

iv. Colour unicolorous black.

*R. politus*, Hellw.—Oblong, rather broad and flat; head rather large, strongly impressed, thorax as long as broad, with sides and angles rounded, diffusely and somewhat finely punctured, with a space between centre and base smooth; elytra with plainly punctured striæ, which are evanescent towards sides and apex.

Length,  $1\frac{1}{2}$ —2 lin.

This very distinct species is decidedly rare; it occurs under pine bark; Lee (Kent), by sweeping, Mr. Douglas; Tintern, Manchester, Aviemore; under bark of black poplar that had been partially submerged; Stretford, Mr. Reston; Rooke, Monmouthshire.

v. Elytra blue or bluish-green; head, thorax, and scutellum shining black.

*R. cœruleipennis*, Sahl.—Rather short and broad; antennæ brown-red with black club; thorax not longer than broad, narrower than elytra, with anterior and posterior angles rounded, rather thickly and finely punctured; elytra finely punctate-striate; legs ferruginous, with femora brownish.

Length,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  lin.

One of the rarest of the British beetles. I know of no locality for it except the Lover's Walk at Matlock, where Mr. Matthews, Mr. Crotch, and, I believe, the late Mr. Garneys, have taken single specimens. I have taken many good beetles in the place, but have never been fortunate enough to secure a specimen.

[*R. parvulus*, Payk., is a species that might very likely be found in Britain; it is a small, flat, fuscous insect, with the head small, the thorax only as long as broad, with rounded sides, extremely finely punctured; the elytra are furnished with finely punctured striæ.

Length,  $1-1\frac{1}{3}$  lin.

It appears to be found under bark of aspens.]

Lincoln.

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## AN ASCENT OF MOUNT KOSCIUSKO.

BY E. MEYRICK, B.A., F.E.S.

Mount Kosciusko is the highest point of Australia; I say this advisedly, because an unreasonable Austrian zoologist has recently endeavoured to fix a new name on the mountain, on the ground that the highest point is not exactly where it was supposed to be; but the name of Mr. Kosciusko is attached to the whole mountain, which consists of a series of ridges or undulations rising one behind the other to the centre, where there are several points of nearly the same height; the highest of all, which I ascended, being 7200 feet.

I was indebted to the kindness and hospitality of Mr. A. Body, whose station (Jindabyne) is situated on the skirts of the mountain beside the Snowy River, at an elevation of 2700 feet, for the means of making the ascent in January last, in the interests of entomology.



Our party consisted of my host, a guide, and myself, with four horses. We started with fair weather, a warm wind blowing, and the thermometer at  $94^{\circ}$ , and made our way up a dry sandstone spur, clothed with the ordinary Australian forest of *Eucalyptus* and thin scrubby undergrowth, the insects being much the same as on the Blue Mountains. The ground was encumbered with fallen trees, and the travelling very rough, there being no track. At 5000 feet we emerged upon a swampy flat, bare of trees, but well grassed, and the boggy ground supporting a dense vegetation of heath-like shrubs (*Myrtaceæ*, *Leguminosæ*, and a *Veronica*); skirting this were low forest-clad ridges. Here the alpine fauna began suddenly, and consisted almost wholly of species quite new to me; principally *Geometræ* of the family *Larentiadae*, which were in great profusion, and remarkable for their gay colouring.

Whilst collecting here rain began to fall, and we remounted and pushed on. The rain, however, increased to a steady downpour, and the wind rose and blew in fierce gusts right in our faces; we continued to ascend, but it became difficult to make our way along the exposed sides of the ranges, and impossible to collect; my companions complained of the cold. We had intended to camp out, but under these circumstances, we made for a deserted wooden hut, the only building on the whole mountain, which we reached about dusk. It was a small roughly constructed shed, in a very disorderly condition, and my companions were inclined to despise it; but I, who had anticipated nothing better than wet grass for my bed, was disposed to be thankful. Whilst the rest of the party made a fire and prepared tea, I employed the little remaining daylight in collecting. I found that the *Lepidoptera* appeared to like the rain, and flew freely, but my net and boxes became so wet, that operations were difficult. I took two species of *Simaethis*, both of which I had found previously in Tasmania; *Mimeseoptilus celidotus*, which extends to New Zealand; and several species of *Tortricina* and *Ecophoridae*, principally of Tasmanian types; our elevation being about 6000 feet. The thermometer fell at night to  $40^{\circ}$ .

The next morning was bright and fine; mists hung about the valleys, but soon cleared away, and the day proved eminently favourable. We started soon after sunrise; our way lay over undulating ridges, separated by boggy creeks, and luxuriantly clothed with long grass and many coloured *Compositæ*, over which the new *Xenica* described below was flying in abundance; the only other butterfly was an occasional specimen of *Pyrameis cardui*. The country now became



very boggy, and demanded constant attention; these bogs constitute the chief difficulty of the ascent. I and my horse came down heavily once, owing to a concealed hole; but this was our only misadventure. The swampy ground was invariably overgrown with dense heathy scrub, and haunted by numerous *Geometræ*; also, as I was assured, by snakes, but we saw none.

