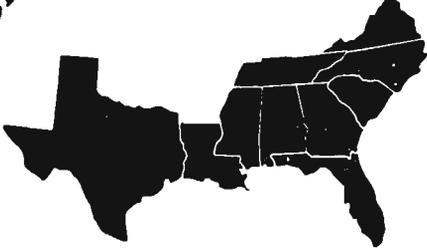




Southern lepidopterists' news




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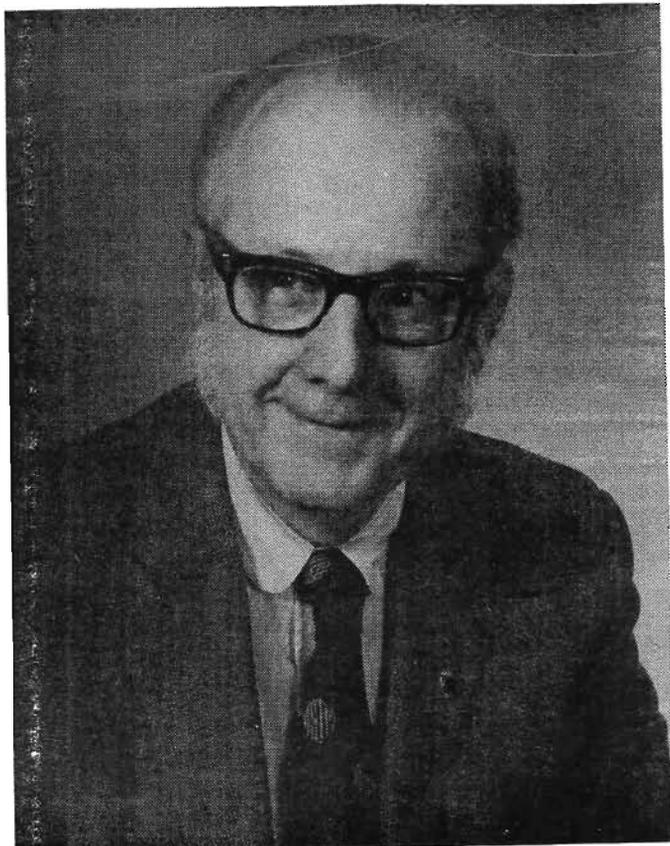
THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE SOUTHERN LEPIDOPTERISTS' SOCIETY, ORGANIZED
TO PROMOTE SCIENTIFIC INTEREST AND KNOWLEDGE RELATED TO UNDERSTANDING
THE LEPIDOPTERA FAUNA OF THE SOUTHERN REGION OF THE UNITED STATES.

CHAIRMAN-EDITOR : DAVE BAGGETT SECRETARY-TREASURER : TOM NEAL
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**** BRYANT MATHER : 1983 JOHN ABBOT AWARD WINNER ****

WE are pleased to announce that BRYANT MATHER of Clinton, Mississippi, has been selected as the 1983 Abbot Award recipient. This year's contest was a near-duplicate of last year's, an extremely close race between candidates involved. Bryant serves as another outstanding example of individual accomplishment as an avocational lepidopterist; those who know Bryant through correspondence or personally are quick to note his prompt, courteous, and professional response. The MATHER COLLECTION is frequently cited by researchers seeking distributional information, and a trademark of his effort is that material from his collection is always available.

His efforts as an entomologist have been rewarded by the naming of seven species of insects, since four moths, two butterflies (Mexican), and a neuropterid now bear the name matheri in tribute. Bryant is a charter member of The Lepidopterists' Society, and he served for many years as the Zone 6 Season Summary Coordinator, and has published a number of papers and/or scientific notes related to species found in Mississippi. He has shown a fondness for Euphyes dukesi and for Sphinx franckii; a paper on the distribution of the latter is in prep. He and his wife Katherine jointly prepared the Mississippi butterfly checklist. He has served the Southern Lepidopterists as the Mississippi coordinator, and his experience and insight have proven useful in drafting the group constitution; he served as Chairman of the Drafting Committee. For his contributions to entomology, he was made an Honorary Life Member of the AMNH (1968), and Honorary Patron (1974), and (continued - p. 8)



