

example of a green pupa (reproduced here at fig. 9.). Of it, Duponchel only says that it overwinters as a pupa, and that the horn is often bent over (*souvent recourbée*). Is it? The plate is vouched for by that experienced artist Paul Dumenil, but Duponchel's footnote on his page 6 suggests that there was some muddle over his earlier artists, and Dumenil's signature may merely indicate a faithful engraving from an unidentified original. My first reaction was that the figure represented a half-way stage in the transformation, but that cannot be since the wing-cases are quite mature. In Boisduval's contemporary work (with Rambur & Graslin, when the name *Anthocharis* was introduced) a fuller and more accurate account is given, and a normal pupa is well figured by the artist Blanchard.

\* Godart's name is on the title page, out of deference, and the work is always catalogued against his name, although he died in 1825 and Duponchel alone was responsible for publishing volume 1. Guenée assisted in completing volume 2 (Moths), and his name was added to the replacement title pages issued for each volume in 1849, three years after Duponchel's death.

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THE DARK SWORDGRASS: *AGROTIS IPSILON* HUFNAGEL IN MARCH. — Although Bretherton, Goater & Lorimer (*Moths & Butterflies of Great Britain & Ireland*, Vol. 9) say this species has been recorded in every month of the year save January and February (South says one at least in February), I see that Evans & Evans (*Macrolepidoptera of Croydon*) regarded 12th May 1971 as a date early enough to be worthy of mention. So two in 1981 on March 10 in my actinic light trap here seem to be worthy of record. They were accompanied by a single *Eupsilia transversa* Hufnagel, a species frequent here last autumn at ivy bloom. Since starting the trap in 1978, I recorded several *A. ipsilon* in the autumn of that year and of 1979. In 1980, two came in June and six in August/September, all singletons.

The three nights previous to March 10 this year had produced nil results, though the same weather had continued during this period — a moderate SW wind bringing persistent cloud with rain on and off and temperatures steady between about 10 and 11 degrees C. throughout. I assume that such a record would be regarded as immigrant and not native emergence. The London Weather Centre informed me today that these winds derive from the area of the west coasts of Spain and North Africa and the Canary Islands.

Incidentally, I noted that the antennae of these two moths had male bipectination which very noticeably tapered abruptly halfway leaving the distal half filiform. Bretherton *et al.* above do not mention this but merely describe the male antenna as "strongly bipectinate", although filiform tips are described for some other *Agrotis* species. — R. A. Softly, 12, Parliament Court, Parliament Hill, London N.W.3 2TS, 11.iii.1981.



Softly, R A. 1981. "The dark swordgrass: *Agrotis ipsilon* Hufnagel in March." *The entomologist's record and journal of variation* 93, 99–99.

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