

OBITUARIES

Sir Henry Lawson (1898-1978)

Henry Lawson who died on December 10th 1978, aged 80, was yet another most knowledgeable and enthusiastic field naturalist who enjoyed to the full his pastimes and interest both in ornithology and the study of mainly the British lepidoptera. He was educated at Lancing College and Cambridge University, taking up the legal profession and eventually becoming chief legal adviser to Lloyds Bank. On becoming President of the Law Society in 1963, he received the honour of a Knighthood. He had a lifelong interest in our butterflies and moths and it was while in the Highlands in the early 1930's that he observed a large moth flying over the heather. It turned out to be a *Crymodes assimilis*, a rarity in those days and seldom seen on the wing in the daytime. Later, he found a Bedstraw Hawk at rest in a room at his home at Pirbright, where he lived for just over forty years, and where he ran a m.v. trap regularly during many of them. In 1949, in the Isle of Wight, he was fortunate enough to be there during the big immigration of *Celerio livornica*. In the vicinity of his Surrey home he found the red form of the Powdered Quaker breeding on bog-myrtle, a rare plant in the region. He often combined bird-watching with entomology in several parts of the British Isles, and not least his country cottage on Selsey Bill which served as a very good base. Henry Lawson joined the then South London Entomological and Natural History Society as far back as 1927, and was made an Honorary Member just before his death. All sympathy is accorded to his widow, his daughter, and three sons for the loss of one who through his quiet nature and most kindly manner endeared himself to all who had the privilege of knowing him. — C. G. M. de W.

George Woollatt (1908-1978)

With the passing of George Woollatt on October 26th 1978 at the age of 70, the fraternity of field lepidopterists has lost one of its keenest members who resumed his early interest in these insects quite late in life. The son of an engineer, it was largely from his uncle, that eminent lepidopterist Edgar Hare, from whom he learnt a great deal about our butterflies and moths. He used to run a m.v. trap at his home near Chobham, Surrey, where the autumn of 1969 was especially propitious since it attracted only the second British specimen of the large Snout moth, *Hypena obesalis*, and shortly afterwards a remarkable aberration of the Silver Y moth, with a blotch instead of the usual gamma-mark. When he retired from his career in the Westminster Bank in 1971, he moved to the West Country where near Yeovil in 1973 he reported seeing a *Plusia bractea*, a very southern record for this species. Further west he resided near Exeter and twice near Seaton where his trap was visited by a good many choice insects, including some remarkable forms of the Jersey Tiger, some with the forewings almost totally obscured with brown. In March 1977, he took

near Beer, Devon, superb example of the little noctuid *Eublemma ostrina*. He finally settled at Mockbeggar near Ringwood, where he kept his trap running and altogether during his latter years was able to obtain a very comprehensive series of the macrolepidoptera, though he seldom travelled far afield. He was also a great adept and authority on wireless and used to receive and transmit messages all over the world from an apparatus he built at his Surrey home. Of charming and kindly personality, he will indeed be missed by all who knew him, and all sympathy is extended to his widow and surviving family. — C. G. M. de W.

Current Literature

The Observer's Book of Caterpillars by **David J. Carter**. Pp. 159 with 226 coloured illustrations by **Gordon Riley** and 17 line drawings. Published by Frederick Warne & Co. @ £1.25 ISBN 0 7323 1592 8.

This is a most useful addition to the Observer Books. Written by the curator of our National Collection of Lepidoptera, the text combines the skill of the professional entomologist with the understanding of a field naturalist. The introduction is a model of a concise account of caterpillars, their place and function in the life cycle, their general features, defence and camouflage, predators, parasites and diseases. There are informed comments on Conservation and collecting, rearing and preservation.

Sadly, because of space, only 205 species have been included. Selection of species has depended on whether they are most likely to be encountered or if they have an unusual appearance or specialized biology. Family form and shape are displayed as silhouettes on the end papers. For each species illustrated, foodplants, months when found, distribution and notes on habits including mode of pupation and time of adult emergence are given.

The plates are generally good and compare favourably with other hand illustrated books on larvae though some of the greens are not quite right—*Saturnia pavonia* for example. Where dimorphism is present, two colour forms are given. Nevertheless the painting of *P. bucephala*, when compared with Miss Angel's cover photo of that species, does suggest that modern photographic technique generally gives a better illustration than a hand painting where larvae are concerned. The illustration of the larva stated to be that of *Xylena exsoleta* L. refers to *X. vetusta* Hbn.

An excellent book for naturalists or gardeners who wish to name their finds and one which most lepidopterists will be glad to have by them. — E.H.W.



Worms, C. G. M. de. 1979. "George Woollatt (1908-1978)." *The entomologist's record and journal of variation* 91, 175–176.

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