

fact I saw none during the last six years or so of that period. But in 1977, four years after moving to Charlton, I met with it repeatedly in that district — but principally at Abbey Wood (just east of Plumstead). Though most of my captures were of single specimens, it turned up in some numbers at the latter place on 15th July by sweeping flowers of Oxford ragwort along the base of a temporary wall in what could best be called an 'industrial wilderness', together with its common congener *S. scripta* L. Each year since then it has been noted, but sparsely and always singly, in my Charlton garden, at Kidbrooke, Shooters Hill, Woolwich Common, Charlton Reach, etc. It may be recalled that the second half of the summer preceding the sudden 'outbreak' was intensely hot and dry, a fact perhaps not unconnected with the remarkable (temporary?) increase of *S. rueppellii* in these parts. — A. A. ALLEN.

THE PRESENT STATUS OF *LITHOPHANE LEAUTIERI* (BOISD.) IN BRITAIN

By D. F. OWEN**

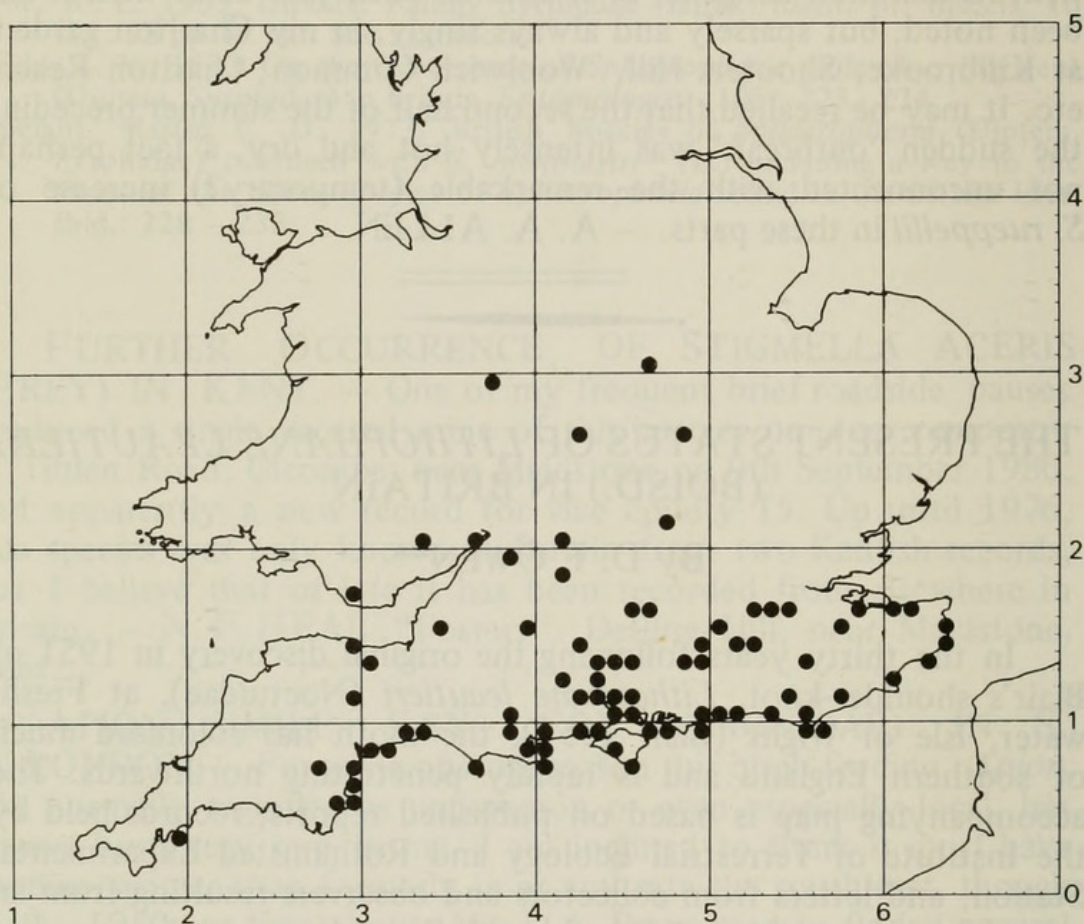
In the thirty years following the original discovery in 1951 of Blair's shoulder-knot, *Lithophane leautieri* (Noctuidae), at Freshwater, Isle of Wight (Blair 1952), the moth has colonised much of southern England and is rapidly penetrating northwards. The accompanying map is based on published reports, records held by the Institute of Terrestrial Ecology and Rothamsted Experimental Station, and letters from collectors and observers resulting from an appeal for information published in the *Record*.