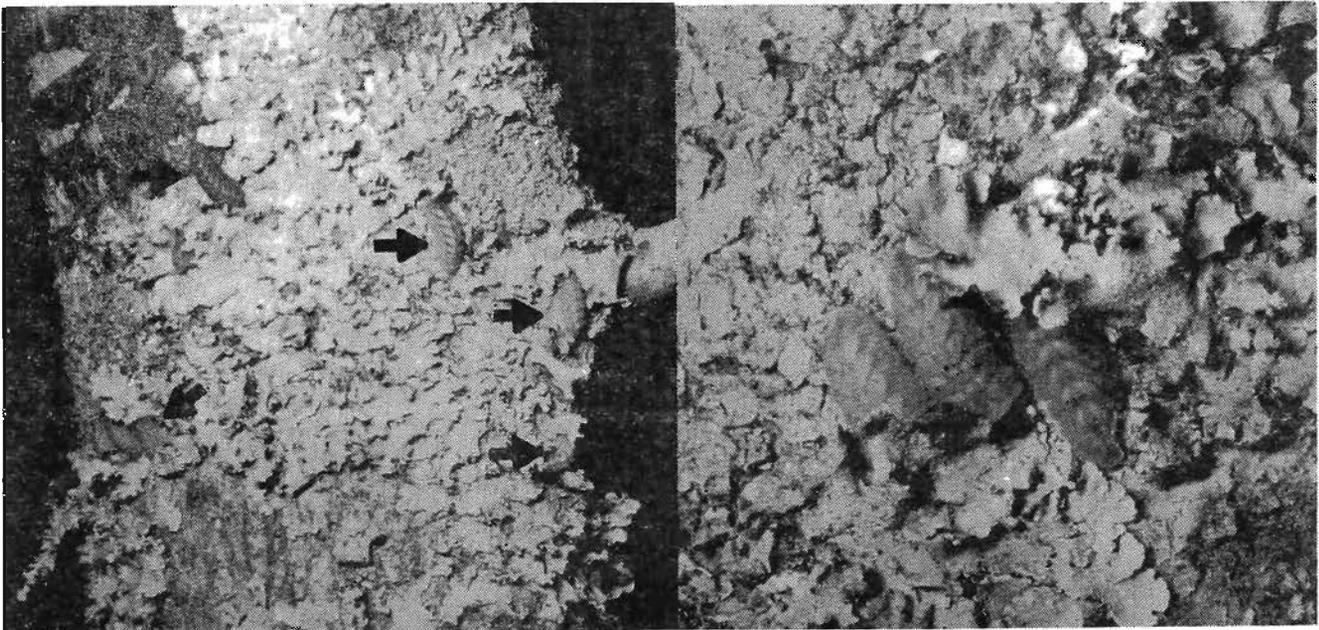
MATHER - con't : a Research Associate in 1978. He has been a Research Associate of the Florida State Collection of Arthropods (FSCA) since 1968. Additionally, he serves as a Research Associate of the Mississippi Museum of Natural Science and the Mississippi Entomological Museum, and in 1981 he was appointed by the Governor to represent "Science" on the Mississippi Museums Council. His career occupation as Chief of the Structures Laboratory, U.S. Army Engineers Waterways Experiment Station in Vicksburg, has often afforded him travel throughout the U.S. and in other countries, which has certainly enhanced his avocational opportunities as well. He was born in Maryland on Dec. 27, 1916, and received his formal education as follows: A.B. in Geology, 1936, Johns Hopkins University; graduate student in geology, 1936-38 and 1940-41, Johns Hopkins; and graduate student in economics at American University, 1938-39. He received the honorary degree of doctor of science from Clarkson College in 1978, and was appointed a charter member of the Senior Executive Service by President Carter in 1979. His professional career is studded by numerous awards and citations from the American Concrete Institute and the American Society for Testing and Materials, and several Civilian Service awards from the Department of the Army. One can easily see from both professional and avocational aspects that Bryant has been a man of distinction, and we can all be proud of his affiliation with the Southern Lepidopterists. The Abbot Award would seem a fitting tribute and token of appreciation for his efforts and contributions; his was an easy choice as one of the original nominees for the award.

