

TWO NEW ZEALAND STICK-INSECTS
NATURALISED IN MAINLAND CORNWALL

By STELLA M. TURK *

Two New Zealand species of phasmid, *Acanthoxyla prasina* (Westwood) and *Clitarchus hookeri* (White) are naturalised in Tresco Abbey Gardens, Isles of Scilly. They have been present in the Gardens for many years, and Uvarov (1944 and 1950) suggests that the colony of *Acanthoxyla* might have been established as early as 1907 when a large consignment of plants was imported from New Zealand by Major A. A. Dorrien-Smith. *Acanthoxyla prasina* was found at Paignton in 1908, 1950, 1962, 1975 and 1982 (Kirby, 1910; Rivers, 1952; Ragge 1973; Kennard, 1975; Haes, 1983) and it is recorded that plants from the Tresco 1907 importation had also been sent to Paignton. About 1959, some examples of *Acanthoxyla* were sent from Tresco to the late Mr. V. Heath of Riviera Gardens, St Mawes, Cornwall, and he deliberately released them with the idea of their becoming naturalised. They have now spread to various private gardens in St. Mawes (Turk & Turk, 1977) and in 1969 one was found in a garden at Bar Road, Helford Passage: after reading the account of this in the *West Briton* for 2.10.1969, Mr. Heath stated (*West Briton* 9.10.1969 and *in litt.*) that he had imported some Tree Ferns (*Dicksonia antarctica*) direct from New Zealand in 1967 and that one of these had been sold to a client in Bar Road.

Clitarchus hookeri has also been found in mainland Cornwall, first in Truro on a garden wall in 1979 (Turk & Turk, 1980) and since then at St. Mawes, on a few occasions, and also at Falmouth (Turk & Turk, 1982). In 1981 eight were found on a juniper bush at Mawnan Smith. The Truro record was the first for mainland Britain, although it was already known from the island of Ross-dohan in the Bay of Kenmare, S. Kerry (Ragge, 1965). At Falmouth it has so far been found in a single garden where the individuals were rounded up (as far as possible) in September 1981 after a Banksian Rose on which they had been feeding, was removed. Four females were given to Mrs. B. Watts of Penryn who had had experience of breeding insects for Worldwide Butterflies. She soon had a total 400 eggs, and with 100% survival rate, she was overwhelmed with young stick-insects the following spring. Those she could not give away to private individuals or schools, she released in her garden, although up to now (March 1984) she has no evidence that any survived out of doors. By contrast, Mrs. R. V. Wright was continuing to find stray individuals in her Falmouth garden; or to be more exact, they were found by her cat who brought in

*“Shang-ri-la”, Reskadinnick, Camborne, Cornwall, TR14 0BH.

ten insects between December 27th and 30th 1983. She noted that eight of the ten were brown; some selective factor would seem to be at work, because of the 600 reared by Mrs. Watts, only three were brown, and they were sickly and died before maturity. In February 1984, an individual of *Clitarchus* was sent to Dr. Ragge for checking and he commented on the virtual absence of the black line on the thorax which had characterised the few specimens in the British Museum (Natural History) collections from the Isle of Scilly. Certainly those who have observed the many specimens originating from the Falmouth colony have noted no obvious black line. Uvarov (1950) doubted if this was a very constant character, but Dr. Ragge suggests that its consistent absence may point to a separate origin from the Tresco colony; and we now know that there is a distinct possibility that Mr. Heath could have introduced them direct from New Zealand.

References

- Haes, E. C. M., 1983. *Orthoptera Recording (Mapping) Scheme*, Newsletter 9. Huntingdon.
- Kennard, A., 1975. Orthoptera: 27th Report of the Entomological Section. *Rep. Trans. Devon Ass. Advmt. Sci.* **107**:184-186
- Kirby, W. F. 1910. An unidentified species of stick-insect found in Devon. *Zoologist* **14**: 197-198.
- Ragge, D. R., 1965. *Grasshoppers, crickets and cockroaches of the British Isles. Wayside and Woodland Series*. London: Warne.
- , 1973. The British Orthoptera, a supplement. *Entomologist's Gaz.* **24**: 227-245.
- Rivers, C. F., 1953. An insect mystery, *Country Life* for 23.1.1953.
- Turk, F. A. & S. M. 1977, 1980 & 1982. *Cornish Biological Records* Nos. 1, 3 and 5, Institute of Cornish Studies.
- Uvarov, B. P., 1944. A New Zealand phasmid (Orthoptera) established in the British Isles, *Proc. R. ent. Soc. Lond.* **13**:94-96.
- , 1950. A second New Zealand stick-insect (Phasmatoidea) established in the British Isles, *Proc. R. ent. Soc. Lond.* **B19**: 174-175.

RHEUMAPTERA UNDULATA L.: SCALLOP SHELL IN THE ISLE OF MAN — On 27th August 1983, about a mile from the town of Peel along Glenfaba Road to the Raggatt Plantation, by the disused track of the Isle of Man railway I found five larvae in sprigs of sallow fastened together with silk. From these moths emerged between 23.vi. and 1.vii.1984. The only previous record of occurrence of this species in Man appears to have been in 1972 (Bond, *Ent. Rec.* **97**:(7)). — R. F. HAYNES, Little Dorking, Mill Road, Killarney, Eire.



Turk, Stella M. 1985. "Two New Zealand stick insects naturalised in mainland Cornwall." *The entomologist's record and journal of variation* 97, 129–130.

View This Item Online: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/94531>

Permalink: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/195810>

Holding Institution

Smithsonian Libraries and Archives

Sponsored by

Smithsonian

Copyright & Reuse

Copyright Status: In copyright. Digitized with the permission of the rights holder.

Rights Holder: Amateur Entomologists' Society

License: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/>

Rights: <https://biodiversitylibrary.org/permissions>

This document was created from content at the **Biodiversity Heritage Library**, the world's largest open access digital library for biodiversity literature and archives. Visit BHL at <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org>.