

Kentucky Lepidopterist

Newsletter of the Society of the Kentucky Lepidopterists

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Officers & Chairmen

President -

Charles V. Covell, Jr.
Dept. of Biology
University of Louisville,
Louisville, KY 40292-0001
Phone: 1-502-852-6771 (w)
456-6122 (h)

e-mail:

cvcov01@homer.louisville.edu

Treasurer -

Les Ferge
7119 Hubbard Avenue
Middleton, WI, 53562
Home Phone: 1-608-836-9438
e-mail: ferge@chorus.net

Secretary -

Ron King
2202 Crescent Hill Dr.
Owensboro, KY 42303
1-270-926-04881
kingsrb@bellsouth.net

Field Trip Coordinator -

Bill Black, Jr.
201 Friedman Ave.
Paducah, KY 42001
Phone: 1-270-442-9587
e-mail: BLACK@
PAD-UKY.CAMPUSCWIX.NET

Newsletter Editor -

Carolyn Roof
2015 Lone Oak Road
Paducah, KY 42003-5310
Phone and FAX: 1-270-554-4466
e-mail:
gardener@paducah.com

At Large Members -

Dr. James K. Adams - 2000*
Eric Metzler - 2001*
George Balogh - 2002*

*term expires

Fall Field Trip-September 1-4 Labor Day Weekend

The Fall Field Trip is scheduled for Labor Day Weekend to take advantage of the long weekend. Bill Black has planned a full weekend with the visits to new locations and to some old friends. As usual, there will be night mothing, so bring your light traps and bait traps.

Schedule: Friday, September 1 - 7:00 p.m. CENTRAL time. Visit at Bill Black's and show specimens. I-24 Exit 4, turn east onto 1-24 Downtown Loop, turn right at 32nd St., turn right at end of street, turn right onto Friedman Avenue (first street on right), house is on the right where the street turns left.

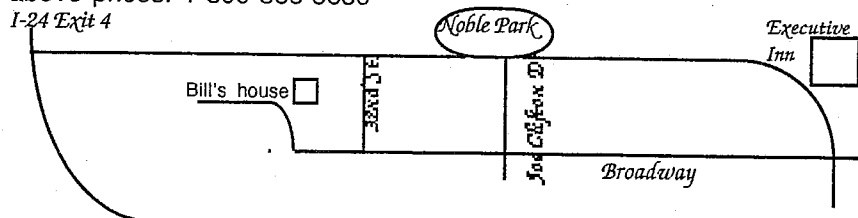
Saturday, September 2, 9:00 a.m. CENTRAL time. Breakfast at J. R.'s Executive Inn, Patio Room. (Executive Inn is four miles east of the I-24 Exit 4). The Patio Room restaurant is in Section C. To reach it from outside, enter at the Silver Dollar Bar ramp, or through the Convention Center entrance, go to the second floor, turn right and follow the corridor.

**Sunday, September 3,
Monday, September 4,**

Collect at requested
sites both days

Both days the group will meet at the Patio Room, Executive Inn.

Bill has made arrangements for lodging at Executive Inn, \$59 a night, \$64 for one night and two buffet breakfasts. Note that you are with the butterfly group (they will never recognize lepidopterist), or that Bill had made arrangements for the above prices. 1-800-866-3636



The schedule for Saturday is to visit the Zip Track Site (80 percent burned last year, this year the vegetation is lush); Massac Creek (McCracken Co.); Sandy Branch (Carlisle Co.); Hickman (Fulton Co.); Charlie Covell's Graves Co. site; plus new sites, as preferred by the crowd in Graves and Calloway Counties, Kentucky; Reelfoot Lake, Tenn.; and Massac and Pope Counties in Illinois.

For more information about Paducah and area, contact the Visitor's Bureau 1-800-PADUCAH.

Message from the President

by Charlie Covell

It is hard to think of summer in its waning days. So far, the drought we expected "went West" and it has been a lush summer in Kentucky and neighboring states. Here are some notes:

First, we anticipate another exciting **Labor Day Weekend Field Trip** with Bill Black and Co. in Paducah and areas in the Purchase.

