

NEWS, NOTES & OBSERVATIONS

According to a print-out from a Monarch-watching group called Journey South, the Monarch butterfly migration this year is much better than in the past few years! The contact for this group is:  
jn-report@learner.org  
or: jn-news@learner.org



To corroborate this is Gail Everett's report that she is observing more Monarchs now than in about the last 5 years!

Gail's annual butterfly count, which included counting at the Brownfield Bog, took in sightings of over a thousand European Skippers, a non-native species. There were also many White Admirals seen, rather late for their normal season. Gail also does a Monarch-Watch at Maine Audubon.



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On August 23, Nancy Sferra led an insect walk at the Kennebunk Plains for the Nature Conservancy. The big highlight for wasp-watchers was a huge female Pelecinid! *Ammophila* wasps were also about.

Nancy Sferra has been working with Dan Jennings (spider-man), Bob Nelson (Coleoptera), and Don Mairs (Orthops) on a 2-year pitfall trap project at the Waterboro Barrens.

If there's anyone out there who could help with identifications on Phalangids ("daddy-long-legs") or ants, for this project, please contact Nancy Sferra at the Sanford office of the Nature Conservancy: 490-4012.

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Tony Roberts is continuing with an ongoing study of small moths (microleps). If you have any questions or observations please contact him at: 367 Village Road, Steuben, ME 04680



The M.E.S. meeting & field trip of June 7th at the Pine Tree State Arboretum gave us a new spider record! Bob Nelson collected a specimen identified by Dan Jennings as:

*Xysticus chippewa* (Gertsch)

a type of "crab spider."

Dan Jennings would welcome any spider specimens, as long as they are sent in isopropyl alcohol, with a pencilled label inside (NOT ink!) and data for locality, habitat, county, vegetation, date, collector. His address is: P.O. Box 130, Garland, ME 04939-0130.

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The M.E.S. editor would like to receive ANY wasps, yellowjackets or hornets that you find deceased around the attic, barn or garage this fall. They do not need to be in perfect shape. Just fold them up in a half-sheet of *The Wall Street Journal* and mail them in a regular business envelope to: Monica Russo, 19 North Skilling Rd., Arundel, ME 04046. I'm not fussy.

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*Polistes dominulus*, a paper-wasp native to Europe & the mid-East, has been found again in southern Maine. Monica Russo caught specimens in 1995 & 1996, and now has a specimen for this year from an additional site, the Biddeford Airport. They have been spreading throughout the northeast.

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Wasn't it a good summer for preying mantids (mantises?)! I saw four, anyway! MJR

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Question: Is there really a ground beetle named Agra phobia?? That's what an article by Richard Conniff states in the December 1996 Smithsonian magazine!

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A recent trip to Nova Scotia and Newfoundland resulted in several specimens of bumblebees (Bombus) -- about the only pollinators that could get around in the driving winds there. Some of these were sent to Robert Jacobson at Greer Labs in North Carolina, and identified as Bombus frigidus, B. ternarius, and B. terricola. Newfoundland is just spectacular! MJR

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There are some new records for pests of ornamental plants in Maine. Richard Folsom sent in a report regarding a new beetle on lillies, Lilioceris lili, which was found in York & Ogunquit. Native to Europe, this beetle is scarlet with black head, antennae, and legs. Also new is the Florida fern caterpillar, Callopietria floridensis, which were found on a shipment of ferns from Florida. So far it doesn't seem to be established in any Maine greenhouses!

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Thanks to Michael Mazurkiewicz for a correction to one of our reports in the last M.E.S. Newsletter: the Neuropteran hunter of spiders, Mantispa brunnea, is now renamed: it should be Climaciella brunnea.

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BOOK REVIEWS, anyone? If you've just read something new and noteworthy, send in your comments!

Sam Ristich reports having observed many Banded Purples and Red Spotted Purples this summer. He collected a number of Mourning Cloak caterpillars in August, and had adult butterflies taking off on August 17 & 18 -- however, some had been parasitized by sarcophagids.

Sam also reports a fly <sup>larva</sup> that inhabits carpenter ant nests: Microdon, which he found in a log he split.

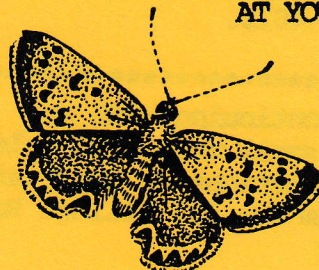
Also: He reports 3 deer mice which were parasitized by ox warbles -- probably Cuterebridae. And so, how does a diurnal fly find a family of nocturnal mice, to take advantage of?

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On September 12, from 7:45 to 8:15 AM I watched a katydid go through a series of "warm-ups" -- First, it leaned all the way over to one side slowly, as if falling over in slow motion; then it leaned all the way over on the opposite side. Then it circled or rotated its head around. Then it raised itself straight up and down elevator-style, slowly. Finally it stretched out each leg in slow motion and opened its wings. This all took a solid half-hour, as I watched it right outside my window. It kind of looked like Tai Chi for katydids! MJR

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PLEASE PASS THIS NEWSLETTER ON TO OTHERS, OR POST IT AT YOUR SCHOOL!



