



Fig. 1. *Electrostrymon angelia angelia* (Hewitson), ♂ upper (left) and under (right) surfaces; FLORIDA, Chas. Dury (Strecker collection). Allyn Museum photos 071477-15/16.

Strecker received it from Charles Dury. No date is given, but it is likely that the specimen was taken before 1880.

Kimball (1965, *Lepidoptera of Florida*) does not list Dury among the pioneer Florida collectors, and it is possible that while Strecker received the *angelia* from Dury, Dury himself may not have collected it. Were it not for the fact that Anderson (1974, *J. Lepid. Soc.*, 28: 354-358) had recorded this species from the Florida Keys, and others have reported it from as far north as the Fort Lauderdale area on the east coast of the state, it would be tempting to dismiss the Strecker specimen as a hoax or a mislabelled specimen. I suspect, though, that the Dury/Strecker specimen is an authentic one, and quite possibly *angelia* long has been a member of the Florida fauna, though perhaps not so commonly as in the past few years.

It is further likely that specimens of *angelia* may have been responsible for the long-standing records of *E. endymion* from Florida. The specimen that Holland (1931, *The Butterfly Book*: pl. 64, Fig. 32) figured as "*endymion*" was actually a specimen of *E. angelia boyeri* (Klots, 1951, *Field Guide to the Butterflies . . .*: 281), and the latter author expressed doubt about the occurrence of *endymion* in Florida. Riley (1975, *Field Guide . . . Butterflies of the West Indies*) does not mention *endymion* from the West Indies, thus strongly suggesting that the species never has occurred in Florida.

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OBSERVATIONS ON *ERORA LAETA* (LYCAENIDAE) IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

Erora laeta Edwards, often considered the rarest of eastern butterflies, is eagerly sought by many lepidopterists; too often with negative results. I made my first trip to New Hampshire to capture this species on 21 May, 1977 with fellow collector Reginald Webster. We visited a few areas in Carroll County, near Bartlett, in northern New Hampshire, where R. W. had taken one specimen the previous year.

The location seemed typical for *laeta*—an abandoned dirt road going through a beech woods.

We hiked up the road until we reached a shallow gully crossing the road. On the other side of the gully, on damp dirt, was a female *E. laeta*, which was quickly netted. We then saw another female which was also easily caught. At this point, I was amazed, for we had hoped to find one or two *E. laeta* in a day of intense collecting, and had caught two in 10 minutes. Continuing along the road, we came to a little trickle of a stream where we caught two more *laeta*, both females. Upon returning to the first gully, we caught three more females.

Astounded by our luck we decided to try a few more dirt roads in the area. On every one, we found *laeta*. It was incredible; was this really that rarest of butterflies that we were seeing everywhere we looked? In about three hours of collecting we must have seen over 80 *E. laeta*, and had collected one or two from every road we tried, ending up with about 12 specimens apiece. When these numbers are compared to those reported in previous literature (e.g., Mousley, 1923, *The Can. Entomol.* 55: 26–29; Field, 1941, *Ann. Entomol. Soc. of America* 34: 303–316; Smith, 1960, *J. Lepid. Soc.* 14: 239–240; Roever, 1962, *J. Lepid. Soc.* 16: 1–4), our sightings seem truly phenomenal. The most specimens previously reported collected at one time were two males and nine females along the slopes of Mount Killington in New Hampshire (Field, op. cit.), and many reports are of individual specimens taken by chance (e.g., Sullivan, 1971, *J. Lepid. Soc.* 25: 295–296).

Of all the individuals that we saw, only two were males, only one of which was captured. Among the females, some were quite worn, while others looked freshly emerged. There seem two likely reasons, not necessarily mutually exclusive, for the dearth of males: 1) the males had emerged earlier in the season and so most had already died, and 2) the males remained up in the trees, and only females came down to drink at the mud. However the male that was caught was freshly emerged, and in most species of butterflies, it is the males that are found “puddling” (Downes, 1973, *J. Lepid. Soc.* 27: 89–99). The single male was caught in a field next to the woods.

The females were very easy to catch, some not even flying up when the net was clapped over them. This behavior has been noted by previous authors (e.g., Hessel, 1952, *J. Lepid. Soc.* 6:34), but strongly impressed me when I nearly stepped on one female as I was walking down the road; it flew up from right under my foot. The males, on the other hand, were more restless and difficult to catch, their flight being fast and uneven, with only occasional landings on vegetation.

Two possible explanations for the extraordinary abundance of *E. laeta* that we observed are as follows: It is possible that there was a real population explosion of *E. laeta* in New Hampshire in 1977 (W. Kiel, who has collected for years in New Hampshire, caught his first *E. laeta* this spring). It would be interesting to know if other lepidopterists found a similar increase in this species in other areas. An alternative explanation is that *laeta* is really not that rare, but that its behavior on this day was unusual. Perhaps the butterflies normally spend most of their time in the forest canopy, and thus are not accessible to collectors. This day being very sunny, hot (33°C), and humid, perhaps drove them down to the ground to drink. It may be that early emergence and a short flight period make *E. laeta* seem very rare, but that finding them is really a matter of being in the right place at the right time. At any rate, we were!

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