

The larva, reinstated in its pupal chamber, resealed it, and changed to a pinkish pupa. This stage lasted for four weeks, and the adult then emerged. The adult on emergence was straw-coloured, and remained so for five days, then gradually assuming the characteristic colours until on the ninth day it was fully mature.

It is noteworthy that although the wood was kept outdoors in apparently natural conditions this adult was not ready to emerge until 6th August, long after the species is usually found. Two others emerged from other pieces of the wood on their own account in early July, together with a considerable number of *Conopalpus testaceus* Ol. from a rotten part of one piece. *Grynobius excavatus* Kl.\* was not present.

## Notes and Observations

AMPHIPYRA PYRAMIDEA L. (SENSU AUCT.) CLUSTERING UNDER BARK; WITH A FEW COMPARATIVE REMARKS ON CONCEALMENT, BEHAVIOUR, ETC.—On 30th August 1972, while searching for Coleoptera in a lane at Blackheath, not far behind my former garden, I was much surprised, on lifting a smallish piece of loose bark on the trunk of a moribund elm, when a Copper Underwing quickly emerged from beneath it and almost instantly flew off. From the crevice thus partly exposed there then came forth in rapid succession a series of specimens, one at a time, each immediately taking flight and coming to rest high out of sight in that or nearby trees. I was unprepared for quarry that did not wait to be caught, but concerned to see how long this curious exodus would last; in fact it was over in about ten seconds, during which, as far as I could estimate, seven moths made their escape. Judging by the smallness of the cavity—what little could be seen of it—they must have been quite tightly packed. Another rather odd feature was the presence of many earwigs under the covering bark, which one might have thought disturbing to the moths. The species is somewhat common in the district at light, but whether it is the true *pyramidea* or the lately separated *berbera* Rungs (or conceivably a mixture) I fear I cannot at present say.

Barrett (1899, *Lep. Brit. Isl.*, 5:251) states that *A. pyramidea* is “only found in woods”, and this seems to be the general idea among authors. It is, however, manifestly no longer true; for, as just seen, the moth can be common enough in a built-up suburb where nothing that could be called a wood has existed for very many years (and where other supposedly woodland species such as *Polia nebulosa* Hufn. occur regularly). Further, Barrett (*l.c.*), whilst remarking on its habit of hiding in sheds, and that it probably rests by day in tree-holes or on the undersides of boughs but that evidence is lacking, makes no mention of its clustering under bark; nor do other authors

\* Dr. A. Strand has proved that the various supposed European *Grynobius* are but one variable species, *G. planus* F.—A.A.A.



that I have consulted. The subcortical habit—though not that of aggregation—is reminiscent of its smaller and less striking congener *A. tragopoginis* L., which I have often found when stripping loose bark from dead standing trunks (but always singly). The latter, moreover, reacts differently to disturbance: instead of taking wing at once and rising into the air, it scurries mouse-like to a new retreat and only eventually, if thwarted in that object, flies off keeping low and fairly straight. Such a difference is in harmony with the general tendency for Noctuids with coloured hindwings to start instantly into flight when disturbed at rest, while their more drab cousins seem to need to “get up steam” before they can take off. (A marked exception is afforded by *Mormo maura* L., which with its very ample wings moves off as swiftly as a *Catocala*.)

In some species, among them the present one — and a host of others in a less pronounced degree — the light-shunning tropism that leads them to pass the day in some dark cranny is evidently so strong as to overcome fully the lamp-seeking one which appears strangely contrary to it, *once the latter is satisfied*. Thus it is, that such moths, entering a lighted room and basking for only a few minutes in the lamp’s rays, set off in a most purposeful manner to explore every nook and corner and finally settle down behind any available cover, such as a screen over a fireplace or against a wall. *M. maura* has even gone further and vanished up the chimney! — A. A. ALLEN, 49, Montcalm Road, London SE7 8QG, 23.xii.74.

RECORDS OF *HYPENA CRASSALIS* FABRICIUS FROM KENT IN 1974. — On the morning of 28th July 1974 I took in my garden trap in Sittingbourne a rather worn female *Hypena crassalis*. Unfortunately, despite making it feel at home by providing it with a healthy bilberry plant, no eggs were deposited.

A few other examples of this moth have recently turned up, one by my colleague Steven Whitebread in a trap at Platt, near Sevenoaks on 22.6.74. This was at a meeting of the Kent Field Club at Mr. McClintock’s house where a trap had been run overnight. *Crassalis* had apparently been discussed prior to the trap being opened since one had previously been taken at Trottiscliffe. It was suggested that this latter moth might have come from the bilberry on Wrotham Heath, only a few miles away. This locality is recorded as possibly the most easterly for bilberry in Kent and could be the breeding site for all these three specimens. Unfortunately, bilberry is now becoming quite scarce in Kent and this is reflected in the increased scarcity of the moth. — DR. I. A. WATKINSON, 2, Fairleas, Sittingbourne, Kent.

PHYLLONORYCTER MESSANIELLA ZELLER: A MASS EMERGENCE. — On the afternoon of Sunday 28th October 1973 I was walking through the National Trust grounds of Clivedon House — the ancestral home of the Aster’s — on the banks of the Thames in Bucks. As usual at that time of the year, I was





Allen, Anthony Adrian. 1975. "Amphipyra pyramidea 2. (sensu auct.) clustering under bark; with a few comparative remarks on concealment, behaviour. etc." *The entomologist's record and journal of variation* 87, 24–25.

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