

NOTES ON UNUSUAL SPECIES OF LEPIDOPTERA
FROM SOUTHERN FLORIDA

***Danaus eresimus* Cramer.** One worn virgin female was taken while feeding at flowers of *Asclepias curassavica* L. on June 6, 1970 in South Miami, Dade County. Another specimen, a male in nearly fresh condition, was taken at flowers of *Eupatorium serotinum* Michx. on October 6, 1970 near Homestead Air Base in southern Dade County. Both individuals apparently belong to populations of *D. eresimus tethys* Forbes which is common in the greater Antilles.

A search of leaves and flowers of *Asclepias curassavica*, *A. tuberosa rolf sii* (Britt.) Shiners, and *Sarcostemma clausa* Vail in the vicinity of the capture sites and elsewhere in Dade County yielded only larvae and eggs of resident *Danaus gilippus berenice* (Cramer) and *D. plexippus* L. If *D. eresimus* is established in Florida, it is rare. It is more likely that individuals stray in from the West Indies as suggested by Kimball (1965, Lepidoptera of Florida).

***Urbanus dorantes* Stoll.** This species has recently been reported from southern Florida (Clench, 1970, J. Lepid. Soc. 24: 240-244). *U. dorantes* is well established in Dade County and flies at least between July and April, encompassing three or more broods. From November to January of 1969 and 1970, *U. dorantes* and *U. proteus* L. could be taken with equal frequency in Coral Gables, South Miami, and in sawgrass marshes near Pinecrest, Monroe County. Females of *U. dorantes* oviposit on *Desmodium tortuosum* (Sw.) DC as do *U. proteus* females.

THOMAS E. PLISKE, *Department of Biology, University of Miami, Coral Gables, Florida.*

DANAUS PLEXIPPUS (NYMPHALIDAE) ATTACKING
RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD

Last summer, Mr. James Erickson and I were collecting female monarchs, *Danaus plexippus* L., in order to establish a laboratory culture for our study of larval feeding efficiencies. On July 6 and 7, 1970, we were collecting in a large (approximately 10 acres), rather pure stand of milkweed, *Asclepias syriaca* L., at the Ithaca, New York old airport (Tompkins Co.). In one corner of the stand we were constantly harassed by a male red-winged blackbird, *Agelaius phoeniceus* L., on whose nesting territory we were apparently trespassing. In three separate instances we saw a male monarch "attack" the red-winged blackbird as it hovered over us at a height of some 20-30 feet. Flying and diving at the bird for less than a minute each time, the monarch appeared to "frighten" the bird, but although backing off slightly, the bird never left the area. The monarch would break off the encounter and come swooping down to the milkweed patch, flying rather rapidly.

Clark (1931, Butterflies of the District of Columbia) mentioned that male monarchs have been seen to attack smaller butterflies and small birds (i.e., hummingbirds and warblers). The red-winged blackbird eats both seeds and insects, especially beetles, grasshoppers, and caterpillars. The monarchs may have been "flaunting" their warning coloration, although if one assumes that they had fed as larvae on these milkweed plants, they would be palatable to predators because *A. syriaca* lacks cardiac glycosides (Brower, 1969, Scientific American 220: 22-30).

FRANK SLANSKY JR., *Department of Entomology and Limnology, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York.*