

NOTES ON DERBYSHIRE LEPIDOPTERA, 1935.

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The year 1935 has been a trying one as regards weather for the entomologist. A mild winter with considerable rain in the very early spring was followed for the third year in succession by a prolonged spell of dry weather in the summer which lasted till September. From September onwards almost unbroken rainfall continued till the end of the year. Sugaring was tried in various localities during the summer, but the evenings were cold and too dry for the scent to travel. The ideal warm, dark and moist evenings so suitable for this purpose were missing throughout the year.

A considerable number of interesting captures were, however, made and include the following. On May 15th a perfect specimen of *verbasci* was taken by Mr. James Douglas at Alvaston. The larvae have been found commonly at Thorpe Cloud in Dovedale and in Ticknall Quarries, but the perfect insect is not so often seen. Breeding from captured larvae from both places mentioned has produced only *ichneumon* flies, and from several dozen larvae taken during the last few years in the wild state, not a single one was free.

G. *Rhamni* was recorded from Dovedale (three specimens) by Mr. G. H. Sale on May 6th, and at Coxbench (one specimen) on June 8th. Another rare visitor to the county—the Comma butterfly *Vanessa c. album*—was reported at Derby in late August by Mr. Walton. This appears to have been more plentiful generally the last two years. For the first time for many years

I did not observe a single specimen of *Vanessa io*. It is generally attracted to the buddleia, but this year, although the flowers were plentiful, it was not there.

On one occasion in September while buddleia was still in full flower I disturbed a number of vanessids from a red veronica growing close by. These quickly re-settled again and I counted no less than 15 specimens of *urticæ* and *atalanta* while *brassicæ* was the only species on the nearby buddleia. *P. Gamma*, another flower visitor often overcommon, was this year peculiarly rare and only evening primrose seemed to attract this species.

A night in Repton Shrubs, on 22nd July, produced among other species several *N. Dictæoides*, *N. Camolina* and *B. Abietaria*. The last named is probably the catch of the season. Half a dozen of the best specimens were retained, but they were nearly over and a number of worn examples were about. This is extremely rare in Derbyshire, and, in view of the number about, one might hope that a colony will be established in the Shrubs.

In May, *C. Chamomillæ* was taken at Normanton by Mr. F. Larkin, who also captured *E. Coronata* and *P. Festucæ* in the same district in September.

Two uncertain insects turned up again this year—the first Geryon was seen in Via Gellia and also at Dovedale in June. In the same month Mr. Larkin took *T. Rubi* in Via Gellia and Little Eaton. Ten years ago this insect was common at Little Eaton, but the breaking up of its haunts there into building plots banished it for some years. It is good to know that it has survived despite this and was in evidence there again this year.

Repton Shrubs always an entomologist's paradise has also produced the following during the season:—

D. pudibunda which was taken as imago in June and in the larval stage in September.

N. Glareosa var. *rosea* in August.

M. ocellata in July and *E. queranaria* in September.

From Dovedale is recorded *A. Subsericeata* and on 30th June *P. plantaginis*.

Normanton larvae of *C. fulvago* bred by Mr. Larkin produced variety *unicolor*.

Most of the commoner insects were in evidence during the season and *brumata* has been especially plentiful while *defoliaria*, which has been far too plentiful in recent years, has proved scarce this season. *Aurantiaria* has also been very scarce.

The death of Mr. H. C. Hayward, F.E.S., has removed a most enthusiastic and painstaking collector of the micro-lepidoptera, and a very large number of our local records are due to his energetic work in this direction.

During the year under review no single record has been received for the *Micros*, although there is undoubtedly much good work to be done in this direction in the county.

Mr. Leonard Nathan records a specimen of *Chrysomela Gættingensis* taken by himself at Monsal Dale 18th Aug., 1934, and believed to be the only record of this beetle for the county.