

Two 'rediscoveries' made in 1970

By DAVID AGASSIZ

Parocystola acroxantha Meyr.

In late August I had been enjoying a few days of successful collecting in Cornwall with Barry Goater. On the way back we decided to spend one night in Torquay—the main quarry being *Eupithecia phoeniciata*. The previous year a kind resident had allowed me a plug in for an M.V. trap in his garden and when approached he again agreed to extend his hospitality. The traps yielded several *Euplagia quadripunctaria* (one of six suspected ♀♀s actually was ♀! and laid a supply of fertile eggs), and also a few micros which looked interesting. These included one distinctive looking Oecophorid unknown to me. Some time after returning home I looked up Jacobs' article in the S. London proceedings for 1949-50 and the moth was readily identified as *Parocystola acroxantha* Meyrick.

Its status is described by Jacobs (loc. cit.) as 'locally established on South Devon coast' so I was pleased to have hit upon an unexpected local speciality. Further investigation revealed only 3½ previous British examples! It was first taken in September 1908 (by Rev. J. W. Metcalfe) who found a specimen near Ottery St. Mary (Clutterbuck: Ent. XLIII (1910) 96-97), though he later seems to have had some doubt about the exact locality. Metcalfe found another specimen near Exmouth in 1917 (Ent. L: 267) and E. G. R. Waters took one specimen on 22nd August 1925 at Dawlish and also found a single forewing in a nearby flourmill. Apart from these records from Devon the species is known only in Australia, and New Zealand where it has been imported. The life history seems to be unknown, though it is suggested that the larva feeds between spun leaves of *Eucalyptus*. The species must still be resident here at low density and some time spent searching for the larva might well repay anyone within reach of South Devon.

Hylaea fasciaria (Linn.) ab *prasinaria* (Schiff.)

In early July I was staying in Suffolk and on the 6th I decided to go to a nearby Broad as the weather was ideal for night work. After obtaining permission from the owner, I battled my way through thick herbage to the mouth of the broad, almost on the sea front. There I set up my lights—two M.V. lamps and one actinic tube. The night turned out to be rather disappointing, it was evidently too early for *Photodes brevilinea* and there was not the quantity of moths I was expecting—the total was 70 species. Numbers of *Brachmia inornatella* and a few *Spilosoma urticae* were to me the most interesting species. After some time I decided to remove the sheet and leave the traps going while I had some sleep in the car! I awoke at dawn and not much seemed to have arrived, so I quickly bundled everything into the car and left. It was only after further sleep and breakfast that I looked again at

the traps to see nothing was left. In the last one, an actinic tube trap which had been right on the shore line there was a beautiful olive-green form *prasinaria* of *Hylaea fasciaria*. It was a fresh female in perfect condition which presented me with a dilemma. Having little confidence in my capacity for breeding, the temptation to make sure of this one was too great and I succumbed. So did the moth. I saw no other specimens of this species, not one of the typical red form.

South says this form is well known on the continent, but is very rare in this country and has been taken in Kent and Suffolk. Barrett gives more details: The first was taken by A. H. Jones, at Eltham in June 1861, another (no data) by F. Bond; then Rev. G. H. Rayner bred some from Brandon which were 'soft olive-green with pink lines' and Rev. C. Cruttwell took one at Aldeburgh in July 1892 described as a soft, pea-green with similar lines. In all the cilia remain red. There is one specimen in the National collection taken in the 1890s and Tutt's name is on the label. According to these descriptions mine is most like those from Brandon.

There may be further records which I have overlooked, but if not this is the first record in this century. E. B. Ford says that genetically, this form is a simple recessive.

Collecting Notes, 1970

By R. G. CHATELAIN and D. O'KEEFFE

The following account of collecting undertaken during 1970 is by no means complete but attempts to cover the less mundane entomological events of the year.

Spring was again cold and late and although a few visits were paid to local woods for wingless females, it was not until late March that longer trips were made. One of our first objectives was *Orthosia populeti* Fab. but the insect must have had a bad year in Ham Street, as visits intended to straddle its time of emergence drew a blank and it was not until 27th May that a worn male was seen.

On 5th April, we departed for Aviemore, where the season was late and the weather dismal. It snowed daily; the only foul meteorological condition not encountered was fog, which delayed its appearance until the return journey on the M.1. One male *Brachionycha nubeculosa* Esp. was taken at m.v. with a few *Achlya flavicornis* L., whilst the posts at Struan produced only ten male and one female *Poecilopsis lapponaria* Boisd., one or two *flavicornis* and females of *Erannis marginaria* Fab. Hibernating larvae of *Polia hepatica* Clerck (*tincta* Hübn.) were found under bark on the posts and in due course gave rise to the handsome Scottish form of this insect. After two days, discretion was deemed the better part of valour and the homeward journey undertaken.



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