As shown, *L. leautieri* is known from 81 10 km squares in England and Wales. The northernmost record is Leicester (1979) and the moth now occurs, in some places as the commonest October species, from Cornwall to Kent, a truly remarkable example of colonisation, reminiscent of what happened to the golden plusia, *Polychrisia moneta* (Fab.) earlier this century, and the varied coronet, *Hadena compta* (D. & S.) from 1948 onwards. There is every reason to suppose that *L. leautieri* will continue to expand its range in Britain and increase in numbers in localities where it is already established. The map can therefore be regarded as a thirty-year progress report of a moth recently added to the British list.

The only known larval food-plant in Britain is the Monterey cypress, *Cupressus macrocarpa*, introduced in 1838 and now common in low-lying areas, especially in parks and gardens along the south coast. Such evidence as there is suggests that the larvae require

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new leaves and flowerbuds high up on the taller trees (Haggett 1957, Kettlewell 1957a, 1957b, Wakely 1961). It has not been recorded from wild juniper, *Juniperus communis*, whose associated fauna has been well studied (Ward 1977), but is known from *Juniperus* spp. and occasionally *Cupressus* spp. from continental Europe. It would be worth examining introduced species of juniper in gardens for larvae.



A more detailed account of the colonisation of Britain by this species will be published later. My intention in this communication is to publish an up-to-date map in the hope that readers will fill in gaps and report further range extensions. I shall be glad to receive additional records, including those from localities where the moth is already established, and especially of the discovery of wild larvae and their food-plants.

I thank the numerous correspondents who have sent me records, John Heath for access to the Institute of Terrestrial Ecology records, Rothamsted Experimental Station for information, and J. M. Chalmers-Hunt for much encouragement.

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TWO NOTABLE DUNG FLIES IN GREENWICH PARK. — From a puparium found in horse dung in Greenwich Park last July, a ♀ *Gymnodia humilis* Zett. (Muscidae) emerged a few weeks later; there are no breeding records for this species in Fonseca (1968, *Handb. Ident. Brit. Ins.*, 10: (4b): 15). In the same locality on fresh horse dung I caught single examples of *Calythea nigricans* Dsv. (Anthomyiidae) — ♂ 3. viii, ♀ 7. ix — a species which Mr. Fonseca (who kindly named all three flies) says appears rather infrequent but that he once found the males hovering in a vast swarm in Eastling Wood (E. Kent) and later hovering in small numbers in parts of the New Forest. He swept some ♀♀ in the former place off vegetation under the aerial swarm, but does not connect the species particularly with dung. The male has a striking pattern of white markings on the abdomen, which shows up in frontal lighting, but the female has no trace of it and in fact looks quite different. — A. A. ALLEN.

CALOPTILIA HEMIDACTYLELLA D. & S. (LEP.: GRACILLARIIDAE) IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE. — Whilst re-examining some old genitalia slides recently, I noted one I made in 1954 for Mr. L. Price and labelled *C. hemidactylella* ♀. In November of that year we had beaten out one or two specimens from bracken etc. in a wood near Cirencester. I labelled the specimen *hemidactylella* at the time because in Pierce & Metcalfe (1935, *Genitalia of the Tineina*), for the females of the *Caloptilia*, all other species were quite different from the one I was examining. Pierce & Metcalfe, however, do not figure the female of *hemidactylella* so I assumed that this must be what I had. Furthermore, the foodplant of this species, sycamore, was quite plentiful at this site. Meyrick (1928, *Rev. Handbook Br. Lep.*) gives several localities in Britain for *hemidactylella*, but recent research by Col. A. M. Emmet reveals that there is no actual proof that any of them are correct. So that it would appear that the few specimens taken by Price and myself in Gloucestershire in 1954, and also in 1955, constitute the only confirmed records of the species in Britain.

I am indebted to Dr. J. D. Bradley for kindly confirming my mount of the female, and also for preparing another of a male. Thanks also to Col. Emmet, who has seen the genitalia mount of the male and added his confirmation. — J. NEWTON, 1, Oxleaze Close, Tetbury, Glos GL 8JS. [This is a most interesting discovery, and we hope to hear further from Mr. Newton of his finding in due course of the early stages of this elusive species. — J. M. C. -H.]



Owen, D F. 1981. "The present status of *Lithophane leautieri* (Boisd.) in Britain." *The entomologist's record and journal of variation* 93, 83–85.

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