



# *Kentucky Lepidopterist*

*Newsletter of the Society of Kentucky Lepidopterists*

*Volume 36 Number 4 January 31, 2011*

**THE SOCIETY  
OF  
KENTUCKY  
LEPIDOPTERISTS**

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Richard Henderson - 2011\*  
James Adams - 2012\*  
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**THE SOCIETY OF KENTUCKY**

**LEPIDOPTERISTS** is open to anyone with an interest in the Lepidoptera of the State of Kentucky. Membership dues are annual: \$12.00. Dues sent to the Treasurer: Les Ferge, 7119 Hubbard Avenue, Middleton, WI 53562

## **PRESIDENT'S LETTER**

Since our November meeting at UK, I have been reflecting on why I found it so enjoyable. Certainly, the camaraderie of diverse and interesting friends congregating in the midst of Kentucky's definitive collection of Lepidoptera explains much of the happiness. The featured speaker, Larry Gall, Curator of the Lepidoptera Collection of the Peabody Museum at Yale University, intrigued us with his presentation on *Catocala*. Larry enthusiastically helped members identify specimens they had brought, as did our mentor and co-founder, Dr. Charlie Covell, who had traveled from the McGuire Center at the University of Florida. Charlie spoke about an interesting collecting trip to Peru. Dr. James Adams, Professor of Biology, Dalton State College, Calhoun, GA, shared photos of moths, butterflies, and the variety of places he had found them, and recalled fond memories of collecting with his mother, our friend, Eleanor Adams, who died last October.

Several more factors that made the November 2010 meeting good were the result of work and preparation by Leroy Koehn. He retired in 2009 from a career in storage systems manufacturing, having served as plant manager of several facilities in North Carolina, Kentucky, Indiana, and Illinois over the last two decades. (He manufactured Lep Traps for fun and profit at home in his off hours!) Now, he is able to live in Georgetown, KY, where he and Betty had bought a house several years ago in anticipation of retirement. Only a short commute is required between his house in Georgetown and the University of Kentucky in Lexington. There in 2004 Kentucky's largest Lepidoptera collection (amassed by U. of L. Professor Charlie V. Covell, Jr.) had joined Kentucky's largest Entomology collection. In 2009 Leroy was offered a part time position as Curator and began working on the Insect Collection. Leroy began to integrate Covell's U of L collection with the older U of K collection. Soon the scope of Leroy's curator role was expanded to include major parts of the Entomology collection beyond the Order Lepidoptera. His regular presence in the Animal Pathology Building, working on the Entomology collection, continues to benefit both the collection and the collectors.

Since the Society of Kentucky Lepidopterists first followed the collection to the University of Kentucky, we have been given a warm welcome from Entomology Professor Mike Sharkey, and Chair of the Department of Entomology Professor John Obrycki. Leroy works on the collections under their direction, and he continues to contribute additional volunteer work on the Lepidoptera collection.



Having one of our most active members at the collection several days each week enhances liaison with the University. Preparation for the November 2010 meeting was a good example. Leroy determined the best date to avoid conflict with home football games and other major events. He arranged for our access to the Lepidoptera collection in the Dimock Animal Pathology Building, use of a lecture hall with digital projection facilities in the Agricultural Science Center, and parking permits. In town he arranged for special hotel rates with contact information, and for our Saturday night dinner reservations. Leroy and Betty hosted the Kentucky Lep's Friday night get together at their home, serving a wonderful buffet dinner (with many different desserts)! After dinner the members were invited to peruse Leroy's Lepidoptera collection, and to roam his library, his well-organized workplace, and to enjoy his other interesting collections (including minerals, beer and soft drink bottles with their original contents).

With this issue, Leroy begins the second year of his second tour of duty as Editor of our Newsletter (his first editorship was from 2001 to 2005). Currently, he and Richard Henderson are rehabilitating several printers to expedite publication of the newsletter. Work and service by individual members for the benefit of the whole has been a strength of the Society of Kentucky Lepidopterists from its beginning. In 2010 Leroy made such a contribution and he has earned our appreciation.

Bill Black  
President  
The Society of Kentucky Lepidopterists

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**BOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
**NOVEMBER 20, 2010**  
**BY**  
**TONY MERKLE**

Present were: James Adams, Bill Black, Gerald Burnett, Charles Covell, Les Ferge, Loran Gibson, Richard Henderson, Leroy Koehn and Tony Merkle

The first topic of discussion presented by President Bill Black was the treasurer's report. Treasurer Les Ferge reported that for the year the organization had collected a total of \$1009.00 and spent \$1,641.47 for a net loss of \$632.47.

