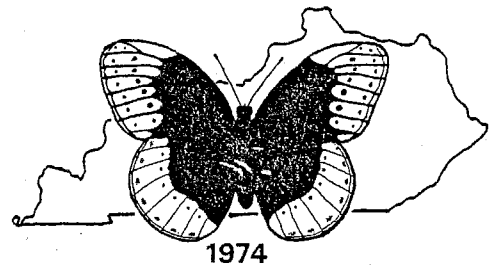


KENTUCKY LEPIDOPTERIST

NEWSLETTER OF

*The Society of
Kentucky Lepidopterists*



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C. V. COVELL JR., EDITOR

AUGUST, 1979

SPRING FIELD MEETING GROUP AFTER A SUCCESSFUL DAY



Taken in Kingdom Come State Park, Cumberland, Ky., on Sat. April 21, 1979. From left: Leroy Koehn, Denny Currutt, Leland Martin, Jim Merritt (front), Charles Watson, Loran Gibson, Blaine Early, Tom Carr, Richard Henderson, Charlie Covell, and Dave Iftner. Photo by Mrs. Iftner. Present but not in photo: Reed Watkins and son, Greg Florence, and John Nordin and wife.

FALL FIELD MEETING. Will be held from Friday, Sept. 14, to Sunday, Sept. 16, at Paducah, Ky. Host: Bill and Nancy Black, Rt. 6, Clinton Rd., Paducah, Ky. 42001. Phone: AC 502 - 554-1938. Collecting in SW Kentucky will be featured, with special emphasis on southern skippers we hope to find, such as Atrytonopsis hianna, Euphyes dukesi, Poanes yehl, and Panoquina ocola. Bill will provide a place to camp on his farm, or give information on motels in the area. Write or call Bill for arrangements as soon as you can.

REPORT OF THE ALASKA MEETING OF THE LEPIDOPTERISTS' SOCIETY

Your editor was privileged to attend the Annual Meeting of the Lepidopterists' Society at Fairbanks, Alaska, from 27 June to 3 July, 1979. Despite earlier talks at meetings about the Alaska butterfly fauna by Kenelm Philip, host of the meeting, I still had no clear picture of what the weather and landscape would be like at Fairbanks. So on 27 June I packed my net and toothbrush, and flew via Chicago and Seattle to Fairbanks. The flight from Chicago was delayed about 3 hours beyond the 2 I had expected to wait, but the weary time suddenly became pleasant when I discovered Jo and Dave Winter waiting for the same flight. THAT was the beginning of the meeting for us, as we talked of many things (I first met Jo at the annual meeting in Carson City, Nev., in 1970, and we've been "meeting like this" ever since!). We arrived safely in Fairbanks at about 10:30 P.M. local time with a lovely sunset in the sky. It never got any darker (funny to see dragonflies flitting about at 2:00 A.M., and catch moths with a net any time of night). Ken Philip's wife Betty Ann met us, along with Julian Donahue, and we drove to the Philips' lovely new house on Chena Ridge overlooking the Chena River near Fairbanks. We were there a day early for the Executive Council meeting held the following day at the campus. Lepidopterists' Soc. business was taken care of Thursday, and that evening early-arrivers were treated to a cocktail party at the home of the Director of the Institute of Arctic Biology, Dr. John Bligh. Thursday was the only rainy day (except for those attending the Brooks Range field trip July 4 - 10, which I did not stay for); weather was usually pleasant, in the high 60's to low 80's during the day.

The meeting began in earnest Friday morning, and was attended by 60-some members and almost as many family members. There were several foreign members there, including President Ian Common from Australia. The program will be seen in a forthcoming NEWS of the Lepid. Soc. Friday night we had a supper cruise along the Chena R. on a steamboat, Discovery II. We saw fish wheels and husky dogs in summer quarters along the bank, as well as alder trees chewed down by beavers. The hostess aboard gave us a

rundown on the personal lives of various people who lived along the bank. After the trip she could point out the Philips's house high on the ridge, and tell everyone about the many butterfly chasers who congregated there in June, 1979'.

I managed to do some collecting around Fairbanks, and found P. glaucus canadensis all over the place (though mostly worn), and such local species as Colias gigantea, Pieris protodice nelsoni, and Limenitis arthemis rubrofasciata. Several species of moths were to be taken by net.

