

Southern Lepidopterists' News



The official newsletter 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.

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Spring 1995

(April)

No. 1

1995 Annual Meeting Set For September

at

Mississippi Entomological Museum Mississippi State University, Starkville

Labor Day weekend (Sept. 1-4) has been selected as the best time to hold our Annual Meeting. This year's meeting schedule allows for Saturday and Monday to be travel days with the main meeting on Sunday. Both the location and timing of this conference affords the optimum opportunity for members at the far ends of our society's geographic area to attend.

Mississippi State is located in the beautiful town of Starkville in northeast Mississippi. If coming into Mississippi on I-55 take Hwy. 82 east at Winona. If coming on I-20, take Hwy. 45 north at Meridian.

The Conference schedule is tentatively as follows:

Saturday (2nd): 1:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.; registration, collection open for viewing

6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.; group dinner (paid in registration)

Sunday (3rd): 8:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.; late registration, collection open for viewing

9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.; morning session

12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.; lunch (paid in registration)

1:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.; afternoon session, conclusion of meeting

Individual butterfly collecting/watching opportunities exist on the way to and from the meeting. An organized trip will be provided on Monday. Some good motels will be available on Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights.

Dr. Richard L. Brown is making the local arrangements. He can provide for some limited camping on his property, but arrangements **must** be made in advance for this (his office number is 601-325-2085). There may also be some on-campus dorm space (though not likely). Availability, location, and cost of motels and a map will be provided to pre-registrants.

The pre-registration fee is **\$18** per individual. This includes dinner Saturday at a nice restaurant and lunch Sunday. After July 1st the fee is **\$25**, and **\$30** day of conference. So be sure and mail in your pre-registration as soon as possible. (*Your early registration is fully refundable through July 1st.*)

We are expecting this to be one of our largest meetings with a good representation of western members in addition to the eastern "regulars." You won't want to miss it!

(Find registration form on page 7 of this newsletter.)

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Survey of Mississippi Lepidoptera

by

Bryant Mather

213 Mount Salus Dr., Clinton MS 39056

Data on Mississippi lepidoptera have been accumulating for nearly a century. Mrs. Mather and I began our work in 1946. Data gathering by the Mississippi Entomological Museum at Mississippi State University accelerated markedly after the arrival there of Dr. Richard L. Brown. A data base is being developed that can serve as a basis for recognition and evaluation of changes in the fauna.

Butterflies

Weed (1894) listed 53 species from Oktibbeha County. Hutchins (1933) listed 73 species based mainly on material in the collection at Mississippi State. Frank Morton Jones of Wilmington, Delaware, collected on the Mississippi Gulf coast in 1910 and 1921; Harold I. O'Byrne collected there in 1946. Their work has not been published, however, Dr. Jones gave me copies of his lists and Mrs. Mather inventoried Mississippi specimens in the O'Byrne collection at the University of Missouri in Columbia.

When we published our results (Mather and Mather, 1958) we had records of 122 species, 45 of which were not included in either of the previous lists. We had taken specimens of 109 of the 122. Specimens of 10 species were taken in all 12 months. Of 10 species, only a single specimen was known. Of one species, *Phoebis philea* Johanssen, which Hutchins (1933) described as "common in southern sections," no Mississippi specimen was known -- this is still the case. At that time we concluded that no species was represented in Mississippi by more than one subspecies. We have subsequently concluded that there are four such cases: *Papilio glaucus glaucus* and *P. g. maynardi*; *P. troilus troilus* and *P. t. ilioneus*; *Basilarchia archippus floridensis* and *B. a. watsoni*; and *Cercyonis pegala pegala* [= *abbotti*] and *C. p. alope*.

Also, in 1958 we noted that no species or subspecies had been described from a Mississippi type locality. This, too, is no longer true. Shuey (1989) described *Euphyes bayensis* from Bay St Louis, Hancock County.

Three supplements to the 1958 report were published (Mather and Mather, 1959, 1976, 1985). In 1959 we added two: *Satyrium kingi* and *Nastra neamathla*, and deleted two: *Fixsenia favonius* and *Erynnis baptisiae*. In 1976 we added 22, bringing the total to 144. In 1985 we added 6, bringing the total to 150. What was, in effect, supplement # 4 (Mather and Dingus, 1992) included 149 names: *Asterocampa alicia* and *A. flora* were deleted and *E. bayensis* added. The next revision (in press) will include 150 names as *Poanes acroni howardi* is being added based on a specimen taken 27-28 Sept. 1992 at Bay St Louis by Jeff Slotten.