Expenses were primarily attributable to the costs associated with publishing the newsletter. Additional expenses of \$140.00 for publishing software and \$86.38 for website domain renewal were also incurred. Particular concern was expressed regarding technical problems with the printer that resulted in the waste of paper and ink during the printing of the most recent issue of the newsletter. It was mentioned that these problems would need to be addressed. The organizations overall finances were reported to be good with a reserve of \$3,554.58 currently in the bank. A slowly eroding membership was also cited as one of the reasons for the organizations deficit operation.

Issues related to the treasurer's report led to a discussion of ways to stabilize the organizations finances. Initial discussion centered on aspects related to newsletter publication and distribution. The possibility of having it distributed electronically was mentioned. It was suggested that an incentive such as a lower dues level might be necessary for some people to be persuaded to receive it that way. Further discussion centered on printer problems and how they might be resolved. A suggestion was made for Leroy to make a list of items needed. He indicated that the first item needed was a printer. A suggestion was made that we allow an expenditure of \$400.00 for the purchase of a printer. A motion to approve the expenditure followed. The motion was seconded. All present voted in favor of it. At this time a suggestion was made that perhaps the annual dues should be raised for individuals wishing to continue receiving paper copies of the newsletter. A motion to increase the annual dues amount to \$15.00 followed. The motion was seconded and all present again voted in favor of it. Further discussion about the publication of the newsletter took place. The difficulties associated with distributing it electronically were mentioned. It was decided that any difficulties that might arise could be overcome. The possibility of having it printed by an outside interest such as a printing company was also mentioned. Several of those present indicated that previous research into the possibility showed it to be cost prohibitive. Discussion then turned back to the dues to be charged for membership. A motion was made that effective in January of 2011 the dues should be set at \$12.00 for individuals receiving the newsletter electronically, \$15.00 for individuals receiving it as a paper copy and \$25.00 for individuals wanting a Sustaining Membership. Notification to the organization's members of the dues changes would be given in the next newsletter. The motion was seconded. All present voted in favor of it.



Les agreed to write the notice for the newsletter. It was mentioned that members would be responsible for supplying a current e-mail address in order to receive the newsletter electronically. It was also suggested and generally agreed that since we had not had a membership list published recently, it might be a good idea to do so in the newsletter soon.

The next item discussed was the renewal of the practice of submitting a season summary report to the Lepidopterist Society for publication. The report would be done annually and would include a compilation of significant data related to state and county records. Loran volunteered to compile the data and forward it to Les for publication. It was agreed that an announcement regarding this should also appear in the newsletter.

A brief discussion about organization decals/stickers took place next. Several aspects related to the purchase of new ones were considered. It was mentioned that a bumper sticker type would serve the organization well in terms of cost and durability. It was decided that action on this could be postponed until later. Discussion then turned to the position of website manager. Concerns were expressed about how it should be administered for the future. It was generally agreed that it should be left with Jeff Marcus if he is willing to continue in the position. Bill agreed to contact him to determine if he would be willing to do so.

The next item discussed involved the promotion of our organization through the publication of short articles in newsletters of other organizations. Charlie agreed to compose and submit articles for this purpose to the News of the Lepidopterist Society and to the Southern Lepidopterist News. The articles will include information on the benefits and costs associated with joining.

The next item discussed was the field trip schedule for the coming year. Suggested locations were Fort Campbell in Trigg and Christian Counties and Yellowbank WMA in Breckenridge County. The suggested timing of the trips was late August or early September for the visit to Fort Campbell and mid June for the one to Yellowbank WMA. Some discussion regarding the timing of the Fourth of July Butterfly Count also took place. Charlie suggested a tentative date of July 9.

The last item discussed was the slate of officers for the coming year. It was suggested that those currently serving could continue in their positions if willing to do so. Each of the officers agreed to continue in his position for another year. The slate, thus set, would be presented to

the general membership at the business meeting and the meeting was adjourned.

