marlborough. His mother, Jennie Jerome, was the daughter of an American business tycoon.

Churchill was Great Britain's Prime Minister from 1940-45 and 1951-55. He died in 1965.

CHURCHILL, from Page 4

attracted wildlife. Around Chartwells red brick country home, were fields with patches of uncut meadows and hardwood forests. The home and garden walls ran thick with vines. Of all of nature, Sir Winston loved butterflies best. He became a full-fledged lepidopterist, as well as statesman, historian, writer, artist, and politician. His interest went back to butterflies he watched while exercising in a camp yard while a prisoner during the Boer War.

During the 1930s, he made his land more receptive to butterflies by planting both host and food species. He planted Lavender and grew Buddleia. Early on he learned that native plants must be included in the landscape to increase the likelihood of successful butterfly breeding. He eschewed (shunned) roses because they didn't provide nectar. Fennel was planted to attract Swallowtails, Stinging Nettle grown for the Red Admiral Butterfly (*Vanessa atalanta*).

When he returned to Chartwell after World War II, he raised and released between 1,000 and 1,500 butterflies yearly. He spent days gazing as they fluttered from flower to flower. The brick summer house was converted to a butterfly roost with caterpillars raised on wooden benches. Sir Winston would sit for hours watching the emergence of the chrysalides and then release them into his garden. One special, native butterfly was the Black-Veined White, extinct in England where it had fallen silent victim to the poison sprays used to control orchard insects. Churchill, along with L. W. Newman, pioneer entomologist, determined to use Chartwell to reintroduce the species. He reestablished a core population by planting Hawthorn and placing nests of larvae in the host plants.

"How wonderfully the Almighty takes care of the creatures of his creation," he mused at age 75 while examining a pair of American Oak Silkmoth cocoons. Churchill, too, took care of those creatures. He recognized the need for and beauty of the elements of nature and took steps to preserve and protect them. 🌿

© 1995 Bret Rappaport

Bret is the past national president of Wild Ones Natural Landscapers. He has four children and lives with his wife and family on a one-acre lot in Lake County, Illinois—complete with a stream, prairie and fen.

THE GOLDENROD BEETLE

(*Epicauta pennsylvanica*)

Order: Coleoptera (Beetles)

Family: Meloidae (Oil or Blister Beetles)

by Janice Stiefel

When the Goldenrods are blooming during the months of August and September, I often find hundreds of these fascinating beetles crawling amongst the blossoms. Their presence in our wildflower meadow prompted me to investigate as to whether they were beneficial or harmful.

The Goldenrod Beetle, or Black Blister Beetle, is $\frac{3}{8}$ – $\frac{5}{8}$ in. long. Its shape is elongate and slender and the color is uniformly dull black, sparsely clothed with black pubescence. Its entire surface has fine, dense impressed dots. The upper surface of the prothorax (pronotum) is almost square and the angles near the head are rounded. The median impressed line is distinct; the basal impression is shallow.

The life history of the Blister Beetles in the genus *Epicauta* is rather complicated. These insects undergo hypermetamorphosis, with the different larval instars (molts) being quite different in form. The first larval instar, an active, long-legged form called a triungulin, seeks out a grasshopper egg or a bee nest and then molts. In the species that develop in bee nests, the triungulin usually climbs on a flower and attaches itself to a bee that visits the flower. The bee carries the triungulin to the nest, whereupon the triungulin attacks the bee's eggs. The second instar is somewhat similar to the triungulin, but the legs are shorter. In the third, fourth, and fifth instars, the larva becomes thicker—resembling a Scarab



The Goldenrod Beetle

Photo: Janice Stiefel, 8/12/92
Sheboygan County, WI

Beetle. The sixth instar has a darker and thicker exoskeleton and lacks functional appendages. This instar is usually known as the coarctate larva or pseudopupa, and it is the instar that hibernates. The seventh instar is small, white, and active (though legless) but apparently does not feed and soon transforms to the true pupa.

The larvae of many Blister Beetles are considered beneficial, for they feed on grasshopper eggs. A few live in bee nests in the larval stage, where they feed on bee eggs and on the food stored in the cells with the eggs.

The name "Blister" Beetle is based on the fact that the body contains cantharidin, a substance capable of blistering the skin. This chemical is extracted from the body of certain species and used medicinally. 🌿

© 2002 Janice Stiefel

Charlotte's Urban Dwelling

A Nonfiction Tale by Mark Salentine

Most of us know at least something about the tale of "Charlotte's Web," with its farm setting of the Zuckerman family, talking animals, such as Wilbur the pig, and, of course, the sweet and sensitive, large, gray spider—Charlotte.