Accounts of 18 individual species have been published: *Euphyes dukesi* (Mather, 1963); *Amblyscirtes carolina* and *A. reversa* (Mather, 1975); *Eurytides marcellus* (Mather, 1970); *Papilio glaucus* (Mather, 1954); *Ascia monuste phileta* (Mather, 1953); *Paramidea midea midea* (Mather, 1952); *Eurema dira* (Mather, 1956); *Hyllolycaena hyllus* (Mather, 1954a, 1984, 1992b); *Euptoieta claudia* (Mather, 1974); *Speyeria cybele* (Mather, 1966); *Anthracassa texana seminole* (Mather, 1990); *Vanessa cardui* (Mather, 1971); *Junonia coenia* (Mather, 1967); *Neonympha areolata* (Mather, 1965); *Cercyonis pegala abbotti* (Mather, 1966a); *Danaus plexippus* (Mather, 1955a); and *D. gilippus* (Mather, 1955a).

Moths

As is usually the case, in Mississippi there are perhaps ten times as many species of moths as there are of butterflies but there is only one tenth as much literature. As of September, 1994, I have shipped 151,811

specimens of moths to experts for study and I therefore have a lot of records. I have a manuscript on Mississippi Sphingidae that gets revised every year or two. I reported (Mather, 1992a) the occurrence of *Neococytius clventius* in Mississippi, which brought to 46 the number of species of Sphingidae recorded here. In a recent comparison of my data with those of Miss. Ent. Museum, I found I had Mississippi records of 587 species of noctuids and they had 27 records I didn't, for a total of 614 noctuids.

Accounts of species and groups have been published: *Catocala* (Wilkinson, 1971); *Sphingidae* (Taylor and Taylor, 1965); *Hileithia decostalis* (Mather and Munroe, 1992); *Metaxaglaea*, *Dasychira atrivenosa*, and *Xestia bollii* (Mather, 1989); *Episimus tyrius* and *Bondia crescentella* (Mather, 1984a); Megalopygidae and Limacodidae (Mather, 1992); Psychidae (Mather, 1991a); and Sessidae (Mather, 1991).

Five new species and one new subspecies have been described from type localities in Mississippi: *Chimoptesis matheri* (Powell, 1964); *Coptodisca matheri* (LaFontaine, 1964); *Dasychira matheri* (Ferguson, 1978); *Eupithecia matheri* and *E. vicksburgi* (Rindge, 1985); and *Melanolophia canadarea choctawæ* (Rindge, 1969).

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Virginia Gets New State Coordinator

Mr. Harry Pavulaan, of Herndon, Virginia, has agreed to take the position of Virginia State Coordinator. Harry is a quality addition to our board. He replaces Tom Allen, of West Virginia, who did a superb job filling in as Virginia Coordinator until a Virginia resident could be installed. Thank you very much, Tom! Harry is a long time collector/researcher of Lepidoptera. He may be best known for his research on the North American *Celastrina* complex. His address is on the front of this issue.

SEARCH Update

We have initiated a **Southern Species Distribution Atlas** (SSDA) covering all counties in our Southern area. Mr. Harry Pavulaan is heading up this very important aspect of the SEARCH Project. Harry has taken over the Eastern Atlas from Paul Opler, so SSDA is a natural data companion.

Harry asks that everyone pass on their new county-species records to him. This important data will be available, through the SEARCH Project, to all governmental, academic, and private researchers. Harry will have a detailed article on **SSDA** in our next (July) issue.

We still are in need of volunteers to fill oversight positions on the SEARCH board. We especially need one USFWS and two State DNR, biologists. If interested, contact the Southern Lepidopterists' chairman, Ron Gatrell (address on cover). The Project is developing very slowly; however, its potential is too great to allow it to not be achieved.

A New State Record for *Epidromia fergusonii* Solis

by

Vernon A. Brou Jr.

74320 Jack Loyd Road, Abita Springs, LA 70420

Solis (1986) described *Epidromia fergusonii* from specimens collected in Florida. This species had previously been recorded in the United States only from Florida, and misidentified as *Epidromia delinguens* (Walker) by Holland (1903) and Kimball (1965). Holland reported the species occurs in southern Florida. Kimball reported the species as common throughout much of the Florida peninsula throughout the year.

A single specimen was collected on August 19, 1993 in St. Tammany Parish, Louisiana, 4.2 mi. NE Abita Springs, sec. 24, T6, SR12E, and represents a **new state record**. This specimen was gleaned from five light trap samples taken that night containing more than 10,000 very similar looking *Anticarsia gemmatilis*. No other specimens have been found among the more than 20,000 nightly light trap samples from this same location.

