FIELD NOTES

AN ALBINO *LYCÆNA PHLÆAS* IN CONNECTICUT

In August 1960 I had a rather interesting experience while hunting in a field in Portland, Connecticut. I was working in a large open field which had a depression at one end. In the depression grew a heavy mass of a pinkish red flower about 2 feet tall. In this depression and on the flowers were swarms of *Lycæna phlæas americana.* No sorrel was apparent; consequently I stood wondering what the attraction was. While I was still pondering the question, a small *white* butterfly appeared on the scene which I did not immediately recognize. To my amazement it turned out to be a white *L. p. americana.* By "white," I mean *pure white;* I have previously found very light pinkish forms. This specimen is identical with the normal form as to spots, etc.

To me the more interesting feature was the fact that it settled on *the only white flower* in the patch, which makes me ask: did it know it was white, and choose the white flower intentionally? Are butterflies that colour conscious? Further afield there were large patches of the same white flowers, but a search turned up no more white freaks.

The specimen in question is in my collection at Cassadaga.

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A WHITISH *LYCÆNA PHLÆAS IN OHIO* (LYCÆNIDÆ)

One of the more accessible collecting areas near the community of Wellington, Lorain Co., Ohio, is Findley State Park, located two miles south of the village on Ohio State Route 58. The park consists of nearly 900 acres, a large part of which was originally woodlands. In 1954 a shallow valley, through which a small stream flowed, was cleared and an earth fill dam was constructed at the north side of the park. This created an artificial lake of about 90 acres. With access roads, cleared picnic areas, and an artificial bathing beach, the park has become a center of summer outdoor recreation in this area. Plantings of native and introduced trees, made about 30 years ago, are in various parts of the park. These are mostly species of *Quercus* (oak), *Betula* (birch), *Liquidambar* (gum), and various conifers.

The afternoon of August 10, 1961 was sunny with scattered cumulus clouds, temperature in the middle eighties, but with a gusty wind of

about 16 to 18 miles an hour from the south-southwest. I was collecting on this afternoon in the above described park, following a service road which led through a brush-filled area and into an open meadow-like field of about 20 acres in area.

About 2:30 P.M. (EDT) and at the point where the drive entered the field, I saw a small butterfly darting around in a belligerent manner. Not recognizing it, I attempted to net it on the wing, but failed. It returned almost immediately, and this time alighted upon a small patch of bare ground in the drive. Thinking it to be some species of Blue not common to this area, I carefully netted it as soon as it arose from the ground, papered it, and continued my collecting.

Returning home, I examined my catch. To my utmost surprise, I found this to be a specimen of *Lycæna phlæas* Linnæus. A perfect male, it lacked completely any red or coppery red color, both on the upper and under surfaces of the primaries and secondaries. Instead, this color was replaced entirely by white or silvery white areas, although the dark gray and black portions were of normal color and design. A rather striking appearance was created by this coloration, or rather, lack of it.

Examination of the white areas under a microscope at 200 $\times$ reveals that these scales are curled or rolled, giving them an almost quill-like appearance. Similar areas on a normally colored specimen reveal flat shingle shaped scales. This suggests that the loss of refractive power of the curled scales results in the loss of the coppery red color, leaving a colorless or white area.

At the present time, this specimen is in the writer's general collection. Subsequent intensive collecting in the area of capture failed to produce any similar individuals, although many normal specimens were taken.

The complex genetics regarding this type of aberration is not completely understood by the writer; but it is felt that a report of such a specimen should be a matter of record, perhaps helping to contribute to information concerning the frequency and distribution of such a form.

I would like to thank Harry Clench of the Carnegie Museum and Prof. A. B. Klots of the American Museum of Natural History for their interest expressed in this specimen and the encouragement for this article. Special thanks to P. Siviter Smith of Birmingham, England, for his suggestion of the microscopic examination of the structure of the colorless scales and the observed results. Also the information that this may be the rare form "alba" (Tutt), although this form name is apparently not well known to general collectors in this country.

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