A large herbaceous *Veronica*, with spikes of purplish-white blossom, grew in masses, from amongst which we disturbed numerous specimens of *Platyptilia emissalis*. I obtained also two examples of a very large new Crambid, of the genus which in Australia replaces *Crambus*. At 6500 feet I took a single worn specimen of the cosmopolitan, *Mecyna polygonalis*. Above this height the trees, which had become very stunted, ceased entirely. The granite hills which form the crest of the mountain, though sometimes broken and rocky, are mostly covered with a perfect smooth sward of short grass and silvery-leaved *Compositæ*, grazed over by troops of wild horses.

The shrubby vegetation of the lower plateaux is unable to maintain itself towards the summit, which is covered with snow nine months in the year. At the time of our visit the snow was confined to large patches, in positions where it lies scores of feet deep in winter. The day was clear, and from the summit we had an uninterrupted view of over 100 miles in every direction; northward up the valley of the Murray, which rises from a deep ravine of the mountain; southward over the tractless ranges of Gippsland, across the Victoria border; eastward to the distant Pacific. Several specimens of a large *Pieris*, which I could not capture, passed us on the summit, but I think they were the common *P. Aganippe*. I had half hoped to discover some form allied to *Erebia*, such as occurs in the New Zealand mountains, but saw no trace of anything of the kind; though I believe a month later there would be a better chance. Diligent search on the highest ground only procured two specimens of *Lepidoptera*, both of new species; one a *Conæca* (a genus allied to *Talæporia*), of which the larva is doubtless a case-bearer and lichen-feeder; the other a small *Cæsya* (*Æcophoridæ*); both these being of familiar Australian types. A species of *Curculionidæ* was common on the blossoms of the peculiar Alpine umbellifer, *Aciphylla glacialis*, whose leaves resemble those of a fan-palm in miniature. This was the only beetle which I observed commonly on the mountain, though I could not spare time to search specially for them; my other captures consisted only of a few very small *Geodephaga* and *Curculionidæ*. Of *Hymenoptera* I saw none.



I expected *Trichoptera* to be abundant, as they are in Tasmania, but this was not the case; I took very few species, and these were identical with those found on the Snowy River at lower levels.

We started on our descent at 3 p.m., and pitched our camp at sunset at about 6000 feet, beside a swamp. Insects were flying in abundance, principally of the species which I had already met with; a large mosquito was common within the precincts of the swamp, but curiously, would not venture a yard outside it, which was fortunate.

Amongst the *Tineina* represented were *Stathmopoda* (two species, both Tasmanian), *Elachista*, *Pleurota*, and *Zelleria*, with several endemic Australian genera of *Æcophoridæ*. During the night the wind increased almost to a gale, and a part of our tent broke loose and could not be secured, so that our rest was troubled. In the morning more rain was evidently impending, and we made the best of our way back, stopping occasionally for a few minutes' collecting, my best capture being a beautiful green *Iodis*; the Station being reached after a pretty rough scramble without mishap. The distance from the Station to the summit is about 35 miles; during the three days occupied we were almost constantly in the saddle, the travelling being necessarily slow, and the ground sometimes so rough that only horses born to the work would face it.

I remained ten days at Jindabyne, and made several shorter excursions to various parts of the same range, ascending to 5000 feet. It was in one of these that I took the single specimen of the new *Telesto* described below. Butterflies were very scarce, but *Xenica Klugii* abounded on the lower slopes. My best day's collecting was on a peak 4700 feet high; it was quite fine when I started with the guide, but came on to rain as we approached the ground, and poured in torrents for the rest of the day. The peak was capped by huge granite boulders, amongst which grew a thin shrubby undergrowth; and, unpromising as the day appeared, insects were very plentiful, but my net and boxes suffered considerably. A singular and beautiful undescribed *Geometer*, allied to *Aspilates*, but superficially recalling a *Glyphodes*, occurred sitting on the rocks. I took also a new nearly white *Mimeseoptilus*, and many *Tortricina* and *Æcophoridæ*.

During the various excursions on the mountains I obtained over 60 new species of *Lepidoptera*, besides much information as to distribution. The most important general result arrived at was that in this Alpine fauna there was nothing of an extra-Australian character; the species were in great part new, but belonged to the same genera as are everywhere prevalent in the lowlands of Australia and Tasmania;



Meyrick, Edward. 1885. "An ascent of Mount Kosciusko." *The Entomologist's monthly magazine* 22, 78–82.

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