More good talks and fellowship on Saturday, with cocktail party and annual banquet in the evening. Salmon was the main course. Dr. J. F. G. Clarke, one of our members, was awarded the Karl Jordan Medal after dinner, and gave a colorfully illustrated talk on "Some microlepidoptera of the Pacific Islands." The door prize awarding was done after that, with your Editor having the pleasure with the help of the Philips's daughter, Mary.

Sunday brought the annual business meeting, with announcement that next year's meeting will be in Gainesville, Fla., and that of 1981 in Mexico, in conjunction with the Mexican Lepid. Soc. After lunch I went collecting with fellow Ky. Lepidopterist Paul Opler, and friends Jerry Powell and Art Shapiro from California. Murphy Dome, a nearby peak with tundra habitat, was the site. Others there were the Ray Stanfords of Denver, Colo., the Floyd Prestons of Kansas, and the Bill Tildens of San Jose, Calif. I worked hard, and managed to catch about 26 butterflies in the 4 hours we spent there. Species I took were Oeneis jutta, Oe. bore (?), Colias hecla (Ken Philip thinks this is a different species), Boloria chariclea, B. polaris, Colias gigantea, Vacciniina (formerly Plebejus) obtilete, and the only skipper of the trip, Erynnis persius). Oh, and a few moths.

Monday was the big trip to Eagle Summit for a day's collecting. Most went on a school bus, but I got to ride in a car with Dr. & Mrs. Ron Hodges of Beltsville, Md., and Jo and Dave Winter. It was a bumpy, 3-hour drive over mostly dirt road, with a bit of the Alaska pipeline alongside us at the Fairbanks end. The spot was tundra, 90 miles east of Fairbanks, and patches of snow were still to be

ALASKA (cont.)

seen in shady nooks among the hills. We got out at a parking lot at Eagle Summit at 11:00 A.M., and I packed off for the nearest skree (rockslide) to look for the much-desired Erebia magdalena mackinleyensis which could be collected only by picking one's way over the rocks to sneak up on the butterflies as they lit thereupon. Risky business, and very wearing. Boloria distincta is another prize with similar habits. I knew I had only a few hours, but did not want to spend it all stalking one species. So I split my time, spending some atop the hills, some on the skree, some on the hillsides covered with lovely arctic wildflowers, and some along a valley brook where one could get a most refreshing drink. By 5:00 P.M., rendezvous time for the drive back, I was moving mighty slowly. I had collected about 50 butterflies, and worked hard for each one. Species taken here were: Papilio machaon aliaska, Pieris occidentalis nelsoni, P. napi hulda, Colias hecla, C. palaeno, P. nastes, V. optilete, Agriades aquilo, Boloria napaea alaskensis, B. improba, B. polaris, and B. chariclea, Oe. jutta, and Erebia youngi and E. magdalena mackinleyensis. I saw but did not take Parnassius eversmanni.

On the way back to Fairbanks, Ken Philip's truck broke down (fuel line leak), and while that was being fixed I took a few more Boloria chariclea and 1 Lycaeides argyrognomon. We all got back safely, and while I prepared the next day to return to the classroom in Louisville, many others were gearing up for a week on the Brooks Range and North Slope. Jo Brewer will give you a fine writeup on that in the NEWS later on.

It was a memorable, wonderful trip. The Philips demonstrated the best southern hospitality, and the bugs taken will long remind me of a vast, beautiful world I could taste but must yearn to visit again and longer.

- CVC

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INFORMATION NEEDED. Please send the Editor any observations on the southwestward extension of the range of the Meadow Fritillary, Boloria bellona, especially in western Ky. Thank you.

ANOTHER TRUE TALL TALE FROM LEROY KOEHN

While camping in the Smokies one year I was baiting trees with a good mixture of beer and sugar. While doing this I was joined by 2 little boys who were very inquisitive. I explained my purpose and what I wanted to catch. This they immediately reported to their father.

Knowing their father was something I shall long remember. He was six feet four and 260 pounds of solid West Virginia heritage. Well, come dark I was setting myself up to go check my trees when these two little boys showed up to go with me. This I needed like Nixon needed Watergate. Both of them had brand new flashlights and they were shining them everywhere. Well, what could I do? They came along.