PRELIMINARY MEETING INFORMATION

OUR 1983 MEETING WILL BE HELD THE WEEKEND OF OCTOBER 1-2 AT TORREYA STATE PARK IN LIBERTY CO., FLORIDA. THIS WILL PROVIDE A SCENIC SETTING FOR THE MEETING AND ALSO AN EXCELLENT CENTER FOR PLANNED FIELD TRIP ACTIVITIES IN POORLY COLLECTED NORTHERN COUNTIES. IN RECENT YEARS, THE PARK AND SURROUNDING AREA HAVE SURRENDERED MANY NEW AND IMPORTANT RECORDS OF INTEREST TO LEPIDOPTERISTS, BUT THERE HAS BEEN VERY LITTLE COLLECTING DONE IN THE FALL OR EARLY WINTER MONTHS TO DATE. PRELIMINARY SCOUTING OF THE AREA DURING THE PAST TWO SEASONS BY BAGGETT, NEAL, AND DICKEL HAS INDICATED WE SHOULD EXPECT SOME VERY INTERESTING BUGS. THE TIMING SHOULD COINCIDE PERFECTLY WITH THE PEAK FALL WILDFLOWER DISPLAYS, AND WE ANTICIPATE FINDING SOME CHOICE LEPS, WHICH SHOULD INCLUDE HESPERIA MESKEI, EUPHYES BERRYI, AND PERHAPS MEGATHYMUS HARRISI (THE LATTER SEEN BUT NOT COLLECTED DURING A PREVIOUS SCOUTING ENDEAVOR IN EARLY OCTOBER.) THE MOON PHASE WILL BE PERFECT FOR MOTH COLLECTING, AND WITH THE COMPOSITAE IN FULL BLOOM, WE SHOULD FIND PLENTY OF THE COLORFUL DAY-FLYING SCHINIA AND EUPANYCHIS MOTHS. WEATHER SHOULD BE MILD AND IDEAL FOR OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES, AND AS IS CUSTOMARY, MOST OF OUR MEETING TIME WILL BE SPENT ENGAGED IN FIELD-ORIENTED ACTIVITIES. THE FLORA AND FAUNA OF THE PARK ARE UNIQUE IN FLORIDA, BEING REMINISCENT OF THE APPALACHIAN FOOTHILLS, AND THE PARK IS NAMED APPROPRIATELY FOR THE TORREYA TREE, WHICH IS FOUND ONLY IN THE IMMEDIATE AREA THEREOF. TENTATIVE PLANS CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS TO MEET AT THE PARK BY 9:00 AM ON SATURDAY MORNING, AND FIELD TRIPS WILL TAKE PLACE TO NEARBY AREAS, LED BY LOCAL MEMBERS FAMILIAR WITH THE TERRAIN. ONE SPOT WE WILL DEFINITELY VISIT WILL BE THE APALACHICOLA NATIONAL FOREST, A PLACE CHARACTERIZED BY UNIQUE VEGETATION, INCLUDING EASTERN WHITE CEDAR AND SEVERAL SPECIALIZED PITCHER PLANTS. WE WILL RETURN TO THE PARK AROUND 5:30 TO PREPARE FOR A GROUP COOKOUT. THE BUSINESS MEETING WILL CONVENE AROUND 8:00 PM (NOMINATIONS FOR OFFICERS, TREASURER'S REPORT, PRESENTATION OF THE FINAL VERSION OF THE CONSTITUTION), FOLLOWED BY THE ABBOT AWARD CEREMONY, PRESENTATION OF THE KNOWN TORREYA PARK CHECKLIST TO THE CHIEF BIOLOGIST OF THE FLORIDA DNR, JIM STEVENSON, AND SLIDE PRESENTATIONS. WE WILL SET UP SEVERAL LIGHT-COLLECTING STATIONS AROUND THE PARK FOR NIGHT COLLECTING ACTIVITIES, AND BY THE TIME THE MEETING TERMINATES, THE SHEETS SHOULD BE WELL-COVERED WITH PROSPECTS. SUNDAY MORNING WE WILL WALK SOME OF THE NATURE TRAILS AT THE PARK, OR PERHAPS SCHEDULE ANOTHER TRIP, DEPENDING ON PARTICIPANT INTEREST. INFO PACKETS, MAPS, AND FULL ITINERARY CAN BE OBTAINED BY CONTACTING DAVE BAGGETT. CAMPING IS RECOMMENDED, BUT OTHER ACCOMODATIONS WILL BE AVAILABLE AND POINTED OUT IN THE PACKET. HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE - DON'T MISS OUT!