There is a small nature preserve in Graves Co. which the Ky. State Nature Preserves Commission wishes us to sample for Lepidoptera. I hope we can work in at least a short visit there this time.

The late flowers ought to be out in fine form this year, and hopefully the "Zip Track" site in Paducah will be flowering nicely after last year's "unprescribed burn." Information about the field trip is elsewhere in this issue. Do plan to attend.

The **Annual Meeting** will be held **November 12-13** this year. I know this conflicts with some members' other commitments; but I could not do it any other weekend in the month except the first, and that is the weekend of the Breeders' Cup, when motels will be full.

Dr. David Wagner, Lepidoptera specialist at the University of Connecticut, has agreed to be our invited speaker this time. He is a super expert on life cycles and larvae, and has published **CATERPILLARS OF EASTERN FORESTS** (1997) with three colleagues. Another similar book is coming out soon. Anyone who know "Wags" can testify that he will give us a dynamic and interesting program.

The meeting starts with a 7:00 PM open house at the Covells', 2333 Brighton Drive, followed next day by a morning of "show and tell" among the group, swapping material, buying and selling books, and identifying specimens in the UofL collection. At 1:00 PM comes the business meeting where we elect officers, plan activities, and carry out other Society business. Then we have our featured speaker (no title yet available) and presentations by others who wish to give a talk, show slide, demonstrate equipment and techniques, etc. Door prizes and a dinner together end the day. Please contact me if you (1) plan to be with us, and (2) plan to give a presentation.

My email is: covell@louisville.edu, and my phone numbers are (502) 852-5942 (office) and 456-6122 (home).

PLAN NOW TO ATTEND

next, some miscellaneous items

The **BUTTERFLIES AND MOTHS OF KENTUCKY: AN ANNOTATED CHECKLIST** published last December seems to be selling moderately well, with over 250 of the 1000 copies sold. A supplemental paper will be published in by the Kentucky Academy of Science this fall, with 35 additional species plus names for three species of *Chionodes* recently published by Ron Hodges in his MONA fascicle revising the genus.

Let me know if you still wish to order the book.

They are available also from:

Lepbook, Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission, 801 Schenkel Lane, Frankfort, KY 40601-1403, \$17 ppd. Make checks payable to "Lepbook."

The **July 4th Butterfly Count** went well on July 1st, with 28 watchers, collectors and counters enjoying a sunny day at the Horner Wildlife Sanctuary, Oldham Co. With us again were Mike Flynn and several of his friends and family who came from Lexington to join us. We recorded 973 individuals representing 37 species, the "stars" being the Northern Metalmark and Sleepy Orange, the latter rarely seen that early in the season. Mike Flynn's group had their count the following Saturday in Lexington, with eight observers. That list had 818 individuals in 36 species.

The most phenomenal story from Lexington was the huge number of 275 Variegated Fritillaries! Only 4 were recorded in the Horner count. Also, they recorded 52 Least Skipperlings, 92 Meadow Fritillaries, and three Little Yellows - not seen in Oldham Co.

Numbers of Cabbage Whites, Eastern Tailed Blues ("ETB's") and Pearl Crescents were comparable in both counts. There were 11 species recorded by the Lexington group that were not on the Horner list, and 14 on the Horner list that were not seen by Mike's group. That makes a total of 48 species recorded by both groups.

Press coverage was excellent, with color-illustrated articles about both counts in local papers.

DUES ARE PAYABLE

Our fiscal year begins in November at the Annual meeting at which time dues are payable.

Please check your mailing label as to expiration date. If dues are in arrears, please send your check for \$10 and any extra you might spare to our treasurer. You may always pre-pay dues:

Les Ferge, 7119 Hubbard St., Middleton, WI 53562



MONA is 30 Years Old

by Eric H. Metzler

In September, 1970, Richard B. Dominick and Charles R. Edwards drafted the introduction to the first fascicle of the venerable *Moths of America North of Mexico* series of publications.

Affectionately known as MONA, that first monograph, Fascicle 21 *Sphingoidea*, Hawkmoths, by Ronald W. Hodges, began an ambitious publication project that successfully continues to document that portion of the lepidopteran fauna, known as moths, of the Nearctic region plus Greenland.