Wait a minute! Talk about your oxymoron! Did I just use the words "sweet and sensitive" to describe a spider? (Ugh!) A large, dingy gray spider?! (Double ugh!!) I may have grown up being a big fan of the comic book super hero, Spider-Man, but I am in no way a spider fan, believe me. However, I've always appreciated intelligence and sensitivity to other's needs, and, believe it or not, I think I found a spider with those traits. She lives just outside my sty--uh, crib--I mean, APARTMENT! Anyway, she's large and gray. Her body would cover the tip of my pinkie; her legs could easily stretch to cover the tip of my thumb. I call her *Charlotte*.

Knowing the three rules of real estate being location, location, location, *Charlotte* chose to set up her sprawling web home right next to the porch light of the only entrance door to my Milwaukee flat. She had toiled to create her web artwork, like a fine lace version of Jackson Pollack's "dripping brush" works, by connecting it from the aluminum siding by the light, running it out on the awning above, then taking the 45 degree angle back to the siding below. She was set and ready. Just as the bulbs in Times Square and the neons in Vegas draw in tourists like flies, my humble 75 watt porch light would draw in the flies like tourists. "*Charlotte's Grocery Store: Always Open.*"

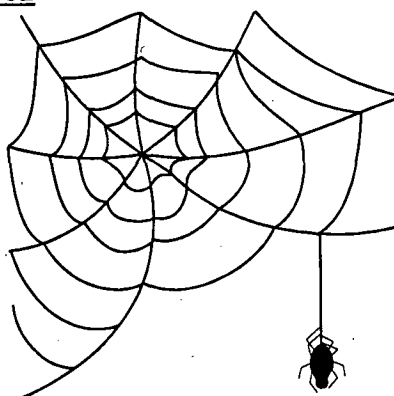
The base of the light itself had enough space out from the wall where *Charlotte* could sleep and dine privately. Extra insurance was offered by the awning protecting her home from the elements. Smart! Very smart! However, *Charlotte* did

not clear her construction with the zoning commission (me), and her home effectively obstructed the easy entrance and exit from my abode. I am 6 ft. tall.

The awning is 6 ft. 2 in. That does not leave room to hang any Jackson Pollack art or any other construction—artistic or not. I tried to avoid her web at first, ducking my head and bending it to the right side as I made the 90 degree left turn out of my apartment. When arriving home, I would try to swing wide, then cut right at the last minute to avoid a head of "bug bones" fresh from the tables of "*Charlotte's Restaurant: No Reservations Needed.*" Of course, the shortest distance between two points is a more natural path to chose, and I often unthinkingly did so.

Welcome to "*Charlotte's Hair Salon: If Your Hair is Bugging You, You've Come to the Right Place.*" Well, that couldn't last, and it didn't. Believe me, if I had taken even one semester of *Spider*, I would have tried to reason with her. She already had my respect for her construction technique. Besides, she was doing her part to keep some unwanted flying pests out of my home. And, try as I might, I couldn't make out any messages in her web. Maybe I needed Wilbur and the Zuckerman's to interpret for me? Reluctantly, I served *Charlotte* her eviction notice in the form of a wrecking ball—or, in this case, a wrecking newspaper.

I believe *Charlotte* emerged from her base camp in the lamp base later that day to survey the damage. Undeterred, she did what any stalwart homesteader would do. She rebuilt. Again, I tried to avoid her fine designs but ultimately ended up in her hair salon. Again! And again! Once more, I used the eviction paper.



And she rebuilt, again. And she was evicted, again. Realize that she also rebuilt each time I visited her hair salon. These evictions were just more thorough.

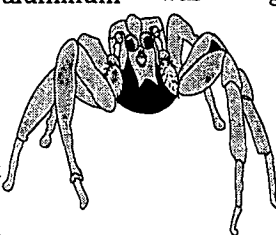
Though I avoided any harm to *Charlotte*, herself, it was looking as if a more permanent move of some sort was on her horizon. But then, this sensitive and intelligent gray spider did something different. She compromised.

