

AN AUTUMN VISIT TO CAPE CLEAR ISLAND,
CO. CORK, IRELAND

By MICHAEL G. W. TERRY*

During an eighteen day (September 28th to October 15th, 1985) visit to Cape Clear Island bird observatory I took the opportunity to operate a 125W m.v. lamp from the observatory's premises. Very little work on the moths has been undertaken at this site. The limited data available concerned mainly day flying species recorded by ornithologists. The opportunity to explore this new area, entomologically, proved to be very exciting and rewarding.

My aim in operating a trap was, primarily, to record migrant species. Cape Clear is ideally situated for this task, lying some five miles from the Cork mainland. It is the most south-westerly point of Ireland bar the Fastnet Rock lighthouse, lying some four miles beyond.

Several westerly gales coincided with my visit making trapping impossible in such conditions. I managed to operate the trap on thirteen nights with ideal conditions for migrants occurring on four. : September 28th and 30th; October 12th and 13th, respectively. South-easterly winds with drizzle or fog predominated during the four nights.

Common migrant species were plentiful. More interestingly, rarer immigrants were caught with some regularity. No less than four *Mythimna loreyi* were seen; one on October 9th, two on the 12th and one on the 13th. Two *Mythimna unipuncta* were trapped; on September 28th and October 13th. *Spodoptera exigua* was seen on September 30th; *Heliothis armigera* on October 12th and *Agrius convolvuli* on October 11th.

Phlogophora meticulosa and *Autographa gamma* were recorded commonly, with 60+ *meticulosa* on October 12th. Variable numbers of *Udea ferrugalis*, *Nomophila noctuella*, *Agrotis ipsilon*, *Noctua pronuba* and *Peridroma saucia* were also caught.

Resident species were noted but the number and variety were small. Interesting residents included *Standfussiana lucerneae*, *Xestia agathina*, *Allophyas oxyacanthae*, *Photedes pygmina* and *Stilbia anomala*.

Microlepidoptera were occasionally noted, including *Hofmannophila pseudospretella*, *Eudonia angustea* and *Emmelina monodactyla*. Noteworthy captures were two specimens of the tortricoid *Crociosema plebejana* on September 30th and October 13th. This species had hitherto been recorded only once before in Ireland by H. C. Huggins in Co. Kerry, 1966 (*Ent. Rec.* 78:256).

No geometrids were recorded, and *Macroglossum stellatarum*, usually noted by ornithologists here, was absent.

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The twenty nine species recorded are as follows: *Hofmannophila pseudospretella* Stt.; *Crociosema plebejana* Zell.; *Alucita hexadactyla* L.; *Eudonia angustea* Curt.; *Udea ferrugalis* Hubn.; *Nomophila noctuella* D. & S.; *Emmelina monodactyla* L.; *Agrius convolvuli* L.; *Agrotis ipsilon* Hufn.; *Standfussiana lucerneae* L.; *Noctua pronuba* L.; *Noctua comes* Hubn.; *Peridroma saucia* Hufn.; *Xestia xanthographa* D. & S.; *Xestia agathina* Dup.; *Mythimna unipuncta* Haw.; *Mythimna loreyi* Dup.; *Aporophyla nigra* Haw.; *Allophyas oxyacanthae* L.; *Omphaloscelis lunosa* Haw.; *Amphipyra tragopogonis* Clerck; *Phlogophora meticulosa* L.; *Photodes pygmaea* Haw.; *Luperina testacea* D. & S.; *Hydraecia micacea* Esp.; *Spodoptera exigua* Hubn.; *Stilba anomala* Haw.; *Heliothis armigera* Hubn.; *Autographa gamma* L.

My relatively short visit to Cape Clear Island has thus demonstrated the potential of this site for recording migrant Lepidoptera.

Acknowledgement

I would like to thank David Borton, the observatory warden, for permission to operate an m.v. lamp at the observatory and for every encouragement.

BUTTERFLIES FROM ASWAN, UPPER EGYPT, DECEMBER 1983 – During a day in Aswan, on 29th December 1983, I had the opportunity to undertake a couple of hours collecting along the banks of the Nile. The butterflies recorded there were few in both species and individuals and most of them were well past their prime, suggesting the time of year was unsuitable. The only butterfly found to be somewhat abundant was *Azanus ubaldus* Stoll, always in proximity of and associated with *Acacia* trees. The species recorded were as follows (see also Wiltshire, E. P. 1948. The Lepidoptera of the Kingdom of Egypt. *Bull. Soc. Fouad I Ent.* 32 : 203-226).

LYCAENIDAE : *Deudorix livia* Klug; *Lampides boeticus* L.: *Syntarucus pirithous* L. – a single female whose genitalia were found to be identical to those of *pirithous* from Southern Europe, thus excluding possibility of its being a member of one of the other closely allied African *Syntarucus* species.; *Azanus ubaldus* Stoll. a number associated with the *Acacia* trees that are situated at the edge of the green zone that runs along the Nile; *Chilades eleusis* Demaison – the genitalia confirm them as *Chilades* sp. and they are here placed under *eleusis* on the basis of superficial affinities to the series confirmed as *eleusis* in the B.M.(N.H.). DANAIDAE: *Danaus chrysippus* L. a single male seen. JOHN G. COUTSIS, 4 Glykonos Street, Athens 10675, Greece.



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