LIFE HISTORY NOTE : Incisalia henrici margaretae dos Passos

For several years, members Steve Roman and Rick Gilmore have successfully been able to locate larvae of this choice Elfin on Ilex cassine, the major Florida host plant, by beating branches of this holly over a well-positioned collecting sheet on the ground below. (Steve appears to be responsible for discovery of Dahoon Holly, I. cassine, as the host at the Deland, Florida TL, and they have also reported larvae of Parrhasius m-album and Dolba hyloeus on this plant -Ed.) The process generally involves a lot of effort, a two-person task at best to position the sheet, bend over the branches, and beat the limbs in the often-wet terrain present. Two seasons ago, in late April, they were at it again, and by accident discovered that it was unnecessary to beat the branches to obtain mature larvae to rear. While bending branches over a sheet, Gilmore accidentally found a small congregation of larvae on a small tree trunk he had bent over, which was quickly pointed out to his partner, Steve. Together, they began to visually inspect trunks and branches, and were delighted to find that the larvae were in small groups scattered along the trunks or at branch forks on virtually every tree they looked at in the area, often, but not always, located amid lichen patches on the trees. Most trees had 25 or more easily-observable larvae present, in groups of about 3-10 individuals. All larvae found appeared to be last instar, but were not yet in the pre-pupal state (turning pinkish), and when brought back were found to still feed for several days before pupating. In all, several hundred larvae were collected in a short time, which far exceeded past results by beating, which normally produced more earlier instars than late instars by their past experience. The discovery was made in late afternoon, and there was no apparent sign of ant-tending activity, and later searches failed to produce any pupae. This observation is very interesting, as the larvae feed mainly on the flower buds and new leaf shoots of the hollies, and no immediate explanation for the phenomenon is known. Steve has provided several photos for our benefit -- anyone have any explanations for the strange behavior ?



We welcome your comments. The only explanation I can think of is that the larvae may be using the congregating behavior as a defensive ploy against other predacious insects or lizards, the old "strength-in-numbers" axiom, whereby an opportunistic predator would eat its fill, but why would this be an advantage to remaining well-dispersed over an entire tree ?

NOTICES, RESEARCH REQUESTS, ETC. :

GROUP MEETING INFORMATION : In order to help plan arrangements for the cookout and field trips, PLEASE notify Dave Baggett, 14406 N. 22nd. St. #169, Lutz, FL 33549 (Work phone AC 813 974 2237, Home phone AC 813 977 5433) of your plans to attend the annual meeting. To insure that you don't find yourself LOST IN THE BOONIES, you'll find it to your advantage to request the information packet with meeting specifics and details. Friends and family are welcome as well, but do let us know ahead of time. Additional details will be made available in the September newsletter, but won't allow for much advance planning time. THANKS!

DR. JOHN HOLOYDA: 2819 N. Marmora St., Chicago, IL 60634 : I may have to scrap my Sesiidae free-pheromone program due to lack of forwarded specimens and response from those receiving materials in the past. If you've had any luck with the pheromones, PLEASE WRITE or CALL COLLECT (evenings, AC 312 237 0543). Chances are that I won't want much, but I do badly need information on the results.

DR. MARYCAROL ROSSITER : Dept. of Zoology, University of Texas, Austin, TX 78712, is requesting livestock of the common N.A. Arctiid moth, Hyphantria cunea, from localities throughout the SE and elsewhere for a comprehensive ecosystematic study. Ova can be obtained by placing gravid females in a paper bag; full collecting data and the parent should accompany each batch of ova. Reimbursement for mailing expenses, etc. will be made. She 'd also like info on local host plants.

***** CURRENT ZONE REPORTS *****

ZONE I : TEXAS. Coordinators, Ed Knudson, 804 Woodstock, Bellaire, 77401, and Mike Rickard, 6550 Hillcroft #201, 77081.

