

that morning at ST 499 489. Between the 25th and 30th October, about a dozen more larvae of *atropos* were found at ST 491 498. A further two *convolvuli* pupae were dug up at ST 505 497 on the 4th October followed by yet another two pupae on the 13th at the same place. A larva of *convolvuli* was also found feeding on bind-weed at ST 499 488 on the 28th September. — N. W. LEAR, 178 St. John's Lane, Bedminster, Bristol, Avon BS3 5AR.

CATOPTRIA MARGARITELLA MARGARITELLA D. & S. IN KENT.

— J. W. Leech in his book *British Pyralides*, page 78 published in 1886 mentions this mainly northern and western species, as occurring at Deal, Kent. This note was repeated in *The Butterflies and Moths found in the Dover & Deal District*, which the late Bernard Embry and I published in 1949. We were not then aware of any record of this species having been taken there and I still have not heard of any from Kent. However one came to the M.V. trap in my garden on 26th July, 1984. The wind was in the North East and there was a heavy dew, the temperature dropping to a minimum of 47° F. Deal is about 5 miles from here and the area of marshy land in that district must have been considerably reduced since Leech's day by development and by-pass roads. This record, however, seems to confirm Leech's note, although it has taken 98 years to do so! — G. H. YODEN, 18 Castle Avenue, Dover, Kent.

PERIZOMA SAGITTATA F.: MARSH CARPET IN NOTTINGHAMSHIRE.

— This moth is listed in the Red Data Book of British insects as a Category 2 species, signifying that it is liable to become endangered if factors causing its decline continue. It is therefore pleasing to record its presence in the floodplain of the River Idle in North Nottinghamshire. It was first discovered by Richard Fairclough in 1960 on Misterton Carr as a larva, feeding on the seeds of *Thalictrum flavum* (Common Meadow Rue). It was found in the general area of Misterton by several entomologists in subsequent years and continues to have been reported until at least 1975 when there is a record of 19 larvae. The area around Misterton Carr has been more extensively improved than most areas of the floodplain and a search in 1981 produced no larvae and very few suitable sites for the foodplant.

In 1983 and 1984 an extensive search of the floodplain was made and the insect was discovered in three adjacent parishes; 200 larvae being recorded from one site in 1983, 100 in 1983 and 70 in 1984 from a second, and 9 from a third in 1984. The last figure is almost certainly unrepresentative of the strength of the colony in this site as the date of search was the 30th August, which is much too late. The first site was not searched in 1984.

The long term future of the Nottinghamshire colonies is precarious. Whereas in other parts of the country the larval foodplant grows in open marshland and old grazing meadows, in the River Idle floodplain it occurs almost exclusively on the sides of drainage



ditches. It is unlikely that any more normal sites for the foodplant will be found as the last of the grazing meadows which flooded regularly was drained as part of an improvement scheme in the early 1970s and, with the exception of one small site just inside Lincolnshire in which the foodplant does not occur, there are no suitable open fenland sites left.

The survival problem of the moth in drains is that if the drains are not periodically dredged, they tend to silt up and eventually become too dry to support the foodplant. On the other hand, when the drains are dredged any colonies of the species are destroyed unless it is an imago. Added to this is the problem caused when unimportant drains are filled in to make larger and more efficient fields, and the insecticides intended for the edges of these agricultural fields also affect the margins of drains. The survival of the insect in Nottinghamshire therefore depends to a significant extent on the policy of the River Idle Drainage Board and that of local farmers.

My experience of this insect in Nottinghamshire leads me to make two tentative suggestions. The first is that, given the widely scattered pattern of records from Cambridgeshire and Norfolk and the existence of this colony, the insect was once widely distributed in suitable areas between the River Humber and southern Cambridgeshire. It would therefore be worth searching drainage dykes around the margins of fields in former fens or flooded grazing meadows in this general area for other relic colonies. The second is that, the most successful method of conservation of the insect where it occurs in drainage dykes, would be for an appropriate conservation body to purchase two fields either side of a drain in which it occurs, and to manage the drain with a staggered programme of dredging. — MARK STERLING, Department of Law, University Park, Nottingham.

LUPERINA NICKERLII FREYER: SANDHILL RUSTIC IN KENT. — Following the discovery of several resident populations of *Luperina nickerlii* along the Essex coast, a survey of likely-looking salt-marsh sites on the Kent side of the Thames estuary was made on 29th August 1984, by my son Mark and myself; and at one locality, on the Isle of Sheppey, the species was found to be tolerably common and obviously well established. — BERNARD SKINNER, 5 Rawlins Close, Addington, South Croydon, Surrey CR2 8JF.

PAPILIO NIREUS LYAEUS DBL.: PUPAL DIMORPHISM. — A few years ago, I published a paper (1981, *Entomologist's Record*, **93**: 75-76) in which I recorded the number of each colour phase of the pupa of *Papilio demodocus* Esp. pupating in total darkness on a smooth surface (glass) and a rough one (sand paper), all other conditions being identical. Green pupae were in a rather larger proportion on the smooth surface. (23.40: 6.25).



Sterling, M. 1985. "Perizoma sagittata F.: marsh carpet in Nottinghamshire."  
*The entomologist's record and journal of variation* 97, 27-28.

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