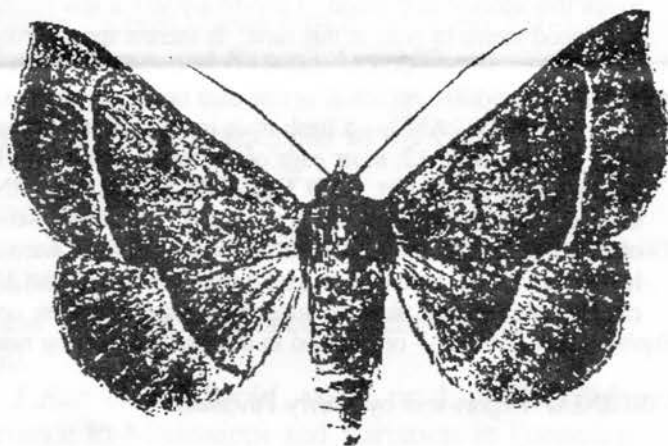


Fig. 1 *Epidromia fergusonii* ♀

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STATE FIELD REPORTS

Individual state reports are to be sent to the coordinator of the state to which the information pertains. The coordinator's job is to validate the information (insure proper identification etc.) and assimilate it into his report which is published in this section of each issue. Sight records for skippers and moths are generally not accepted since misidentification is too easy. Sight records for most of the larger well known species of moths and butterflies are acceptable if from an experienced observer. REPORTS ARE TO BE SUBMITTED VIA THE PROPER STATE COORDINATOR. The name and address of each state coordinator is on the cover of each issue. Reports from states without a coordinator may be sent directly to the Editor.

NORTH CAROLINA: Steve Hall submitted the following by Harry LeGrand.

Report highlights noteworthy sightings made from September through November 1994. The report is in taxonomic order.

Lycaena phlaeas: HENDERSON -- One nectaring on *Verbesina* at the edge of a pasture at 4000 feet, on September 13.

Enodia anthedon: RUTHERFORD -- at least four along a dirt road through steep hardwood forest on September 14. HENDERSON -- at least six at three sites in the Hickorynut Gorge area, mainly along dirt roads in forests, on September 14.

Urbanus proteus: Much more common than usual in eastern NC this fall, including an 15 seen as late as Nov 20 at NEW HANOVER.

Copaeodes minima: MOORE -- one worn individual nectaring on *Heterotheca mariana* along a roadside, on October 9.

Hesperia leonardus: WAKE -- one fresh individual nectaring on *Liatris graminifolia* in a powerline clearing on October 2; this is a slight eastward range extension. My previous NC records, for farther west in the Piedmont, are for October 7, 21, and 22; thus, the single brood apparently does not even emerge in the eastern Piedmont of NC until the end of September or the first of Oct.

Hesperia attalus slossonae: SCOTLAND -- four on September 5, in open longleaf pine woods nectaring on *Vernonia angustifolia* and *Elephantopus nudatus*. I have now found the species in moderate numbers in the NC Sandhills, from late May to mid-June, and from mid-August into early September. The species favors somewhat more open areas, even weedy fields with much *Andropogon*, than does *H. meskei*, though I have found both in the same place (at different times of the year).

Hesperia meskei: SCOTLAND -- about 15 seen at numerous sites in Sandhills Game Land, in typical open longleaf pine woods, on October 9; nectaring on *Carphephorus bellidifolius* and *Liatris graminifolia*. MOORE -- four seen on October 9 at several sites, in open longleaf pine woods, nectaring on the above species. Despite much searching of these same areas in May and June, I have yet to see this species' first brood. I previously saw a few *meskei* in adjacent RICHMOND on October 10, 1992. Thus, the second, or fall, brood seems to peak at this time. Is there a spring brood in NC?

Polites peckius: HENDERSON -- five in wet meadow, on *Vernonia noveboracensis*, Sept 13-14. BUNCOMBE -- one seen Sept 14.

Problemia byssus: BRUNSWICK -- one seen nectaring on *Liatris* sp. in a savanna on September 10.

Poanes yehl: SCOTLAND -- a fresh male in a frequently burned sandhills on Sept. 5. WAKE -- a female nectaring on *Verbena* in a rural yard, on Sept. 12; inner edge of the range, and rare in Piedmont. SCOTLAND, ROBESON -- three nectaring on *Carphephorus*, in sandy uplands, on Oct. 8. SCOTLAND, MOORE, HARNETT -- at least 12 in sandy uplands on Oct. 9, nectaring on *Carphephorus* and *Liatris*. All of these Oct. individuals were somewhat worn. Most of these Oct. individuals were seen one hundred or more yards from wooded wetlands with cane; most were in typical sandhills habitats (open longleaf pine stands with a diverse herbaceous flora), nectaring on pink/lavender flowers with *Hesperia meskei*, *Lerema accius*, *Hylephila phyleus*, and other skippers. If cane is truly the host plant, as suggested in some sources, one would not suspect this plant, based on these observations!