Knudson, reporting for himself and Rickard, found good spring butterfly collecting in the Franklin Mts. near El Paso during late March, including a new Texas state record in Pontia sisymbrii, confirmed by Roy Kendall. Other Pierids included Anthocharis sara and Euchloe hylantis (both common). He noted that Anthocharis pima is known from the area from a single specimen taken several years ago by Greg Forbes, but speculated that it probably flies earlier than the others. In Big Bend on March 27-28th, they found two Lycaenids of note : Incisalia henrici solatus and Erora quaderna, the latter generally quite rare. In the Davis Mts. on the 29th., virtually nothing was on the wing except for the Hesperiid, Stinga morrisoni. During April, Mike checked out the only recently known locality for the Megathymid, Stallingsia maculosus, but found no adults and little evidence of their presence; this is one of few Texas butterflies that may be considered potentially endangered. Moths of interest taken this spring included the following from Big Bend Nat. Park on March 27-28th.: Nemoria subsequens, Hydmenodria mediodentata, Ersephila indistincta, E. grandipennis, Catoclothis frondaria, Chloraspilates minima, and Chesiododes bicolor (Geometridae); Ozamia multistriatella (Pyralidae); and Cosmopterix montisella (Cosmopterigidae). At Conroe, Montgomery Co. on April 10th., he took Cutina distincta, Zale curema, and Zale confusa (Noctuidae); Nemoria elfa (Geom.); Eucosma cocana, and Choristoneura fractivittata (Tortricidae). On May 14th. at the Santa Ana Refuge, Hidalgo Co., choice moths included Eumorpha vitis and satellitica (Sphingidae); Acronicta lepitata, Arzama obliqua, Archanara oblonga, Tripudia limbata, T. balteata, Copibryophila angelica, Stibadium spumosum, and Melipotis nigrobasis (Noctuidae); Scordylia atalanta (Geometridae); Euprosterina lacipecta (Limaconid); Eucosma exclusiorana and E. rorana, Cydia membrana, C. luminosa, and C. largo (Tortricidae); and Givara theodori (Cossidae). He noted that butterflies at Santa Ana were scarce due to the hot, dry conditions. Knudson has prepared a fine article dealing with collecting in south Texas, which will be used in a future issue. (He and several others were quick to point out that I had overlooked one of the insect precautions in the "Collecting in South Florida" article in the last issue - how I managed to ignore FIRE ANTS I am not sure, but I did. Collectors anywhere in the Gulf States will be wise to pay heed to the ant mounds along highways and in fields.)

ZONE II : ALABAMA, LOUISIANA, MISSISSIPPI, and TENNESSEE. Coordinators : Vernon Brou, Rt. 1, Box 74, Edgard, LA 70049; Bryant Mather, 213 Mt. Salus Dr., Clinton, MS 39056; Charles Watson, 1339 Watauga St. Kingsport, TN 37660; John Hyatt, 439 Forest Hills Dr., Kingsport, TN 37663.

Brou commented on the lousy weather and rainy conditions, but persistent effort has helped him process 17,000 specimens in 1983 to date, including 900 Sphingids. He noted that numbers for many species were "down" by past standards, with many species apparently absent. Using a flight trap for the first time, he found it effective for skippers in particular, taking his first LA specimens of Euphyes dion and Atrytone arogos. New Louisiana Lepidoptera Survey Records include : Acronicta sinescripta, Parallelia consobrina, Leucania cinereicollis, Argyrostromis deleta, Quandara brauneata, and Catocala miranda (Noctuidae); Schizura badia (Notodontidae); Cleora projecta, Semiothisa cyda, Synchlora aerata, Glena cognitaria, Euchlaena marginaria, Lytrosis sinuosa, Stenaspilatodes antidiscaria, Episemasia morbosa, Metarrhantis angularia, and M. hypochraria (Geometridae); Ostrina penitalis, Desmia ploralis, Herpetogramma aeglealis, H. thesiusalis, Sitochroa dasconalis, Trischistognatha pyrenealis, and Neocataclysta magnificalis (Pyrallidae). Hyatt and Watson reported things as late in emergence; a trip in early June produced Poanes hobomok with Celastrina "neglecta major" still hanging on; they located a new colony of Celastrina ebenina by locating larvae. Brou also has a second list, which will be utilized in the next newsletter.

