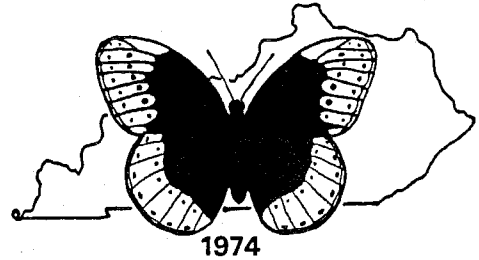


KENTUCKY LEPIDOPTERIST

NEWSLETTER OF

The Society of Kentucky Lepidopterists



VOL. 14, NO. 4

M. L. McInnis, Editor

October, 1988

ANNUAL MEETING

C. V. Covell, Jr.

This will be our 15th Annual Meeting, and our special guest speaker is Dr. John M. Burns of the Smithsonian Institution. The title of his talk: AMERICAN HESPERIIDAE: SKIPPING THROUGH FUZZY SPECIES

He is an extremely entertaining as well as enlightening speaker, and will also be willing to help identify some of those Erynnis and other North American skippers you may not have been able to identify. Plans are as follows:

Friday, November 11, 8-11: Open house at the Covell's, 2333 Brighton Drive, Louisville, Kentucky 40205. RSVP. Phone (502) 588-5942 (office) or 456-6122 (home; after 6 PM).

Saturday, November 12, 9-Noon: Open session at room 321 Life Sciences Building, University of Louisville, to view collections, have specimens identified, and swap tall tales, information and specimens. Silent auction of literature as in past. Coffee and superb doughnuts available.
12-1: lunch; or continue above
1-2: annual business meeting; Dr. Roy W. Rings, President, presiding (elections, reports)
2-3: Address by Dr. John M. Burns:
3-5:30: Slide presentations, short talks, and "show and tell" by any members who wish to participate

6PM: Dinner at Masterson's for those who wish to participate (Dutch treat).

Write or call Charlie Covell for further information, directions, maps, etc. (Phone: AC 502, home, 456-6122; office, 588-5942 or 588-6771).

*MARK YOUR CALENDARS

SOME NOTES ON CELESTRINA EBENINA (CLENCH)

Troy Payne

Celestrina ebenina Clench (= nigra (Tutt)) or the Sooty Azure is a darkish species in the family Lycaenidae. The first record of this species being collected in Kentucky is a female caught by George Straley on April 21, 1974. Identification of a Kentucky specimen of this species, to my knowledge, was not made until Amos Showalter collected one specimen in Robinson Woods in Breathitt County on April 26, 1975, and another specimen in Red River Gorge in Menifee County on April 27, 1975. Specimens have since been caught in seven counties: Breathitt, Bullitt, Harlan, McCreary, Menifee, Owsley, and Powell. Three areas are well known to be good places to look for C. ebenina Clench: Bearcamp Road, 4.6 miles south of Blevins Gap Road, in Bullitt County; a hollow along Route 160 near the base of Big Black Mountain in Harlan County; and Red River Gorge in Menifee County.

The Bullitt County spot is relatively close to my home in Louisville, and I have kept a close eye on this population for the past few years. Mike McInnis first found C. ebenina Clench at this spot on May 8, 1980. the reason why this particular hollow was picked out by Mike was that it was the only one that had a place to park! I have traveled over much of the surrounding countryside in Bullitt County and have yet to find another that matches Mike's hollow for diversity of species. It turns out that Mike's May 8th capture date is the latest record of this species flying in Kentucky of any year except a remarkable specimen taken by Richard Henderson on August 10, 1980 in Kingdom Come State Park in Harlan County. Not only does the Bullitt County site boast the latest spring record in Kentucky, but also the earliest record, a female taken by Dr. Covell on March 14, 1982.

The species name is nigra according to James Scott who wrote, "The type specimen of form 'nigra' (Edwards) 1884 was also the type specimen of C. ebenina Clench 1972. The code of zoological nomenclature states that 'A name is or remains available even though before 1961, it was proposed as a variety or a form.' nigra was named as a form, so ebenina is a synonym of nigra." (Scott, The Butterflies of North America, 1986).

After re-reading Harry Clench's description of ebenina (Annals of the Carnegie Museum, Vol. 44, 1972, pp. 33-44) and talking to Dr. Covell, I have decided that "nigra" has no standing according to the Code. Edwards proposed "nigra" as an infrasubspecific name and therefore, it has no validity. Article forty-five, part C states, "Infrasubspecific forms are excluded from the species-group and the provisions of this Code do not apply to them" Lee Miller, F. Martin Brown, and Clifford Ferris have all studied this in great detail (personal communication with Dr. Covell) and have come to the same conclusion. No matter what you choose to call it, it is interesting

little insect and watching it has provided me with much pleasure.