What happened next was not planned. It just so happened that I told the boys to put the lights up to their right ears and shine them through their heads. Holding their left hands near their left ears, they could see the lights coming through their heads onto their left hands. Well, this had to be reported to Dad at once. And for some unknown reason I never saw those little boys again. I wonder why!

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NEWS FROM AFIELD

Richard Henderson, Loran Gibson, and John Nordin have been spending most of their weekends in such places as Kingdom Come State Park/Big Black Mountain, Red River Gorge, and Otter Creek Park. They have turned up some new state records such as Catocala dulciola (Big Bone Lick St. Park, June 26 and 27, L. Gibson), and a white pyralid moth with gray markings, Metrea ostreonalis Grote heretofore known only as far south as southern Michigan. The season seemed late at Big Black Mountain, with no E. laeta seen by McInnis the first weekend in July, or the above collectors the weekend following (13 - 15 July). S. diana males were fresh on the latter date. The very dry spring there seems to have had a bad effect.

(NEWS FROM AFIELD, cont.)

Richard Henderson and Loran Gibson also took another interesting new state record at Red River Gorge July 20: a noctuid, Pyrrhia ex-primens (Walker). Covell took Kentucky's first record of the beautiful orange and black moth, Euclementia bassetella (Clemens) (Cosmopterigidae) at Otter Creek Park Aug. 10. The price was a sting from a hornet, many of which were coming to light that night. We jarred 55 of them before Covell got it on the hand.

Richard Henderson noted a fantastic phenomenon of 300 or more Catocala paleogama coming to his light in Red River Gorge about 5 - 6 A.M. July 21. Also, July 27 at Otter Creek Park he noted 172 E. imperialis and about 45 C. regalis between 2 and 3 A.M. on his sheet.

How about some news from other of YOU? - CVC

NEWS AND NOTES

Bob Dirig has asked me to bring to your attention the fact that a 19 X 25 inch color print of the Karner Blue Butterfly, Lycaeides melissa samuelis, is available at \$20 plus \$1.50 for postage and handling. By Ryland Loos, the watercolor shows 2 of the blues on blossoms of its lupine foodplant, with the Pine Bush in the background. In buying one of these limited edition prints (950), you not only obtain a fine picture, but you help support the conservation work of the Pine Bush Historic Preservation Project and the Xerces Society, who sponsored its issue. Order from: Pine Bush Historic Preservation Project, Inc., P.O. Box 22820, 1400 Washington Ave., Albany, N.Y. 12222, with checks payable to same. They also have postcards of the Karner Blue (\$.10 ea.), note cards & envelopes booklets such as Moths of Autumn, Buck Moths at the Pine Bush (\$1.25) and other items. Membership and contributions in the PBHPP are also solicited. I have a photo of the print by this well-known scientific artist, and it IS impressive.

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In a recent issue of Bulletin of the Allyn Museum (#51), L.D. Miller and F. M. Brown have erected a new genus name for the Bronze Copper. So what was known as Lycaena thoe is now Hylolycaena hyllus (Cramer).

DON'T FORGET OUR ANNUAL MEETING scheduled to be held in Louisville Nov. 9 and 10. Party at Covells' Friday night, with meeting at the Entomology Lab, Univ. of Louisville, Sat. A slide show on the Alaska meeting of the Lepidopterists' Society and field trip will be featured, and hopefully a featured speaker as in the past 2 years. Short talks are solicited from members attending. WRITE COVELL IF YOU PLAN TO ATTEND. Further information later.

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Blaine Early has accepted a teaching position in the Biology Dept. at Cumberland College in Williamsburg, Ky., and will begin his duties there this month.

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With this issue we welcome Richard Henderson as Associate Editor of Kentucky Lepidopterist. He will be in charge of the printing aspects and other duties to be arranged later.

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The Ohio Lepidopterists are well along in their first year of existence, and 2 issues of their fine newsletter, The Ohio Lepidopterist, have been published. Membership is \$5 per year; send to Eric Metzler, 1241 Kildale Sq. N., Columbus, OHIO 43229, and become a charter member before the end of Nov. They plan a field meeting also on the weekend of Sept. 15 - at Glen Helen, Ohio. Congratulations to Mrs. M.C. "Buggie" Markham, Editor, for her superb newsletter.

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WRITEUPS ON OUR NEW MEMBERS WILL APPEAR IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE KENTUCKY LEPIDOPTERIST.

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