In 30 years of publication, the MONA series has documented the occurrence of 2,381 species from the region. Three hundred thirteen species and 23 subspecies were described as new to science in the series. Larger showy and popular moths such as the sphinx moths and giant silk worm moths are included as well as some of the smallest moths, the *Cosmopterigidae*.

In the conception MONA was meant to be an authoritative replacement for the long out of date W. J. Holland's *The Moth Book*, originally published in 1903 and reprinted in 1968 by Dover. The highly popular and, until 1968, much sought after Holland provided some color illustrations, brief annotations about the species, and briefer taxonomic notes. Yet the number of species in Holland was limited, and nearly all species of smaller moths could not be identified with this, the only guide to moths in North America.

The idea for MONA needed time to develop, and eventually a nucleus of people including R. B. Dominick, C. R. Edwards, D. C. Ferguson, J. G. Franclemont, R. W. Hodges, E. R. Hodges, E. G. Munroe, E. W. Classey, B. Harley and others joined their knowledge, enthusiasm, and tenacity to publish the first MONA fascicle.

Five years after the first monograph was published, a public non-profit foundation, the Wedge Entomological Research Foundation, named in honor of Dominick's home in South Carolina, was formed to continue the vision of Richard Dominick, who unexpectedly died after just a few years and after only a few monographs were published.

Now in its 26th year, the foundation continues to publish the highly acclaimed series. The Entomological Society of America awarded Ronald W. Hodges its prestigious Thomas Say Award in 1990 for his leadership with the MONA series. Published reviews of the monographs in the MONA series have been highly complimentary.

Upcoming fascicles include the tribe *Macariini* (*Geometridae*) and the genus *Catocala* (*Noctuidae*). The Wedge Entomological Research Foundation is actively searching for competent authors of monographs for the series. In addition, the board of directors of the foundation desires to publish suitable monographs beyond the scope of the MONA series. Interested persons should contact the Foundations at: The Wedge Entomological Research Foundation, 85253 Ridgetop Drive, Eugene, Oregon 97405-9535, USA.

The Wedge Entomological Research Foundation gratefully thanks its subscribers, its supporters, the persons who provide data and energy to assist the authors, and the users of the monographs. Were there not a need, the project could not be sustained. Were there not an interest and dedication of moth collectors, the project would be impeded. Completion of the preliminary survey remains a major goal.

Dr. Ronald W. Hodges, Managing Director, The Wedge Entomological Research Foundation, 85253 Ridgetop Drive, Eugene, Oregon 97405-9535, USA.
(541) 684-0484 rwhodges@continent.com

Eric H. Metzler, Secretary, The Wedge Entomological Research Foundation, 1241 Kildale Square, North, Columbus, Ohio 43229-1306, USA.
(614) 888-3642 spruance@infinet.com

GLOBAL WARMING

I would like to speak to you a moment about "Butterflies and Global Warming." I think there is evidence that winters have been milder and shorter in Kentucky and much of the East in the past few years.

This is demonstrated not only by the temperatures recorded, but also by the fact that butterflies rarely seen early in the season in much of Kentucky were common in early 2000. Some of these include the Variegated Fritillary, 215 of which were noted above in the Lexington, KY - July 4th Butterfly Count. In Oldham Co. we also reported the Sleepy Orange, another late season butterfly in Kentucky, seen this year much earlier.

Mike Flynn and the Lexington group also reported Little Yellows in their count, which we rarely see that early. This, with Gulf Fritillary, White M Hairstreak and Checkered White being more common lately, makes me think that these species are "pushing the envelope" to overwinter farther north, and are at least now doing it with some success.

Any comments from you all? Charlie Covell

Bill Black and Cane

On 1 July 2000 I took an old friend, Lee Mercier of Jacksonville, FL, to see the enchanting Sandy Branch in Carlisle Co., KY. This wet-weather creek has eroded a 150 feet canyon through the loess bluff that borders the east edge of the Mississippi River flood plain, about two miles from the river itself. During last year's field trip, the Kentucky Lepidopterists collected butterflies and moths at Sandy Branch. Eric Quinter has collected caterpillars there, and several members of the KyLEPS helped collect there with light traps in search of Eric's new cane feeding moth species.