In late autumn of 1986 workers cleared the brush under the huge power lines that run along the tops of the hills along Bearcamp Road. The cutting of all the vegetation along the powercut did not adversely affect the butterfly populations in the area. the number and diversity of species was approximately the same before and after the area was cleared. Ebenina flies along the creek bank in a hollow near its food plant, Aruncus dioicus (Walter) common name - Goatsbeard), and was not the least bit affected. In April of 1987, ebenina was seen flying up and down the creek bank in the sunlight, oblivious to what was to happen.

In late autumn of 1987, I went to check on some bait traps and found that the hollow had been logged. The bait traps were left intact but little else was. All the marketable trees had been cut and dragged out of the hollow. Huge limbs were left scattered across the hillsides. the bubbling creek was buried under two feet of mud. Ebenina tends to fly along steep hillsides next to small creeks. Bulldozers had scrapped out or buried the creek all the way up to a little hillside area near the beginning of the creek where I could always find ebenina. I was heartstruck. I did not know if enough of the host plant would come back to support the colony. All winter I waited.

I walked up and down the hollow every weekend in March and first half of April without seeing ebenina. Barry Nichols informed me that he had caught ebenina during the first week of April at the beginning of the creek where we had collected it in past years. Dr. Covell had collected one specimen on April 8. On April 29, I went back to the hollow. Celastrina ladon (Cramer), Pieris virginiensis (Edwards), Falcapica midea (Hubner), and Polygonia comma (Harris) were all present in

their normal numbers. There was an increased incidence of Papilio troilus (Linnaeus) and Eurytides marcellus Cramer. Now that the area is more opened up, swallowtails come down into the dappled light of the creekbed, whereas before they had stayed at the top of the hill. Finally, after walking all the way back into the hollow, I found that for which I had so desperately wished. I saw five ebenina, three males and two females. I took the two females and tried to get them to lay eggs on the hostplant back at my house but they did not. This is not surprising: they were caught "late" in the season. The host plant still covers the hillside, despite the bulldozing. The creek has recut through the mud, although it is not as pretty as it once was. People, seeing a cleared area near the road, have dumped garbage near the entrance of the hollow. But if you walk, as I have, all the way to the back of the hollow, to where the creek forms from the seepage of two steep hillsides, there you will find an area untouched by bulldozer and chainsaw and there, in April, you will find ebenina.

I doubt that collecting in this hollow has ever had serious impact on the population. Females that I have seen are devoid of eggs and therefore, I assume that they have already oviposited them. Nevertheless, the species is uncommon and postage stamp collecting should not be tolerated.

The following is a list of captures of Celastrina ebenina Clench in Kentucky. This listing was compiled with assistance from Dr. C. V. Covell, for which I am very appreciative. Where possible, the sex and the collector of the insect are included. Records were taken off labels in my private collection, the University of Louisville's collection, and from old Kentucky Lepidopterist Newsletters. The sex and the collector were not mentioned in many of the Newsletters and therefore, are not listed here.

Celastrina ebenina (Clench) in Kentucky

Bullitt Co., Bearcamp Rd., 4.6 mi. south of Blevins Gap Road
 May 8, 1980, one female, M. L. McInnis
 April 7, 1981, C. V. Covell, Jr. and M. L. McInnis
 April 11, 1981, eight males, ten females, C. V. Covell, Jr.
 April 17, 1981, C. V. Covell, Jr. and M. L. McInnis
 April 18, 1981, one male, one female, C. V. Covell, Jr.
 March 14, 1982, one female, C. V. Covell, Jr.
 April 1, 1982, M. L. McInnis
 April 2, 1982, C. V. Covell, Jr.
 April 14, 1982, two males, one female, C. V. Covell, Jr.
 April 20, 1984, one male, one female, C. V. Covell, Jr.
 April 7, 1986, one female, T. A. Payne
 April 11, 1986, one male, C. V. Covell, Jr.
 April 17, 1986, M. L. McInnis
 April 18, 1986, C. V. Covell, Jr.
 April 9, 1987, one female, C. V. Covell, Jr.
 April 20, 1987, one female, C. V. Covell, Jr.
 April 21, 1987, two females, T. A. Payne
 April 8, 1988, C. V. Covell, Jr.
 April 29, 1988, two females, T. A. Payne (saw three males)

Harlan Co., Kingdom Come State Park
 August 10, 1980, one male, R. A. Henderson

Harlan Co., Route 160, base of Big Black Mountain
 April 20, 1979, one male, W. B. Early; one male, C. V. Covell, Jr.
 April 21, 1979, three females, C. V. Covell, Jr.
 April 29, 1979, two males, C. V. Covell, Jr.
 April 20, 1981, one female, W. B. Early
 April 21, 1981, one female, W. B. Early
 April 25, 1981, three males, one female, C. V. Covell, Jr.

