

TWO WEEKS OF BUTTERFLY HUNTING IN CENTRAL LABRADOR

HENRY HENSEL

145 Bellevue Street, Edmundston, N.B. Canada

On July 5, 1964, I left for Schefferville, Quebec, in quest of arctic butterflies. The modern community of Schefferville is located nearly in the center of the huge Labrador Peninsula. It can be reached by train, which winds 360 miles from Seven Islands to the well-developed iron-mining center in the Province of Quebec. Because of the thorough report given by Eugene Munroe (1951), who collected in northern Quebec for six weeks in 1948, I was able to determine the best time for my trip and had a good idea of what to expect.

The morning of July 8, my first day, was somewhat cloudy and cool. At noon it cleared up and was sunny for the rest of the day. I decided to search for *Boloria polaris groenlandica* Skinner on a mountain ridge that afternoon and found fresh males there in considerable numbers at about 2,600 feet. Next day again I only encountered males, but on July 11, a hot day already in the morning, the first females appeared. The *polaris* flew only a few inches above the ground, mostly against the strong wind, as reported by Dr. Munroe. They were quite hard to catch, one being unable to keep sight of them while they were in flight.

On July 10, I collected in a black spruce bog and an adjacent boggy meadow, at the outskirts of the town. There, besides *Oeneis jutta ridingiana* Chermock & Chermock, five species of *Boloria* were taken flying in the boggy meadow: *Boloria selene atrocostalis* Huard, *toddi* *toddi* Holland, *frigga saga* Staudinger, *titania boisduvalii* Duponchel, and *eunomia tricularis* Huebner. The *eunomia* were by far the commonest. The *toddi* were all extremely dark suffused, even in the females which are of the same size as the males, or smaller. Many *toddi* and *frigga* appeared somewhat worn, indicating that these two species hatch in the first days of July.

From Schefferville a 15 mile dirt road through tundra forest leads to Lake Attikamagan in the Province of Newfoundland. There on July 15, I collected *Boloria titania* males and females, *eunomia*, one *B. freija* Thunberg male, one *Colias pelidne labradorensis* Scudder, and some *Pyrgus centaureae freija* Warren. The weather up to that time was mostly hot, the temperature did not even drop greatly at night. A rainstorm occurred late at night July 15, and next morning the thermometer showed 32° F. and a severe snowstorm developed, which lasted till noon! The next day it was sunny and warmer again, so I decided to go back to the

mountain once more. There for the first time encountered *Plebejus aquilo aquilo* Boisduval. Both sexes apparently hatching the same day. Despite the fact that these were numerous, I was able to catch but few. The tiny blues are extremely wary, approached they fly up into the strong wind and one could see them only few seconds. Most of the few I took, were netted late in the afternoon, when the butterflies sat down to rest for the night. That last day I also found *Oeneis taygete taygete* Geyer more common than they had been a few days before, when only single specimens could be seen. I also took one *Oeneis melissa assimilis* Butler, several *P. centaureae*, *C. pelidne*, and *B. polaris* females. Besides the *aquilo*, the *O. taygete* were also hard to approach, let alone to catch. The collector simply cannot follow butterflies over the rocks, which make use of the always present strong wind while escaping! Owing to the fact that it must have been a "hot" summer in that part of the country, the butterfly-season was more stretched out, than in 1948 when Dr. Munroe collected there. No *C. pelidne* was seen before July 15 and only three July 17. *Lycaeides argyrognomon scudderi* Edwards and *Hesperia comma borealis* Lindsey were not found. Both seemed to be the last butterflies to appear in July and were recorded by Dr. Munroe. There are 15 species of butterflies known to be breeding in the Schefferville region. Four of them: *Boloria toddi*, *frigga*, *freiija*, and *Oeneis taygete* had previously not been reported from Central Labrador. *O. jutta*, was previously recorded north of Schefferville.

It was a rich, unforgettable experience, collecting in the subarctic and truly arctic life zones of Labrador. Something to consider for collectors, who dream of collecting arctic butterflies.

LITERATURE CITED

- MUNROE, EUGENE, 1951. Field Notes on the Butterflies of Knob Lake, Northern Quebec. *Lepid. News*, 5: 7-9.

EDWIN RAY HULBIRT (1886-1965)

Edwin Ray Hulbirt was born in Lovelton, Pennsylvania, April 9, 1886, and died in Glendale, California, March 12, 1965. He was the son of Franklin J. and Nora Spring Hulbirt. He received his college degrees, B.S., June, 1908, and M.A., 1909, from Princeton, where he was Phi Beta Kappa. His thesis, "Specific Charge of Ions Emitted by Hot Metals," was published in the *Philosophical Magazine* of London in 1910.

"Dr. Ray," as he was respectfully and affectionately known by many of his associates, had a long career as teacher, research chemist, and ad-