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NOTES AND NEWS

Recent Letter

Dear Dr. Godfrey,

With reference to Mr. Manley's note on "The 'greasy' wing gene of *Utetheisa ornatrix* (Arctiidae)" (1975, J. Lepid. Soc. 29: 77), I do not think that any special significance should be attached to the 1:1 ratio in females *ex* various collections, except that it shows that the aberration is confined to the female, but whether sex-linked or sex-controlled can only be ascertained by breeding. It is most unusual for the proportion of an aberration to the type in museum collections to correspond with the proportion in nature; there is an inevitable bias in favour of the aberration. Also no inference as regards dominance can be drawn from such figures, as many morphs, genetically dominant, are far rarer than the recessive allelomorph in nature. A good example is f. *salaami* Suff. of *Papilio dardanus* Brown, which is far rarer than f. *hippocoon* F., to which it is dominant.

Dr. Sargent's experience with *Papaipema duovata* (1975, J. Lepid. Soc. 29: 9) appears to confirm the comment made by J. W. Tutt, the famous English entomologist, early in the century "that no species is rare if you know where to look for it."

An entomologist, working with light, both mercury vapour and incandescent, would be quite justified in concluding that the sphingid *Nephele peneus* Cr. did not occur in Mombasa. Its congeners *argentifera* Wlk., *bipartita* Btlr., *funebis* F. and *comma* Hpffr., all visit light freely, whilst *aequivalens* Wlk., *oenopion* Hbn. and *rosae* Btlr. occur more rarely, but during 20 years collecting I have known a single *peneus* to visit light. Yet it is quite common and an examination of its foodplant in the proper season will always provide large numbers of ova and larvae at all stages of growth.

D. G. SEVASTOPULO