One morning, I made my exit to find that *Charlotte* had moved. Not far! After all, she did have location, location, location—but just enough to keep her out of my hair and me out of hers. She was still connected to the aluminum siding by the porch light. But now, instead of running out into my path along the awning, she had taken a hard shift to the left toward my living room window, yet another light source. In fact, this allowed her to increase her "square webbage," expanding her restaurant by closing down the hair salon. This satisfied the zoning commission. I'm even considering giving her a plaque to declare my appreciation.

Granted, having a large, gray spider and her web decorating the side of your door is not a welcoming sight for most folks—especially city dwellers. It doesn't speak well of your housekeeping, either. However, I figure that humankind has taken over many of the best parts of nature, especially in the city where I live, so it's only fair that we occasionally give some of it back. Maybe I'll hang a sign with that plaque: "*Charlotte's Web Site: Mobile Homes Made to Order.*"

© 2002 Mark Salentine

Mark is a theatrical director, actor, and singer. With his talent, he may put this true story to music someday. *Charlotte* is quite fortunate to have such an open-minded, accommodating and patient client to frequent her hair salon and restaurant.



THE LONG JOURNEY

Article and Photography by Janice Stiefel

When the phone rang on the sunny, warm morning of August 31, 2000, it was the beginning of a long, adventurous journey into the world of one of the beautiful members of the Lepidoptera insect order, the Pandorus Sphinx Moth.

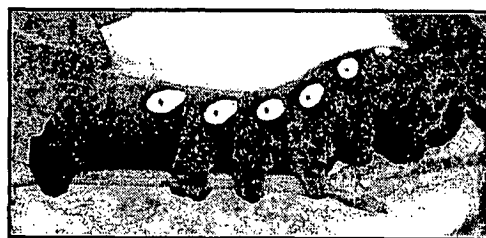
The voice at the other end of the line was Therese Randall, my good friend from Greenbush, three hours to the south of Bailey's Harbor. In a very animated voice she said, "I have a caterpillar you've got to see. Scott [her husband] and I are driving it to Bailey's Harbor NOW. Are you going to be home this morning?" After I got over the shock that someone would actually drive three hours to deliver a caterpillar, I said, "Sure, Therese, we'll be home. Are you sure you want to drive that far with a caterpillar?" She said, "Oh yes, this one is special. Wait 'til you see it." Realizing she was actually serious, I invited them for lunch.

The caterpillar was discovered by Scott Randall when he was clearing away some Grape vines on the property of the Northern Moraine Utility Commission in the Village of Glenbeulah, where he is the operations/manager. The caterpillar just happened to drop to the ground as he was pulling unwanted grape vines. Grapes (*Vitis spp.*) are one of the host plants for this moth species, which along with its distinct markings, made it easy to identify.

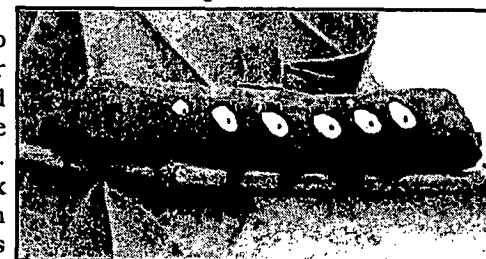
Upon arriving at Hidden Corners Sanctuary, north of Bailey's Harbor, Therese immediately brought out the most beautiful caterpillar I had ever seen. It was a brilliant reddish-brown, with five huge, cream-colored, oval spots on the 3rd to 7th abdominal segments. The spots were outlined in black with a black spot or spiracle in the

center. Spiracles are the apparatus through which caterpillars breathe. When disturbed, alarmed or even at rest, the caterpillar would draw its head and first two segments into the 3rd segment (see photo above). When it was crawling or eating the first segments would protrude. It had an eye-like button at its rear. Ordinarily a Sphinx caterpillar has a horn at the rear, but in this species, the horn drops off and becomes an eyespot in its last instar (molt). This meant the caterpillar was just about ready to pupate, although it took a week to do it—on Sept. 7.

The pupa overwintered in our refrigerator from Oct. 8, 2000 to April 15, 2001. I had placed the pupa in a nest of sphagnum moss and misted it every three weeks to keep it from drying out. On May 29, 2001 a gorgeous, bright, olive-green moth, with dashes of pink and a wingspan of 3¾ in. emerged from its pupa. Excitement reigned in our household that day. It was like having a baby all over again, without all the work and responsibilities. As you can see it obligingly posed for the camera.