ZONE III : GEORGIA. Coordinators : Abner Towers, P.O. Box 127, Powder Springs, 30073; Scott N. Brown, P.O. Box 207, Homerville, 31634.

We're sad to report the resignation of Irving Finkelstein as a principal contributor to our zone report, but he has indicated a need for more time to devote to other projects. He has done an outstanding job for the group, and his efforts will no doubt be missed, but the others should be able to help fill in the gaps, and I'm confident that we'll still hear from Irving from time to time. All spring reports from Georgia have been negative, with an indication that the weather has had adverse effects on the leps there this spring. Riggerbach provided an optimistic note for summer collecting, mentioning he had photographed C. pegala in the Blue Ridge area, one of the species he has been trying to get on film for several seasons. He noted that it appears there will be a good summer wildflower bloom in the mountain region. Hermann Flaschka wrote to mention he had experienced some early success at rearing Callosamia securifera on Liquidambar styraciflua, after his stocks apparently refused to accept Magnolia virginiana as food. It will be interesting to see how the brood winds up. Hope to visit Irving in mid-August for a trip to Arabia Mt. to look for Megathymus harrisi and learn more about its habits.

ZONE IV : FLORIDA : Coordinators: Lee Adair, 810 Gascon Place, Temple Terrace 33617, and Steve Roman, 117 Masters Blvd., Winter Park 32792.

Spring collecting in north-central Florida has also been "off" drastically from normal standards, but there have been some exceptional reports. The spring 'streaks' seemed very late and down in numbers, and checks for Catocala indicate a poor year. Neal, collecting in the panhandle in early June, managed some good catches : Euristrymon ontario, Blackwater River St. Park, Santa Rosa Co. and Crestview, Okaloosa Co., both on June 1st., plus Satyrrium kingi, Blackwater River St. Park. These are new county records, and both species are regarded as rare in Florida. He also took S. liparops strigosum at Crestview, and commented that the hairstreaks were found mainly at flowers of Castanea. On June 2nd., he found Manduca jasmineearum at lights of a convenience store in Wakulla. Huge migrational swarms of Ascia monuste were reported along the Florida Atlantic coast and keys during May-June by a number of

members, including a sighting by Harry Darrow while fishing off the coast! Ada Ginsburg reported finding several of the recently-introduced Ctenuchid, Empyreuma affinis during March-April at Pompano Beach. Collecting at bait in the sand pine scrub near Blue Springs St. Park, Volusia Co., Dennis Profant collected seven species of Catocala moths on May 27th., including C. louiseae. At lights he recorded additional moths, including Schinia (Rhodophora) gaurae, Cicinnus melsheimeri, Eumorpha fasciatus, and Inga sparsiciliella. Dick Anderson, visiting the Keys in late June, found Chlorostrymon maesites, Electrostrymon angelia, and Eunica monima. John Watts reported a single sighting of a female Heraclides (Papilio) aristodemus ponceanus on North Key Largo in late May, the only report received for this rare butterfly thus far in '83. With the optimistic reports from last season, and the added benefit of ample winter-spring rain (we had perhaps TOO much, with numerous records set in March and April), it was hoped that this season would be a good one for ponceanus. Spingid collecting has been "up" compared with many other things, as Gilmore and Baggett both recorded Sphinx franckii and Eumorpha intermedia at Torreya in early June; a trip to Sanibel Island in June resulted in several Manduca brontes, Protambulyx strigilis, and Eumorpha vitis for Adair and Baggett.

ZONE V : VIRGINIA, NORTH & SOUTH CAROLINA. Coordinators, John Coffman, Rt. 1, Box 331, Timberville, VA 22853; Ron Gatrelle, 126 Wells Rd., Goose Creek, SC 29445; and Bob Cavanaugh, P.O. Box 489, Newport, NC 28570.

Cavanaugh reported that he had taken some of the Incisalia henrici which are heavily suffused with green scaling beneath in Carteret Co. in late March. Bob will be leaving NC as he has been re-assigned by the military to Orange Park, Florida. Bo Sullivan of Beaufort will take over his role as NC coordinator; his address is 200 Craven St., Beaufort, NC 28516. I had no reports from SC or VA for the spring - has it been THAT bad there ?

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