

A SIMPLE METHOD FOR PREPARING MALE HESPERIID GENITALIA  
FOR EXAMINATION WITHOUT DISSECTION

Examination of the genitalia of Lepidoptera usually involves dissection, a rather unesthetic treatment for a mounted specimen. Evans, in preparing his catalogues of the Hesperidae, frequently used a dry dissection method, but this is not always totally satisfactory. For the past year I have been extruding the male genital armature while specimens are still fresh by gently pulling on the clasps until the entire armature "pops out." This has not always proved satisfactory because as the specimen dries, the genitalia frequently retract slowly, and in any event, the clasps remain at least partially closed necessitating some tissue rupture to open them for examination of the inner faces and the penis, uncus and gnathos.

Further experimentation has indicated that the clasps can be held in a wide open position during drying by applying a bit of Duco or similar cement, which can be removed later. The technique is as follows:

Holding the fresh insect by the thorax with forceps in normal pinching position, the genital armature can be extruded by gently pulling out the clasps with fine forceps. Sometimes the uncus will be bent down covering and distorting the gnathos; this usually can be teased into a normal position with a dissecting needle. Once the genitalia are fully exposed, grasp the abdomen with fine curved forceps immediately forward of the vinculum which further spreads the clasps. A small quantity of cement is then smeared over the area of the junction of the clasps which are held spread wide with a second pair of fine forceps until the cement dries, 5 minutes or less. I prefer to spread the clasps to a position normal to the abdomen as it simplifies photography. When the specimen is thoroughly dried, either spread or in papers, the cement is easily removed; usually it can simply be peeled away. However, if stuck too firmly, it can be dissolved away by washing in acetone, leaving the genitalia well exposed for study.

The same process also can be applied to relaxed specimens provided the genitalia have been previously extruded, but is not as successful as with fresh specimens. Because of the general structure of the male genitalia of the Hesperidae, the method is especially applicable to this family though of limited use in others, where for example, details of the anterior portions of the tegumen, the base of the penis or the structure of the saccus are important features. In addition, in several families of butterflies, the genitalia are either too lightly sclerotized or too difficult to extrude to lend themselves to this process.

I sincerely hope that others may find this method as useful as it has been to me.

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CAPTURES OF *ERORA LAETA* IN NORTH CAROLINA (LYCAENIDAE)

Roever (1962, *J. Lepid. Soc.* 16: 1-4) described several records for *Erora laeta* (Edwards) from the southern states. These included a single capture in Tennessee (April 15) and a single capture in North Carolina (July 17). Clark and Clark (1951, *Butterflies of Virginia*) list a single capture in Virginia (June 23) and since that publication at least two additional spring specimens have been taken. There are no recorded specimens from Georgia or northeastern Alabama. All *Erora laeta* taken in the southern states were found in the mountain regions.

On July 1, 1970, I drove from Durham, North Carolina, to Alleghany County in the northwestern corner of the state. I had been in the area a week earlier but rain had cut short my collecting. At that time the *Speyeria* were in good flight and I had made the trip in hopes of getting a nice series of *cybele*, *aphrodite* and especially *idalia*. I