

PLUTELLA Schrk.**Plutella omissa** sp. n.

Head, face, and antennæ, white; palpi slightly tinged with brownish at the sides.

Fore-wings, white, with a yellowish tinge, most noticeable along the fold, sometimes with a very few scattered brownish scales; the dorsal and apical margins and the anal angle are dotted with small groups of brown scales; cilia white.

Hind-wings, very pale grayish, iridescent, with a rosy hue; cilia paler.

Exp. al., 13^{mm}.

Habitat, Willow Creek, Oregon, September 9, 1871. Five specimens.

Type, ♂ ♀, *Mus. Wlsm.*

(*To be continued.*)

GENERAL NOTES.**NOTES ON THE COCHINEAL INSECT.**

In October, 1886, we received from Mr. A. F. Carothers, Iuka Ranch, near Cotulla, La Salle County, Tex., a large number of specimens of the Cochineal Insect (*Coccus cacti*), and were much interested to find that they were being destroyed by a predaceous caterpillar, which worked in precisely the same way as *Dakruma coccidivora* upon the Cottony Maple scale, described by Professor Comstock in the annual report of this Department for 1879. The caterpillars ate one Coccid after another, spinning a silken tube as they progressed and remained hidden inside the tube, which was covered with fragments of the *Coccus* and of its white secretion. We were fortunately able to rear the adult, which proved to be beyond question identical with *Dakruma coccidivora*, this species having previously been found only in the District of Columbia.

Another enemy of the Cochineal Insect was reared from this same lot of specimens. This is a true parasitic fly of the genus *Leucopis*, species of which have previously been recorded as attacking scale insects. Specimens were sent to Dr. Williston who has kindly sent us the following description, as the species proves to be new:

Leucopis bellula, n. sp., Williston

Length 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ -2^{mm}. Black, thickly grayish white dusted. Front with two slender, gently arcuate, black stripes; the narrow orbital space perceptibly more whitish. Antennæ black, the basal joints shimmering whitish; arista short. Face in color like the frontal orbits. Mesonotum with two conspicuous chocolate-brown stripes, beginning on the inner side of each humerus and gently converging to the posterior margin. In the middle of the dorsum, before the scutellum, there are two bristles; the usual bristles on the lateral margin, and on the margin of the scutellum; none on the front or vertex. Abdomen more whitish than the thorax; clothed with short black hairs; first segment with the lateral margins and a posterior band, deep brown; second third and fourth segments each with a slender, sub-interrupted stripe and a pair of rounded spots, all deep brown in color; the pair on the second mod-

erately large, on the third, smaller, and on the fourth, punctiform or minute. Legs black, with the same whitish pruinosity; the immediate tip of femora, the base of front and hind tibiae, the middle tibiae, and the tarsi, except their tip, yellow, the tibiae elsewhere and the tip of the tarsi brown or infuscated; in some specimens, the tibiae throughout are more brown. Wings hyaline, or faintly clouded; the auxiliary vein distinctly separated from the first longitudinal, except at tip; the last section of the fifth vein a little shorter than the penultimate one of the fourth.

Four specimens, from Professor Riley, labeled "Par. on *Coccus cacti*."

I was, at first, in doubt as to the specific difference of this from *L. bella* Loew, from Cuba. Aside, however, from the different habitat, there are sufficient differences in coloration to indicate a well-marked variety, at all events. Loew describes his species as having "Antennae nigrae, albido-pollinosae," the second segment of the abdomen only, as bearing a "maculam rotundam atram," and "Alae lacteae" in color.

A species of *Drosophila* was also bred from the mass of Coccids, and this Dr. Williston determines as *Drosophila quinaria* Loew. This insect, however, is of course not a parasite.

We notice from the *Florida Dispatch* of August 6, 1888, that the Cochineal Insect has become very abundant upon Opuntias at Jessamine, Pasco County, Fla., on the authority of a communication from Walter N. Pike, of that place. The specimens were determined by Mr. Ashmead. The only previous record of the occurrence of this dye insect in Florida is that by Professor Comstock upon page 347 of the annual report of this Department for 1880. Professor Comstock's specimens were collected by Dr. R. S. Turner at Fort George, Fla., upon a yellow-flowering cactus, the species of which was not determined.

THE BEET CARRION-BEETLE.

A notice in the *American Agriculturist* for September, 1888, to the effect that the Beet Carrion-beetle (*Silpha opaca*) has been doing a great deal of damage to mangolds in England the past season, reminds us of the fact, to which attention has not lately been called, that this insect is also found commonly in this country, but that it has never here, so far as records go, been reported as injurious. Like other species of its family it feeds upon decaying animal and vegetable material. In England, however, it occasionally does great damage to the mangel-wurzel crop. It was first noticed to have this habit in 1844. The damage is done by the larva feeding upon the leaves.

AN AFRICAN LADY-BIRD INTRODUCED INTO NEW ZEALAND.

Through the kindness of Mr. Henry D. Twohy, of Auckland, we were some time ago favored with the following communication from the *Otago Witness* of February 3, 1888, which, through an oversight, had not been published. Mr. Twohy suggests that, if it seemed desirable, the same lady-birds could be shipped from Cape Town and landed in New York by way of London in twenty-six days, if the boats made close connection. Our Australian importations, however, are so promising at present that this experiment is hardly worth trying:

An interesting experiment is being conducted at Nelson in the way of acclimatization. It appears that some of the finest trees in and about Nelson have been de-



Williston, Samuel W. 1889. "Leucopis bellula, n." *Insect life* 1, 258–259.

View This Item Online: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/51783>

Permalink: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/3749>

Holding Institution

Smithsonian Libraries and Archives

Sponsored by

Smithsonian

Copyright & Reuse

Copyright Status: Public domain. The BHL considers that this work is no longer under copyright protection.

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>.