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## **ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES NOVEMBER 20, 2010 BY TONY MERKLE**

President Bill Black began the meeting by introducing member Bruce Fanciski. Bruce made an announcement regarding an invitation he had received from an official associated with Raven Run Nature Sanctuary in Fayette County. The official had offered to allow our organization the use of display cases at the nature center for display of moth specimens. The display would include the name of our organization and contact information. Specimens would be obtained from members of our organization willing to donate to the project. The announcement was being made to make members aware of the opportunity and to determine if there was sufficient interest in it to warrant pursuing it further. All in attendance seemed to be in favor of it. Bruce offered to act as a liaison on the project. Loran Gibson agreed to work with him in order to get it moving.

The first item discussed following the announcement was the Treasure's Report. Bill mentioned that it showed that our organization operated at a deficit of about \$600.00 for the year. Treasurer Les Ferge mentioned that we have a reserve of \$3554.58 therefore the organization was not in any immediate trouble. He further indicated that the deficit was attributable to newsletter publication costs, equipment problems and a general increase in costs associated with the organizations operations.

The next item discussed was the publication of the newsletter. Of particular concern were issues related to its printing. It was mentioned that equipment, particularly the printer, used to produce it was failing and for this reason the board of officers had approved an expenditure of up to \$400.00 for the purchase of a new one. Also, as a cost saving measure an option for receiving the newsletter electronically was being implemented. Members would have the option to receive it either as a paper copy through the mail or as an electronic copy through e-mail. Members wishing to receive it in both forms would be allowed that option as well.



In conjunction with the implementation of electronic newsletter distribution, a new dues structure was also being implemented. Under the new dues arrangement individuals wishing to receive the newsletter electronically will continue to pay \$12.00 annually and individuals opting to receive paper copies will pay \$15.00 annually. Sustaining memberships will continue to be \$25.00 annually. Sustaining members will also receive paper copies of the newsletter.

The next item discussed was season summary data compilation and submission to the Lepidopterist Society for publication. It was mentioned that Les was the person in charge of submitting the data from our region. Loran agreed to collect data from our members, compile it and send it to Les for publication.

The field trip schedule for 2011 was then discussed. Bill mentioned that trips to the Yellowbank WMA in mid June and Fort Campbell Military Base in early September were planned. The Fourth of July Butterfly Count was tentatively scheduled for July 9. The Fort Campbell trip is based in part on obtaining a permit by Leroy Koehn and would in all likelihood require individual security clearances for individuals participating.

The last item discussed was the slate of officers to serve the organization for the next year. It was mentioned that all those currently serving had agreed to continue in their positions therefore the board had re-nominated all of them to serve another year. At this time the floor was opened for other nominations. None were presented. A motion was made to close the floor to nominations. The motion was seconded. No dissensions to the motion were presented and no further discussion of the matter took place. The slate of officers presented was thus approved and the meeting was adjourned.

## PHAON CRESCENTS IN WESTERN FULTON COUNTY

BY  
**MARK MONROE,  
BRAINARD PALMER-BALL, JR.,  
AND EDDIE HUBER**

As most Kentucky lepidopterists are aware, the far southwestern corner of Kentucky is a trove of zoological treasures just waiting to be discovered. Even if you don't find something unexpected, any self-respecting botanist, birder, or lepidopterist who is avid about the flora and fauna of our state knows that you just have to visit Fulton County at least a time or two each year if you want to experience the full spectrum of what our state has to offer.

The authors are regularly in western Fulton County, exploring the Mississippi River bottoms for flying creatures, although we somewhat shamefully admit to the readership of this newsletter that it is mostly for those that have feathers. That being said, there is among the three of us a uniform interest in leps, and especially our late summer forays to the area always include at least a bit of "bugging."

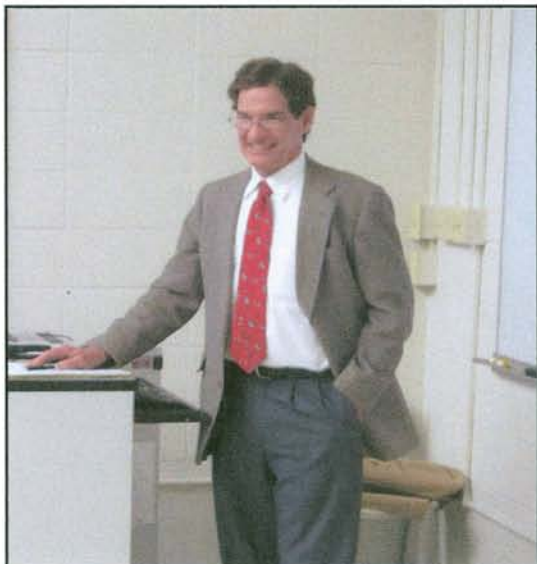
It was on one of these recent trips that a most surprising discovery was made, again somewhat shamefully, while we were birding. The body of water known as Lake No. 9 is a famous one for birds; late summer concentrations of waterfowl, egrets, and sandpipers occasionally include the odd ball ibis or spoonbill. It was the quest for this type of quarry that had us walking up the western shoreline of the southern end of Lake No. 9 on the afternoon of August 19, 2010.