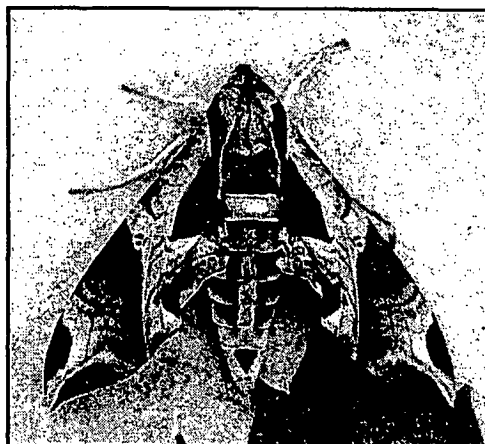
Pandorus Sphinx Caterpillar (*Eumorpha pandorus*)
(Disturbed or at rest position)
August 31, 2000



(Crawling or eating position)



Pandorus Sphinx Pupa
September 7, 2000



Pandorus Sphinx Moth
(*Eumorpha pandorus*)
May 29, 2001

Now, we were faced with a problem and a decision to make. The Pandorus has never been recorded from Door County. Perhaps this is because its favorite host plants, which are Grapes and Virginia Creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*), do not grow as abundantly on the peninsula as they do in Sheboygan County. I believe the Pandorus is in Door County and has yet to be discovered and reported. The decision was made to drive the adult Pandorus back to its place of origin—the wastewater treatment plant at Glenbeulah. This was accomplished on June 1, 2001. Thus ended what might be the longest journey ever of a Pandorus Sphinx caterpillar.

I thank Therese and Scott Randall for their willingness to drive such a long distance and to take the time to share their discovery of something so simple as—a caterpillar. What they also shared was their enthusiasm, awareness, knowledge, and that there still are exhilarating discoveries to be made in wild habitats, as well as our own backyard providing, of course, we allow some wild vegetation to flourish besides a mowed lawn.

Note: The Genus Name, *Eumorpha* (you-MOR-fa), is from the Greek meaning "nice shape or form." Species Name, *pandorus*, is from the Greek word, *pandora*, name of the first mortal woman on whom all gods bestowed gifts.

© 2002 Janice Stiefel

Wisconsin Entomological Society



Janice Stiefel, Editor
2125 Grove Rd.
Bailey's Harbor, WI 54202

Address Correction Requested

Wisconsin Entomological Society Newsletter — June 2002

Page 8

New **FREE** Book on Geometridae Moths

David Wagner, Douglas Ferguson, Timothy McCabe, and Richard Reardon have produced a wonderfully informative book for the US Forest Service entitled *Geometroid Caterpillars of Northeastern and Appalachian Forests*. This guide illustrates 187 larvae with the associated adult in color. Included are many of the caterpillars commonly referred to as inchworms, loopers, and spanworms. Don't be confused by the word "geometroid". This book covers Geometridae, plus Epiplemidæ, which the authors place as a sub-family of the Uraniidæ.

For a free copy of this publication, you may contact Lisa Cress by e-mail at lcress@fs.fed.us; by telephone at 304-285-1563; or by mail at USDA Forest Service, 180 Canfield Street, Morgantown, WV 26505.
—Valerie A. Passoa

2002 Dues Notice!

A collection envelope is enclosed with this newsletter, for the convenience of members who haven't paid their dues for 2002. No envelope is provided if you are paid up for 2002 or beyond. Please check the address label on this newsletter for your current dues status. Send check to our treasurer, Les Ferge, 7119 Hubbard Ave., Middleton, WI 53562. Also appearing after your name will be your membership category:

Individual \$5.00 per year
Family \$10.00 per year
Sustaining \$15.00 per year
Patron \$25.00 per year

**Be sure to notify us of
any address changes
when you send in your check.**



Wisconsin Entomological Society Officers

President: Kerry Katovich

Dept. of Entomology
1610 Linden Dr.
Madison, WI 53706
katovich@entomology.wisc.edu

Vice President: Phil Pellitteri

Dept. of Entomology
1630 Linden Dr.
Madison, WI 53706
pellitte@entomology.wisc.edu

Secretary-Treasurer: Les Ferge

7119 Hubbard Ave.
Middleton, WI 53562-3231
ferge@chorus.net

Newsletter Editor: Janice Stiefel

2125 Grove Rd.
Bailey's Harbor, WI 54202
(920) 839-9796
jstiefel@itol.com