

## ESPECIALLY FOR FIELD COLLECTORS

(Under the supervision of FRED T. THORNE, 1360 Merritt Dr., El Cajon, Calif., U.S.A.)

### I GAVE UP COLLECTING LEPIDOPTERA (FOR FORTY-FIVE MINUTES)

by SIDNEY A. HESSEL

I began intensive collecting in 1930. Each winter, all winter long, I would dream of the coming spring campaign for *Erora læta*. I surely have made upward of twenty-five trips, mostly involving over-night stays, with this butterfly my prime objective. Until this year two trips had produced three specimens. (I had also blundered into a single specimen when it was far from my mind.) This year I hit the jackpot, albeit a somewhat modest one; eight—six intended for cabinet specimens, one male with gonad separately preserved contributed to Prof. C. L. REMINGTON at Yale for chromosome study, one female retained hopefully for eggs.

This morning when I went to my lab, first to feast my eyes upon the six *læta* on the spreading board, I was simultaneously horrified and dazed. I couldn't believe what I saw. Of the six specimens the five best had the bodies entirely or partially eaten away. Of the many specimens on the boards these were the *only* ones that had been disturbed. I went through the customary routine of pinching myself. Surely this was a nightmare and I would be happy again in a moment. But it wasn't.

I had not taken any special precautions against this sort of thing as I had experienced it only twice in the last ten years and there have almost always, summer and winter, been exposed material on the boards at that location. Once in the fall it had been a cricket and once a flying squirrel that had escaped from a cage.

Then I went to the imprisoned female to observe (what else?) that she was dead and, although she had been active and feeding for several days, had laid no eggs. Of course, she was in disreputable condition. My decision to abandon such a frustrating hobby was spontaneous, *final* and *irrevocable!*

Nothing to do now but clean things up preparatory to giving everything away and forgetting this chapter of my life as quickly and completely as possible. There was always gardening, but that, too, subject to more than a little discouragement. Without enumerating all of the more or less expected disasters, does anyone else have major *turtle* trouble? You should see the unbelievable excavations they have made on several

occasions in an artificial bog and rock garden of exotic plants that were not purchased, but personally imported by my wife and me with full measure of TLC (tender, loving care) and at extreme inconvenience. They don't bother commercial items, it seems. On second thought it would be stamps. Yes, it would be stamps — no comparable harassments there! June 13, 1962 would mark an abrupt change in my life.

The next move was to dismantle the moth trap. From force of habit (I still was in a daze), I picked up each egg carton in it individually (used to afford refuges for the moths) and turned it over for examination. If I had had my wits about me I would just have dumped the whole thing in the brook. When I got down to the very bottom, which practically never produces anything anyhow, I just caught myself in time from slapping the last carton automatically (my customary procedure to knock off the "bugs" and worthless Leps. before reassembling the trap).

It took a double-take and *another* pinch to realize that it was real — a spectacular bilateral gynandromorph *Automeris io*! Besides *læta*, this had been one of my dreams over the years. So, — a second monumental decision, this, too, spontaneous, *final* and *irrevocable*! I continue to collect Leps. After all, 1963 is another year to plan for *Erora læta*, but what year can one make plans to capture a gynandromorph *A. io*???

Since I do not expect to take another gynandrous *io* (soon), a description and photo and discussion of this one are now being prepared for publication. Any papers on *læta* can wait for next year's findings.

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## RECORD CHARTS FOR THE COLLECTOR OF LEPIDOPTERA

by RICHARD HEITZMAN

For the past six years I have been using a method of correlating my observations on the occurrence and habits of Lepidoptera found in this area. It has occurred to me that this method might be of interest to other members of the Society. So with this thought in mind I would like to present it at this time.

I keep a note book of all observations and captures and every month I transfer the data to two types of record charts. After a few years the flight period of different broods becomes quite clear for many of the species. Certain of the more difficult ones still remain rather vague but at least a little understanding is gained from the results. The most