GROUP PHOTOGRAPH OF MEETING ATTENDEES



## MEETING PHOTOGRAPHS



Bill Black  
President



Larry Gaul  
Guest Speaker: Catocala Moths



Loran Gibson, Bill Black & John Peacock



Gerald Burnett, Loran Gibson  
James Adams & Jim Vargo & Leroy's Collection



Richard Henderson



Board Meeting



## MEETING PHOTOGRAPHS



Jonathon Smith, John Peacock & David Wright talk Speyeria.



Sam Smith looks at the Microlepidoptera in the University of Kentucky Insect Collection.



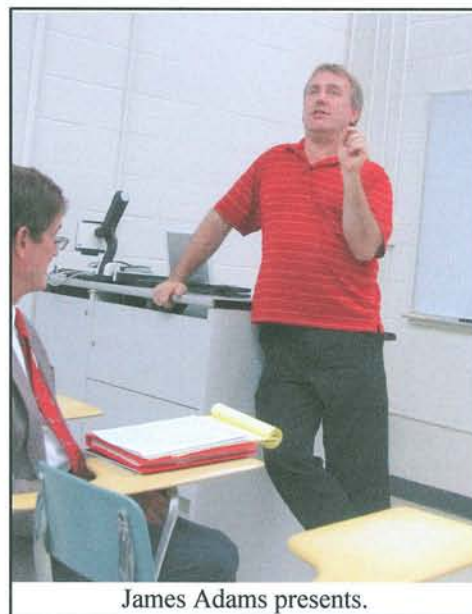
Bill Black, Les Ferge with father & daughter Megan & David McCarty looking at specimens



Bill Black (Behind Cabinet), Les Ferge, Jonathon Smith & Jim Vargo at Friday Night Get Together.



Meeting attendees at the presentation of talks.



James Adams presents.



While slowly approaching a group of shorebirds, the senior author's attention began to wander to the collection of butterflies that were present amidst a thick band of Scarlet Toothcup (*Ammannia coccinea*) near the shoreline. There were many Fiery Skippers (*Hylephila phyleus*), Common Buckeyes (*Junonia coenia*) and a few Checkered Skippers (*Pyrgus communis*), but there were also a number of individuals of a small crescent that looked distinctly different than the many Pearl Crescents (*Phyciodes tharos*) that we had seen abundantly the previous day in the counties bordering the Mississippi River.

Mark had seen this stranger before but could not place where, so he took some photographs and video of them and collected a single specimen. We probably counted at least 25-30 individuals, mostly in fresh condition. Most were flying low through the two-foot tall vegetation, some were courting, and at least two mated pairs were observed.

Upon returning to the truck, a review of photos of various crescents on the internet via a handheld smart phone revealed that the mystery bugs were Phaon Crescents (*Phyciodes phaon*), a species previously unreported in Kentucky. A map of that species pulled up from another web site ([butterfliesandmoths.org](http://butterfliesandmoths.org)) showed this widespread southern species to have been reported as close as Dunklin County in southeastern Missouri (just one county west of Fulton County) and Lauderdale County in west Tennessee (just two counties south of Fulton County).

Upon returning home, Mark was able to confirm the identification because he has several specimens of Phaon Crescent in his personal collection. We passed the news along to Ellis Laudermilk of the Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission, and Loran Gibson of the KLS. Loran and Bill Black returned to the site 24 August 2010 and collected a few more specimens, took more photographs, and located another small population of these butterflies near the pumping station on Elbow Slough (about 2.5 miles to the north).

The host plants for Phaon Crescents include members of the genus *Phyla* (formerly *Lippia*) with the relatively common and widespread Fogfruit (*Phyla lanceolata*) being the likely host in western Fulton County. This plant was growing abundantly in the shade of the stands of Scarlet Toothcup, (*Ammannia coccinea*) from which the crescents seemed to be nectaring.

