

anism. It is possible, too, that the unusually cool and humid summer has in some way influenced the appearance of this behavior.

It seems unlikely that such an activity would be confined to a single area. Yet I know of only one other published account of it: that of GUPPY (*Lepid. News* 6: 43; 1952), who observed (presumably near Wellington, B. C.) an individual of the small holarctic geometer, *Venusia cambrica* Curt., engaged in what his clear description shows to be the same activity as that here under discussion. The specimen was perched head down inside a pail partly filled with water. On the occasion of the recent Congress of Entomology at Montreal I discussed the activity with a number of veteran moth collectors, of both Europe and North America, who surprisingly declared it to be quite new to them. A few observations on butterflies so engaged have been made (but so far as I know not published). Professor W. T. M. FORBES recalled having seen a small butterfly in South America behaving similarly; and my colleague, Dr. ARTHUR TWOMEY, Curator of Birds at the museum, has several times seen various *Papilio* performing the same activity, in at least one instance the liquid being ejected forcibly. In each case, however, only single individuals or at most a very few were involved, rather than the mass assembly seen in *Dyspteris* and *Drepana*.

Clearly we need to know much more about this unusual phenomenon. Is it world-wide, or confined to certain regions only? Is it limited to certain groups, and if so, to which ones (and what species)? Is it usual, or is it only manifested during unusual climatic conditions?

Section of Insects and Spiders, Carnegie Museum, Pittsburgh 13, Penna., U.S.A.

#### ON DESCRIBING DISTRIBUTIONS

In obtaining data in connection with the list of Florida Lepidoptera I frequently encountered in the literature the ambiguous definition of the range of certain species. An example of this is "Maine to Florida." When there are other, definite Florida records, everything is serene, but where it has not been possible to dig out any actual record for the species in Florida, the question arises, just what did the author mean? Did he know of a Florida record, or did he mean that the species was taken in Georgia, and so could be recorded as far south as the Florida boundary? In several instances this has proved to be the case. From living authors it has been possible to find out the meaning, but with those who are no longer with us, we have to use our own judgment. It is my suggestion, therefore, that in future, authors be specific when giving the range of a species and always state "Maine to Florida, inclusive," or "New York to Illinois, inclusive." Naturally there may be gaps in between whence there are no records, just as the statement "General throughout the state" does not mean that there is a record from every county, but it does mean that there are records from enough counties in all parts of the state to make the assumption. LUCIEN HARRIS tells me he encountered the same problem in working on his "Butterflies of Georgia."

CHARLES P. KIMBALL, 7340 Point of Rocks Rd., Sarasota, Fla., U. S. A.