

Though in a locality where it occurs regularly every year (in Devon), I could only find one very worn female on the 19th August. Or, there is raised the possibility of its flapping across the Channel on the southerly air drift of the 24th. One is, of course, assuming a second generation on the Continent in this fine summer. This could well explain the two *stellatarum* dropping on to the sheet that night; they arrived in the dark, so to speak.

I cannot end this article without saying thank you to my wife and sons for allowing me to grossly neglect the principles of the "family holiday", albeit for exceptional circumstances.

ACHERONTIA ATROPOS L., MACROGLOSSUM STELLATARUM (L.) AND EUCOSMA PUPILLANA (CLERCK) IN STAFFORDSHIRE. — In September 1976, two larvae of the Death's Head Hawk (*A. atropos*) were found on separate occasions in a potato field at Hopton, near Stafford; later, a pupa was dug up in an adjoining garden.

I have received many reports of Humming-bird Hawks (*M. stellatarum*) seen in gardens in Staffordshire in 1976, one or two in June, but the great majority in September. One was on honeysuckle in my own garden on 18th September. The number of sightings, spread right across the county, indicates the largest immigration of this species we have experienced since 1947. Several observers have commented that the moths were seen hovering over plants which were not in flower, searching presumably for sources of nectar which in that period of drought must have been in very short supply.

Eucosma pupillana was recorded for the first time in Staffordshire as recently as 1973 when I disturbed one from the foodplant (Wormwood, *Artemisia absinthium*) on waste ground near Burton-on-Trent. The plant has within the last ten years or so become much more widespread in Staffordshire, appearing on waste ground and cleared sites in industrial areas in the north of the county. In one such place, near Biddulph, on 14th July, 1976, I found the moth commonly, two or more dropping out of each plant I touched. The site was near to a disused railway line and this was no doubt the route by which first the plant and then the insect had spread; even so, the comparatively short time it has taken the moth to spread from one end of the county to the other seems remarkable. — R. G. WARREN, Wood Ridings, 32 Whitmore Road, Trentham, Stoke-on-Trent, ST4 8AP.

LAOTHOE POPULI L. IN S. DEVON IN 1976. — Mint specimen in m.v. trap on 19th August, and one month later than any previous year. Earliest capture was on 21st May, 1976, which is normal. Was the August specimen from a second brood? — H. L. O'HEFFERNAN, 3 Coombe Meadows, Chillington, Kingsbridge, S. Devon.



1977. "Laothoe populi L. in S. Devon in 1976." *The entomologist's record and journal of variation* 89, 41–41.

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