During our hike, Lee and I observed what has come to be regarded as a rare occurrence - the blooming and fruiting of our North American endemic bamboo, *Arundinaria gigantea* (Walt.) Chapm. Eric Quinter and Jim Wicker also have observed several locations in other states where cane was blooming this year. We observed blooming and seed production only in Cane Site #8 of the Sandy Branch complex, about a half mile up from the mouth at the old railroad bed.

Its culms averaged from 3/4 to 1 inch in diameter, and 14,-18 feet in height. As with the other seven sites at Sandy Branch, Cane Site #8 was shaded by the higher canopy of deciduous trees that fill the canyon, thus accounting for the low density of culms, whose spacing from one another averaged about one and a half feet. The entirety of Cane Site #8 covered about 40,x100 feet.

All culms were dead or dying - testifying that they all were actually one single plant. Approximately every sixth culm appeared to have flowered. This reproduction process requires the cane plant to so completely expend its energy, that none remains to sustain the plant, and it dies. If viable seeds were produced, then new shoots should reappear next year, along with a few shoots from remnant living parts of the old rhizome. It may take from five to ten years for the culms to reach their relatively large (by present day standards) size of one inch diameter and 18 feet in height. Thereafter, new shoots should sprout at their full diameter and reach full height in their first season.

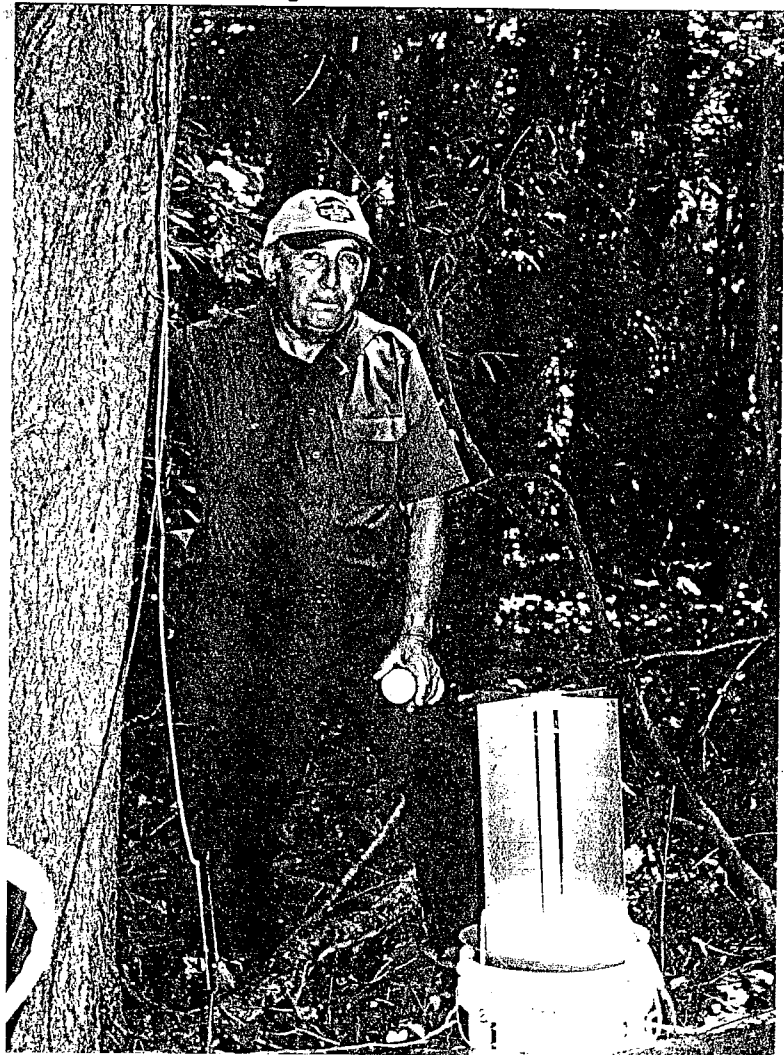
At the mouth of Sandy Branch, Cane Site # 1, was observed in February, 1999, to have already died out. Until now, I have believed its demise had been caused by flooding. No new shoots have been observed sprouting up from among the standing dead stalks of Cane Site #1. However, Loran Gibson discovered a small stand of living cane adjacent to the back of cane site # 1 in September, 1999.