NEWS, NOTES & OBSERVATIONS

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BUGS IN THE NEWS:

During the summer, the evening TV news gave spot coverage to the browntail moth a few times. Apparently, there are some people who get allergic reactions to the fuzz or scales from these. If you have any questions, contact Dick Dearborn or Don Ouellette in Augusta at the Insect & Disease Lab: 287-2431

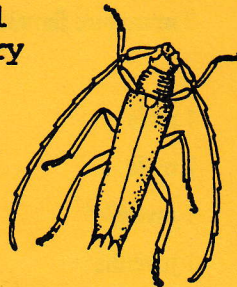


BUG PEOPLE IN THE NEWS:

Channel 13 did a spot on Sam Ristich leading a group out in the woods, mid-coast. It's always great to see TV teams focusing on the natural sciences!

AND:

In the August issue of Maine's THE BEE LINE newsletter for bee-keepers, our State apiary inspector Tony Jadczyk reports: "On June 5, the Discovery Channel spent the day in Maine's blueberry fields and barrens filming for a program that will feature honey bees, the parasitic mite situation and the importance of honeybees as pollinators of America's food supply."



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DON'T FORGET THAT WE WILL HAVE ANOTHER NEWSLETTER IN THE SPRING!

AS YOU SPEND THE WINTER WORKING ON YOUR COLLECTION & FIND ANYTHING INTERESTING, LET US KNOW!

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SEND IN YOUR IDEAS & COMMENTS FOR THE NEXT NEWSLETTER -- MAYBE A BOOK REVIEW OR MOVIE REVIEW!

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MOVIE REVIEW ! !  
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MOVIE: (Videotape)  
JOE'S APARTMENT

This is a 1996 Warner video that has already been discounted to about \$9. I guess a whole lot of people aren't rushing to see footage of cockroaches, which is what this is mostly about. The target audience is no mystery: college males. But if you want to see stunning shots of real and computer-designed roaches, this is your film! And there's lots of them, but they are actually funny, and surprising. Best scenes: Roaches line-dancing, and roaches doing formal synchronized swimming. But some of this film is quite disgusting, and there is about 2 or 3 minutes of it that are NOT appropriate for children! It's rated PG-13, and if you could delete just a couple of minutes of footage, it would be a great disgusting film for most kids! MJR

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THE NEXT M.E.S. NEWSLETTER WILL BE OUT APRIL 30, 1998. SEND IN YOUR NEWS & NOTES BY THE FIRST WEEK OF APRIL!

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RUTHANN COULOMBE IS CURRENTLY WORKING ON OUR M.E.S. DIRECTORY! WE HOPE THAT BEFORE THE YEAR IS OUT, YOU WILL HAVE A CHANCE TO SEE A DRAFT COPY TO REVIEW. MANY THANKS TO RUTHANN FOR BEING THE M.E.S. DOCUMENTARIAN!

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As of September 27, the ant-lion pits at Legros' Agway in Biddeford were still active! It was only 60 degrees.

**SPIDERS (ARANEAE) OF THE PINE TREE ARBORETUM, AUGUSTA, KENNEBEC COUNTY,  
MAINE**

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Collections by: Robert E. Nelson, Colby College, 7-VI-1997

Determinations by: Daniel T. Jennings, USDA, Forest Service (ret.), 15-VII-1997

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<b>Spider Taxa<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Number of Individuals by Life Stage</b>
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*WEB SPINNERS*

LINYPHIIDAE (Erigoninae)

*Hypselistes florens* (O. P.-Cambridge)                      2 females

TETRAGNATHIDAE

*Tetragnatha* sp.    1 juvenile<sup>2</sup>

*HUNTERS*

LYCOSIDAE

*Pardosa* sp.    1 juvenile<sup>2</sup>

PHILODROMIDAE

*Philodromus rufus vibrans* Dondale                      1 female

*Tibellus* sp. [prob. *oblongus* (Walck.)]                      2 immature females<sup>2</sup>

THOMISIDAE

*Xysticus chippewa* Gertsch<sup>3</sup>                                      1 male

*Xysticus luctans* (C. L. Koch)                                      1 male

*Xysticus* sp. [prob. *punctatus* Keys.]                      1 juvenile<sup>2</sup>

*Xysticus* sp.    1 juvenile<sup>2</sup>

SALTICIDAE

*Pelegrina insignis* (Banks)<sup>4</sup>                                      1 male

*Phidippus* sp.    2 juveniles<sup>2</sup>

*Sitticus palustris* (Peckham & Peckham)                      1 female

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<sup>1</sup> Spider taxa follow: Platnick, N. I. *Advances in Spider Taxonomy 1988-1991*. New York Entomological Society in association with The American Museum of Natural History, NY 1-846 pp., 1993.

<sup>2</sup> Identification keys are not available for juvenile spiders.

<sup>3</sup> NEW STATE RECORD!

<sup>4</sup> Formerly *Metaphidippus insignis* (Banks).