FIELD AND TECHNIQUE NOTES

SOME HOST PLANT RECORDS DERIVED FROM REARING EXPERIMENTS

In attempts to induce *Strymon melinus* Hbn. to oviposit in captivity I tried all the host plants (*Rubus, Cratægus, Malvus,* and *Humulus*) given in JONES' Check List of B.C. Macrolepidoptera, except *Humulus* which is not obtainable here. A single egg was laid on fruit of raspberry, which was lost due to the berry rotting before it hatched.

I finally decided to watch unconfined butterflies for clues. I would have saved much trouble by trying this sooner. After a few minutes' watching I had observed two females of *S. melinus* ovipositing in the flowers of small wild clovers. The ova were pushed well into the corollas of the flowers. In the keys of HENRY'S Flora of B.C. the plants run to *Trifolium oliganthum* Steud. and *T. tridentatum* Lindl. When captive *S. melinus* females were tried with these plants they oviposited freely.

The larvæ are inveterate cannibals, so I did not rear very many. When not eating their companions, they ate only the flowers or seed pods of the clover, never the leaves.

Mitoura nelsoni Edw. is never a common butterfly here, and I always hesitate to use good specimens in the breeding cages. One damaged, but seemingly fairly fresh, female taken at Wellington, I tried on every conifer locally obtainable, but without success. Later I brought a worn female from Cameron Lake. Having tried this one for a time with *Pinus* and *Picea* without success, I put in a twig of *Thuja plicata* Donn. On this the butterfly soon deposited three ova. Two of these hatched. One larva soon disappeared; I suspect cannibalism again. The remaining caterpillar I successfully brought to pupation on a diet of *T. plicata.*

From frequent watching of the insect, I had long been convinced in my own mind, that in this locality *Lycænopsis pseudargiolus echo* Edw. feeds chiefly on *Spiræa discolor* Pursh. I first put the theory to test in 1952. The butterflies oviposited on *S. discolor* flowers, but the young larvæ were lost due to the flowers dying and falling off. Cut *Spiræa* flowers are difficult to keep fresh. The following year I achieved success by carefully moving the ova onto fresh flowers. As is frequently the case with Lycænidæ, the larvæ feed on the flowers mainly, but with this species I did not notice any cannibalism.

As often happens with Arctiidæ, *Diacrisia pteridis rubra* Neum. oviposited without waiting to be supplied with the correct host plant. I tried *Pteris aquilina* L. and *Plantago lanceolata* L. Some of the small larvæ commenced feeding on the ferns, but in a few days all had transferred themselves to the plantain leaves. On this diet I reared them with very little mortality.

Newly hatched larvæ of *Lacinipolia comis* Grt. were supplied with leaves of cultivated clover, and commenced at once to feed on these. Since this is a common species, and I was at the moment concerned with rarer things, I pushed fresh clover leaves on top of the old, and hoped the larvæ would transfer themselves. On examining them a few days later, I found them still feeding happily on the old leaves, which were now nearly black. I would likely have taken the trouble to move them, if I had not noticed in JONES' List, under *Lacinipola pensilis* Grt. "Larva feeds on dead leaves, according to Dyar". Species of the same genus might have similar habits, so I left the *L. comis* larvæ alone. They thrived all summer on a diet of dead or half dry clover leaves and went into hibernation apparently in good health.

RICHARD GUPPY, Wellington, V.I., B.C., CANADA