Cane sites #2 through #7 remain alive at Sandy Branch.

Photo at right courtesy of Bill Black

Edward A. Sadler
Andover, Hampshire, England

Edward is with one of Leroy Kohn's UV Light Traps, in a wooded slough near Kincaid Mounds, Massac County, Illinois
July 4, 2000



Charlie At Home

This summer the butterfly garden has yielded 24 specimens to date, including a Mourning Cloak in my bait trap yesterday, August 11. Nothing fantastic to report this time (like Ocola Skipper in '97, Longtailed Skipper in '99, and White-M Hairstreak last summer). The best days are ahead, though, and maybe I can top the 31 species recorded last year.

In June, I brought back from Ecuador a supply of the color-illustrated MARIPOSAS DEL ECUADOR parts 1 and 2 (1 was "Genera" and 2 covers most of the Arctiidae). I sold all I had at the Lepidoptera Society meeting in North Carolina, July 28-30; but Dr. Giovanni Onore is sending some more. If you are interested, let me know. They are \$28 each postpaid.

(see front page for **Charlie's address - correction - his e-mail is: cvcove01@louisville.edu**)

The Lepidoptera Society meeting was most enjoyable with excellent talks, and about 20 Kentucky Lepidopterists and their mates and children in attendance.

There were over 70 door prizes to give away, and the Balogh boys and Albert Slocomb did a fine job getting the prizes to the winners. Many thanks, guys.

Some of the group had participated in a unique collecting effort at the Great Smoky Mountain National Park in Tennessee. It was called the "Lepidoptera Bio-blitz" and it was a 24-hour collecting effort by 20 lepidopterists from around the USA. They recorded over 720 species, lots more as yet not identified. I was teaching so could not go and give you a first-hand report.

I would like to welcome Leroy Koehn "back" to Kentucky, finally as a resident. While he has been a KyLEPS from the beginning, this will be the first time he has resided here. We will let you know his address as soon as he is settled.

I hope to see many of you soon at the fall field trip and the Annual Meeting. Cheers, Charlie

The photograph on the right is compliments of Bill Black.
It is a culm of can (*Arundinaria gigantea* (Walt.) Champ.) with flowering panicles.
Jane site #8 (the most upstream site)
Candy Branch
Marlisle County, Kentucky
July 1, 2000

Bill noted that the flowering panicles and the culm (stalk) still retain some green color.
The leaves have already died and fallen off, leaving bare, dead stems.
(See previous page for story)



The Kentucky Lepidopterist Society Newsletter is published quarterly-January, June, August, and October.
Membership dues are \$10.00 annually, payable November.
The organization is open to all interested in Lepidoptera.

If the date after your name is highlighted, dues are still payable. The list was last updated April 30.
If you have paid since that date, please ignore the notation.

Please send dues to the Treasurer Les Ferge.



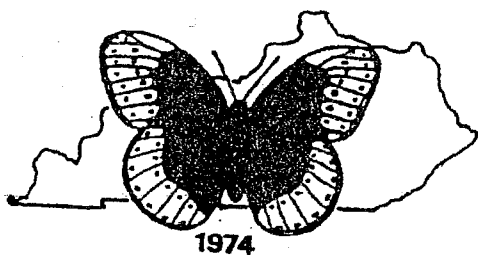
DATES TO REMEMBER:

SEPTEMBER 1-4 - Jackson Purchase area field trip

Contact Bill Black for more information (see front page for address and numbers)

NOVEMBER 12-13 - Annual Meeting

Contact Charlie Covell for more information on both of these (see front page for address and numbers)



Society of Kentucky Lepidopterists
2015 Lone Oak Road, Paducah, KY 42003



Loran & Pat Gibson pd2000
2727 Running Creek Drive
Florence KY 41042

JOE TOM ERWIN

436-2467