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ACER NEGUNDO (BOXELDER) AS A FOOD PLANT FOR
SYNANTHEDON ACERRUBRI (SESIIDAE)

On 30 June 1983 quite by accident I discovered a *Synanthedon acerrubri* (Engelhardt) ovipositing on a somewhat distressed *Acer negundo* (boxelder) (Aceraceae) in my yard in Liberty, Missouri. A total of 18 *acerrubri* were caught through the 16th of July 1983. At least one specimen was caught on all of the intervening days except the 8th and 15th, two days on which I did not collect at all. Eight females and ten males were caught. Prior to this only seven males had been collected in Missouri, to the best of my knowledge. All of my specimens were caught on one of three *A. negundo* growing in my yard. They favored the most distressed tree. Other trees in the yard and neighborhood were checked for visitation. This included other members of the maple family, plus cherry, pear, elm, hackberry and cottonwood.

Initially, I tried to catch the specimens with a net on which I had pinned male sex attractant. No males seemed attracted to the bait at that time or when I subsequently pinned the attractant to my shirt during my collecting. Almost all of the specimens were caught with a small killing jar, the moths being taken directly off the trees.

Most were seen ovipositing or resting no more than a foot from the ground on the bark of the host tree. Only three were seen or caught at a height above 4 ft. All except one specimen were caught between 1430 and 1900 h. They appeared most commonly around 1730 h. None was seen mating. A number of pupal cases were found projecting from the trunk of the most distressed looking *A. negundo* and appeared similar to that pictured in Holland (1903, *The moth book*, Doubleday, Page & Co.) for *Synanthedon acerni* (Clemens). It would seem logical to assume that these were pupal cases of the *S. acerrubri*, but none was seen emerging.

This may not be the normal time of emergence since it was a very late year for many Lepidoptera species in Missouri. J. Richard Heitzman (pers. comm.), who collected the other recorded specimens in Missouri of which I am aware, captured all of them in his yard in Independence. He caught five male *acerrubri* nectaring at *Asclepias syrica* (purple milkweed, Asclepiaceae) between the 10th and 29th of June over a number of years, and two male specimens were collected while responding to a specific sex attractant at approximately 1145 h, 11 July 1982 and 9 July 1983. These latter dates correspond nicely with the dates that I collected the 18 specimens.

In 1984 a total of 63 *acerrubri* were caught at the two most distressed boxelder in my yard. All were caught between 1600 and 2020 h from 9 June to 13 July. Three males came to an attractant at a different location in the yard. They were caught while resting on leaves at this location (one at 1600 h on 2 July and two at 1820 h on 9 July). A total of 65 *acerrubri* (31 males and 34 females) were caught. One specimen was sighted but not caught on 24 July. Once again pupal cases (16) were seen projecting from the trunks of the *A. negundo*.

S. acerrubri occurs in the eastern United States and is known to feed on *Acer rubrum* (red maple) and *A. saccharum* (sugar maple), according to Engelhardt (1946, *The North American clear-wing moths of the Family Aegeriidae*, U.S. Nat. Mus. Bull. 190). *A. negundo* is apparently an unrecorded food plant for *acerrubri*. Since the growth of

boxelder is widespread, the moth may be more common than previously thought but has gone undetected.

I am grateful to J. Richard Heitzman for his aid in identifying and determining the sex of the specimens and for being so generous with his time and knowledge. My son, James Adams, deserves my thanks for reviewing this manuscript.

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ON THE ORIGIN OF SNOOT BUTTERFLIES
(*LIBYTHEANA BACHMANII LARVATA*, LIBYTHEIDAE)
IN A 1978 MIGRATION IN SOUTHERN TEXAS

Southern Texas periodically is the scene of migrations by the snout butterfly, *Libytheana bachmanii larvata* (Strecker). The last massive migration in Texas occurred during summer 1971 (Helfert, 1972, *Entomol. News* 83:49-52; Neck, 1983, *J. Lepid. Soc.* 37:121-128). More frequent than these "cloud-type" migrations are the smaller-scale migrations which rarely extend beyond the northeastern boundary of the South Texas Plains (line from San Antonio to the Gulf Coast north of Corpus Christi). A series of these more restricted migrations was observed during four traverses of the area in June, July and September of 1978. Comments from two observers will be integrated into personal observations. The primary thrust of the investigation of this migration was to determine the geographical origin of the migrating butterflies. A secondary thrust was to document a relationship between density of butterfly flights and local habitat.

28 June 1978. On the Coastal Plain of Texas, a low-density migration was observed from north of Refugio, Refugio Co., to south of Sinton, San Patricio Co. (Fig. 1). Density of migratory snout butterflies varied with vegetation and urban/rural settings (Table 1). Snout butterflies were not very common over recently-harvested sorghum fields, were most abundant in areas of invaded brush patches (dominated by mesquite, *Prosopis glandulosa*), and were less common but not absent from urban areas, e.g. Woodsboro (a small farming community center). Note should be made that some brush plots exhibited no flying butterflies.

Most snout butterflies were flying an approximate west-to-east flight path. Azimuth directions of compass heading of butterflies at four localities were as follows: 1) Refugio, 110°; 2) Sinton, 115°; 3) IH37/US 77 bridge over Nueces River, 85°; and 4) 5 km south of Kingsville, 80°. These flight lines were extended inland in an attempt to discover source regions of these butterflies. While no information is available on the distance flown by these butterflies, flight lines (Fig. 1) indicate a broad source area for the observed snout butterflies. Several butterflies were observed moving westward temporarily as a result of vehicle-caused air turbulence. Several butterflies were observed being forced along the axis of the highways when two semi-trailer trucks approached and passed each other. The only other butterfly species associated with the migrating snouts were occasional specimens of the queen, *Danaus gilippus strigosus* (Bates), which totaled less than five percent of the total butterfly count.

2 July. Traveling northward from Brownsville, Cameron Co., the first snout butterflies were encountered just north of Kingsville. Butterflies were traveling eastward (exact azimuths not measured) and were common to Robstown and Mathis. Snout butterflies