

FIELD AND TECHNIQUE NOTES

TRAP NETS FOR RHOPALOCERA

The use of trap nets seems to be a method of collecting butterflies peculiar to Africa, and is, in fact, the only way in which certain species can be obtained in any numbers.

The nets are usually some two feet in diameter and about three feet in length, and are kept expanded by rings of wire. The top end of the net is closed by a flat piece of net, not bunched up to a point, and is provided with a loop of chord to attach it to a branch of a shrub or other support. The bottom end is open and fitted with strings to anchor it.

The method of employment is to suspend the net in a sunny spot—a sun-lit path through a shady forest is ideal—so that the mouth of the net is a couple of inches above the ground level. The anchor strings are attached to stones, etc. to keep the net from swaying with the wind, and the bait is placed on a large leaf in the centre. The nets are simply suspended and left, being visited from time to time to take out any wanted specimens. Butterflies will crawl under the edge of the net to get at the bait, but do not seem to crawl out again, any attempts at escape being made by flying upwards.

The bait used depends on the species sought for, and may consist of fermenting fruit—bananas, pineapples, etc.—or the dung of some carnivorous animal. Leopard and lion dung are ideal, so is civet cat, and the dung may be mixed with a little decomposing liver. Bad fish is also attractive to some species. Much seems to depend on the state of fermentation or decomposition, the bait has to be at just the right point to be attractive. It will be found that only male butterflies are attracted to dung and carrion, fermenting fruit attracts both sexes. In Africa the Nymphalidæ and Acraeidæ are the two families most attracted, and trap nets are probably the only way by which reasonable series of many species of Charaxinæ and Nymphalinæ can be obtained; the former through their swift flight, and the latter through their skulking habits, are very difficult to catch in the ordinary way with a net.

The same type of net can be used as an "assembling" trap for Heterocera, the bait being replaced by a virgin female in a muslin covered box. In countries where "sugar" is attractive (it does not seem to be so in Africa), these nets could also be used with "sugar" as bait, but I would suggest putting it into a muslin covered jar sufficiently deep to prevent the moths attracted reaching it with their proboscides.

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A NEW NORTH AMERICAN RECORD AND A SECOND RARITY

In re-checking some undetermined genitalic slides, one was found which is undoubtedly *Endothenia gentianana* Hübner, the type species of the genus and apparently the first to be taken in North America. It was taken in Wayne County, Michigan, Sept. 11, 1949.

Two other slides, one from Wayne County, June 1, 1951, and Livingston County, May 5, 1951, first thought to be an unknown species of *Eucbisma* were recognised as *Grapholitha libertana* Heinrich, which Mr. HEINRICH described from two specimens from British Columbia which KEARFOTT had erroneously included with material of another species.

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