Menifee Co.
 April 21, 1974, one female, G. Straley

Menifee Co., Red River Gorge
April 27, 1975, two females,
A. H. Showalter
April 24, 1976, three males, two
females, C. V. Covell, Jr.
April 26, 1976, one male,
C. V. Covell, III
April 26, 1981, two males and two
females, C. V. Covell, Jr.
May 25 and 27, 1982, two males and one
female ex ova on Aruncus, L. Koehn

Menifee Co., Route 77 at Menifee and
Powell County line
April 27, 1975, A. H. Showalter

Powell Co., Red River Gorge
April 26, 1981, five males, three
females, C. V. Covell, Jr.

Owsley Co.
April, L. D. Gibson (exact date unknown)

Breathitt Co., Robinson Woods
April 26, 1975, A. H. Showalter
April 11, 1981, one female, A. H.
Showalter

McCreary Co., Bell Farm, Rt. 1363
April 18, 1982, one male,
C. V. Covell, Jr.

NEWS AND NOTES

C. V. Covell, Jr.

We are saddened to learn of the sudden death by heart attack of Leland L. Martin of Wellington, Ohio. He was 68. Leland was a faithful attendant at annual meetings of our Society, and served as President in 1979. His work on habitat discovery and conservation for the skipper Euphyes dukesi in Ohio was one of his important contributions to lepidopterology. An enthusiastic colleague and warm friend, we will all miss Leland greatly.

A new and valuable publication on moths was published by Herbert H. Neunzig as Technical Bull. 287, N.C. Agricultural Research Service. It is "A Taxonomic Study of the Genus Salebriaria (Lepidoptera: Pyralidae:

Phycitinae) in America North of Mexico. 95 p., 37 pls. It can be obtained for \$6 from Agricultural Communications, Box 7603, N.C. State University, Raleigh, NC 27695-7603. Several new species are described, two of which had Kentucky paratypes designated.

Another work just published is the long-awaited Portraits of South Australian Geometridae, by Noel McFarland. This large 400-page paper-bound book contains unbelievably fine photos of life stages of 72 species, and is chock full of valuable general information and wit as well as biological data. The \$80 cost includes N. American mailing. Order from Noel McFarland, Box 1404 Sierra Vista, AZ 85636.

You should have received an order form for the next fascicle of Moths of America North of Mexico, which will be on the Sesiidae (clear-winged moths), by T. D. Eicklin & W. D. Duckworth. Price (until 1 Nov.) is \$55 (afterwards, \$65), plus \$2 shipping in North America. Wedge Entomological Research Found., c/o National Museum of Natural History, MRC-127, Washington, DC 20560.

NEW MEMBERS

William M. M. Edmonds, 68 Olive Avenue., Toronto, Ontario M6G 1V1 Canada. Interests: "Lepid., esp. Papilionidae, Lycaenidae, Limenitis; life history, distribution, migration, butterfly gardening."

Steven J. Mueller, Ody Brook Enterprises, 13010 Northland Dr., Cedar Springs, Michigan 49319. Interests: "habitat preservation, Lycaenidae, life history research."

NEW ADDRESSES

Dike Bixler, P.O. Box 613,
Janestown, NC 27282

Dave Baggett, 1246 Helmesdale Rd.,
Jacksonville, FL 32207

1989 Dues Notice

Our membership dues for calendar year 1989 (\$5.00) are due on or before January 1, 1989. Please note that your address label denotes what year your dues are paid up through. Please return this form along with your check to:

Charles V. Covell, Jr.
Department of Biology
University of Louisville
Louisville, Kentucky 40292

Name _____ Amount Remitted _____

Address _____

THE KENTUCKY LEPIDOPTERISTS

Membership Application Form

NAME _____ Date _____

Address _____

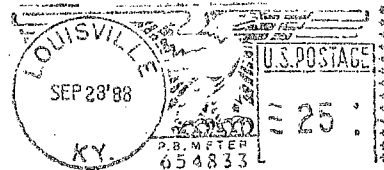
Telephone (Home) _____ (Work) _____

Membership \$5.00 per calendar year _____

Please enclose check for the correct amount. Check should be made out to the Kentucky Lepidopterists. Send to: C. V. Covell, Jr.,
Department of Biology
University of Louisville
Louisville, KY 40292

Interests _____

THE KENTUCKY LEPIDOPTERIST
M. L. McInnis, Editor
22 Benchmark
New Albany, Indiana 47150



FIRST CLASS

Loran D. Gibson
8496 Pheasant Drive
Florence, KY 41042
pd88