Euphyes dion: WAKE -- one or two in a powerline clearing near a lake on Sept. 4; NEW HANOVER -- two on September 11.

VIRGINIA: Report sent by Harry Pavulaan.

Basilarchia arthemis astyanax: FAIRFAX CO.: April 18, at Great Falls National Park, Great Falls, VA. A remarkably early sighting of this butterfly at this latitude, larva probably being coaxed from hibernation by early March heat wave.

Boloria bellona: FAIRFAX CO.: April 21, Herndon, VA. Generally rare in this area. Adult was found in a residential area, imbibing moisture on wet sand in garden. April 26, Great Falls village. Several adults observed in small colony on abandoned farm.

Calycopis cecrops: FAIRFAX CO.: May 8, Great Falls, VA. A somewhat early record for this area.

FLORIDA: Report by Jeff Slotten

Feb. 26, *Eurythra phasma* one male and one female emerged from female collected at UV light by Jeff Slotten and John Peacock in Liberty Co., May 28, 1994. Tom Neal and Jeff Slotten are studying the life history of this moth and hope to report their findings in an upcoming journal.

Feb. 26-Mar. 5, 1995, Jeff Slotten and John Filiatrault observed *Psychomorpha euryrhoda* and *Alypia wittfeldii* 10 to 30 feet high visiting *Salix* blossoms along streams in various localities around Gainesville, Alachua Co. Also present were *Calycopis cecrops*, *Hermeuptychia sosybia*, *Papilio palamedes*, *P. glaucus*, and one *E. marcellus* along with many bees and wasps.

Feb. 26-Mar 5, John Kutis and Slotten collected *Zale perculata* in Baker Co. at blacklight. John Kutis has been studying the life history of this moth.

1995 Annual Meeting set for September

Mississippi Entomological Museum

Call For Papers and Registration

This year, rather than having a specific theme, we solicit papers on any aspect of butterflies and moths in general. However, we are especially interested in topics featuring moths. Seven hours have been dedicated for formal papers Sunday. We have allotted 30 minutes for each speaker, for a total of 14 speakers (naturally, two or three may only need 15-20 minutes and one or two, 45)

If you desire to bring a paper, just fill in the abstract at the bottom of this page. Abstracts need to be received by the editor as soon as possible for programming and advertizing purposes

17th ANNUAL MEETING OF *The Southern Lepidopterists' Society*

Name: _____

Pre-registration **\$18** per person.

Address: _____

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Total Enclosed: _____

*Should be received no later than June 30.
Registration \$25.00 after June 30..
Registration \$30.00 at the door.*

Make check payable to: Jeff Slotten

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Presentation Request

Cut on dotted line and send to:

Ron Gatrell
Southern Lepidopterists' Society
126 Wells Road
Goose Creek, SC 29445

I would like to address the group about the following:

Topic title: _____

Abstract: _____

Materials, visual aids, etc. requested: _____ Time needed: _____

Membership Policy Statement

"The Southern Lepidopterists' Society is first centrist and holistic. We seek to be unifying and not divisive. Our membership is open to anyone interested in any activity or aspect related to butterflies and moths. This includes (but is not limited to) those interested in butterfly/moth watching, photographing, gardening, rearing, collecting, and exchanging. It seeks to further the efforts of both amateurs and professionals involved in general research and those working for species/habitat conservation at both governmental and civilian levels. All members should reflect this organizational philosophy personally."

1995 DUES NOTICE

All members are reminded that as of January 1, 1995 their dues lapsed and need to be renewed. If you have not yet paid your 1995 dues, this will be your final reminder. Otherwise we will assume you wish to be dropped from our mailing list. Annual dues are **\$12** per member. Don't delay, pay your dues today!
Note: The Southern Lepidopterists' does not have tax exempt status. Any donations to the society are not tax deductible.

Make checks payable to: Southern Lepidopterists' Society.

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5421 NW 69th Lane
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SPECIAL INTERESTS _____

The Southern Lepidopterists' News is published four times annually. Membership dues are **\$12.00** annually. A scientific Bulletin is published occasionally. The organization is open to anyone with an interest in any aspect or activity relating to southern United States Lepidoptera, except those interested in forbidding the activities of others. Information about the Society may be obtained from, and dues may be sent to: Jeff Slotten secretary-treasurer, 5421 NW 69th Lane, Gainesville, FL 32653

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