Interestingly, during our observations of Phaon Crescents, we did not see any Pearl Crescents in the immediate area even though they were quite numerous only a few hundred yards away along the river levee. The authors returned to the Mississippi River counties 4-5 September 2010. We searched flood plain areas with Fogfruit from southern Ballard County to western Fulton County (including Swan Lake WMA, Doug Travis WMA, and Obion WMA as well as gravel roadsides in between), but did not locate any additional populations. Other associated species of butterflies were still flying and although fewer in number, the Phaon Crescents were still flying at Lake No. 9. On the KLS field trip 12 September 2010, additional specimens were seen, photographed, and collected at Lake No. 9 but nowhere else. The lack of observations in other areas with suitable food plants suggests that the colonization of western Fulton Co. by the crescents is probably relatively recent.

Phaon Crescent was first discovered in Tennessee in August 2005 in the state's southwestern most county, Shelby, by Bart Jones. Since that time, it has been recorded in four additional counties: Crockett, Haywood, Lauderdale, and Tipton (B. Jones, pers. comm.). Bart has seen the butterfly in the Memphis area as early as late June, but during the last couple of years he has not seen individuals until mid-August, suggesting that it may not be surviving the winters but is re-colonizing through northward migrations during the spring and summer months. It will be interesting to study the Kentucky population during 2011 to determine when individuals first appear and how many broods may emerge. We suspect that the appearance of this butterfly in western Fulton County is yet another example of the northward spread of some species that can likely be attributed to climate change, most notably as reflected in milder winters.



Phyciodes phaon  
Photograph by Ellis Laudermilk



## IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING NEWSLETTER AND DUES

It is becoming prohibitively expensive to produce and mail the quality color newsletter that we are accustomed to receiving. In 2010, the Society incurred a deficit of \$632.47 with only three issues of the newsletter. To reduce these expenses, in 2011 we will offer an electronic version of the newsletter delivered by e-mail. All members with access to e-mail are encouraged to subscribe in this manner. For those without e-mail or desiring a paper copy dues had to be raised to \$15.00 per year. Regular dues will remain at \$12.00 for those receiving the e-mail newsletter only. Sustaining memberships will continue to be \$25.00 or more, with the option of receiving a paper copy of the newsletter.

Dues billings will be sent out in January, except to members who paid their 2011 dues at the Annual Meeting. In order not to miss the first 2011 newsletter, please respond promptly and make sure to include a current valid e-mail address with your dues.

Les Ferge  
Treasurer  
The Society of Kentucky Lepidopterists

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## SOCIETY OF KENTUCKY LEPIDOPTERISTS ACTIVITIES

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

9/10 April 2011  
Spring Field Trip to Eastern Kentucky  
Trip leader Leroy Koehn

Mid June 2011  
Early Summer Field Trip to  
Yellowbanks WMA  
Trip leader Leroy Koehn

9 July 2011  
Annual 4th of July Butterfly Count  
to Oldham Co.  
Trip leader Charlie Covell

9/10 September  
Late Summer Field Trip to Far Western Kentucky  
Trip leader Gerald Burnett

Mid-November 2011  
Annual Meeting in Lexington, Ky  
Organizer Leroy Koehn

There will be more information about these activities in future newsletters.1

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## NEWS LETTER UPDATE

This Newsletter completes your Editors first year of Newsletters (Vol. 36). To say the least, it has been fun. The Fall Field Meeting to western Kentucky was well planned and organized. The Accommodations at the Fowler Farm Hunting Lodge were excellent. The food was great! The meeting was excellent.

The early summer field meeting to YellowBank WMA should be very interesting. We will be search for Calephelis mutica and Autochton cellus. Both of these can be very common at certain locations directly across the Ohio River in Perry County, Indiana. Come join us as we search for these two butterflies in Kentucky.

The Fall Field Trip to western Kentucky is always exciting. Something new is always found during this meeting.

As we begin the new year, please send photographs of Lepidoptera, short and lengthy articles, notes and items of interest to your Editor. Let's make the Newsletter a great source of information that will help our Society grow.

In the late 1980's the Southern Lepidopterists Society created and published a Cartoon series, "Catocala Caper's." The characters were a group of hapless and well known Southern Lepidopterists. If you have some art skills, let your Editor know and we could produce something very similar in our Newsletter.

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## LIST OF MEMBERS

A List of Members is included in this Newsletter. The list is for members use only to contact one another and not for business or financial gain.



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