

MOLD-FREE RELAXING BOTTLES FOR LEPIDOPTERA

Some lepidopterists store many or all of their captures in paper until winter, when they have more time to spread them. One drawback to that is that the papers become moldy after a few days in a tin or jar of wet sand, blotting paper or cellular sponge, in spite of carbolic acid in the water. Others prefer to put their specimens straight into relaxing containers; this may mean that if one night's or day's captures are not all spread quickly there will be captures of several dates together. As it is not at all times possible to set all of a "bag" without some delay, the following method for relaxing may be found to be useful, separate catches being put into separate containers. A mixture of about a tablespoon of plaster and a small amount of crystalline potassium cyanide is prepared as a paste and placed on the inside wall of an 8 or 10 ounce jar, which is left lying on its side until the plaster has set. A wad of dampened cotton is placed in the bottom of the jar, but not so wet as to soak the cotton. The insects do not come in contact with the cyanide-plaster, and the cyanide prevents the growth of molds. A strip of paper can be used as an index of the moisture in the atmosphere in the jar. This kind of jar is suitable also for papered Lepidoptera.

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AN UNUSUAL METHOD OF COLLECTING A RARE *YUCCA* SKIPPER
(MEGATHYMIIDÆ)

On returning from a collecting trip to southern Florida, Mr ALLEN GRAY, Mr. R. C. RAY, and I stopped at Stone Mountain, Georgia, to look for *Megathymus harrisi* H. Freeman. We got in touch with Mr. LUCIEN HARRIS, JR., for whom this Giant Skipper is named. Mr. HARRIS very kindly took time off from his business to guide us to some excellent collecting.

We expected to have to flush the giant skippers out of the *Yucca* and only saw a couple on the wing. We were unable to capture any until Mr. GRAY walked near the base of a large pine and flushed a very fresh female off the bare trunk and captured it. We moved on and about a hundred feet away we flushed a worn male off another bare tree trunk. It flew to another tree trunk and alighted there, and I popped my net over it. From then on we walked around every tree in that area, flushing no less than fifteen other giant skippers in this way, from an area of about three acres.

We noticed that almost all were on the shady side of the tree, and all were on very bare areas of the trees from two to six feet above the ground. Some we managed to spot before they flew. They were resting with their heads pointing upwards, wings closed tightly, and hardly noticeable against the bark of the trees.

The day was hot and sunny, and it was after two o'clock when we discovered where the Giant Skippers were resting. They seemed very nervous and usually flew a long distance before settling again. Because of this, it was almost impossible to find them again if one missed capturing them on the first try — which we did in most cases.

Mr. HARRIS had to leave us before we discovered where the skippers were resting. At the end of the day we returned to his home to compare notes and to view his excellent collection and fine series of *Megathymus* specimens. We mentioned the way we found the Giant Skippers. He was surprised and suggested we write a note on this experience.

We would like to hear from other other collectors and their experiences in collecting various species of *Megathymus*.

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