

## ENTOMOLOGY.

## NOTES FOR APRIL IN VANCOUVER ISLAND.

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The past month, April, has been exceptionally mild and the season so far as many of the insects are concerned, is fully three weeks in advance of last year.

As early as the 22nd of March, in the course of an afternoon walk, I was able to collect no fewer than 40 species of Coleoptera. These were mostly found under bark and perhaps the best capture was *Elaphrus Clairvillei* of which rare beetle I took 3 specimens. Thus far I seem to have been giving most attention to Coleoptera though collecting in all orders. Consequently I have more to report in the beetle line than in any other.

Among notable captures during April I may mention as occurring under bark the rare Carab *Psydrus piceus* together with *Clinidium calcaratum* and *Peltis Pippingskoeldi*, both very common, *Adelocera profusa*, *Hylastes cavernosus*, *Gnathotrichus retusus*, *Dendroctonus rufipennis*? *Rhizophagus sculpturatus*, the strange looking *Phellopsis porcata* and the curiously flat *Pediacus subglaber*. Under dead crows (these are the only kind of crows a farmer in these parts cares to see) were found, the very abundant and always in season *Necrophilus hydrophiloides*, *Silpha Lapponica*, two species of *Choleva*, *Hister fædatus*, *Saprinus lugens*, and two or three *Histeridæ* not yet determined; also of course *Creophilus villosus* and many smaller *Staphylinidæ*. An inspection of the fences brought to light *Hylesinus sericeus* (common), numerous specimens of *Haltica*, *Malachius auritus*, *Ellychnia Californica*, *Trogosita virescens*, an unknown *Lasconotus*, *Platycerus Oregonensis*, *Clerus sphegeus* and *abruptus*, *Hylotrupes ligneus* (very common) and an interesting little beetle, *Listrus Motschulskii* which I took last year, for the first time, on the same fences. Under logs I found two *Ditylus gracilis* and *Ipthimus serratus* and very many *Carabidæ*. Hiding in crevices *Plectrura spinicauda* and two kinds of *Helops*, *pernitens* and *lætus*. On the wing in the bright sunshine I have taken many

specimens of the beautiful *Cucujus puniceus* and the equally brilliant *Eros simplicipes* and *E. lætus*, *Odonteus obesus*, *Synaphæta Quexii*. This last named insect attacks the willow and some years ago I took more than twenty specimens from a heap of dead willow branches in my yard.

On flowers there have not yet been many beetles, the only captures perhaps worth noting being *Anthaxia æneogaster*, *Lathrimœum pictum* and *Grynocharis pilosula*. Assisting me to rid my fruit trees of Aphides are 11 species of Lady birds and their efforts are seconded I think by *Podabrus pruinosus*. This insect is very common on the affected trees and I believe its errand is a friendly one. Lastly in my pantry, in stale bread left there as a bait, I have found many beetles, *Omosita discoidea*, *Colastus truncatus*, a *Cryptophagid* for which Professor Wickham cannot give me a name and numerous small fry which have not yet been determined.

By the way there is one other beetle I must mention as it is both rare and curious, *Nosodendron Californicum*, I found this for the first time on May 13th last year, when I took about twenty in an old wound on the trunk of a balsam fir (*Abies grandis*). This year I have taken other specimens in the same place, the earliest date being April 26th, but I cannot find a single specimen elsewhere.

Among the Lepidoptera I have not been doing much. The hibernated Graptas with *V. Antiopa* and *Milbertii* put in an appearance before the end of March. By the beginning of April the early Blues, *Thecla Siva*, *T. melinus* and *T. iroides*, *Anthocaris ausonides* and *A. stella* and *Pieris venosa* were all abundant. A single specimen of *Papilio Eurymedon* was observed on April 24 a month before its proper time of appearance. The larvæ of *Limenitis Lorquinii* left their hibernacula on the apple trees and spiræas before a leaf was out, but managed to satisfy their hunger by nibbling the buds. The larva of *Anthocaris* (I am not sure which species) was also to be found at the end of the month feeding on *Arabis perfoliata*.

Of moths I have hardly made any notes this season, but I remember seeing *Hemaris rubens* (which is a very common insect with us, the larvæ feeding on *Symphoricarpos*) in the last week of March. Towards the end of April I cut some pupæ of *Sesia tipuliformis* from my currant bushes and on the last day of the month I bred a fine specimen of *Telea Polyphemus* from one of three larvæ taken on willow last September.

Among the *Hymenoptera* our enemy *Gymnonychus appendiculatus* appeared on April 1st and all through the month has been busy oripositing on the currant and gooseberry bushes. Two other saw flies, *Strongylogaster distans* and *Dolerus sericeus* have also been abundant; but I think they do not meddle with our cultivated plants. Wasps and bees have been in hundreds and in thousands at the gooseberry blossoms (both wild and cultivated kinds) but as yet I know not their names. Of ants I have collected nearly 20 kinds but these too are as yet undetermined. I have also found under bark some other curious apterous *Hymenoptera* which I intend to send to Mr. Harrington in my next box.

In other orders I have not taken many species. The smaller of our two kinds of Cicada appeared on April 13th, very much in advance of its usual season. Our earliest and smallest grasshopper (*Tettix granulatus* I believe) has been swarming since the beginning of the month and I have also taken a few specimens of another orthopterous insect, to wit the curious little cricket *Mrymecophila Oregonensis* described and figured by Bruner in Can. Ent. XVI. p. 41-43. These I found under bark of fir logs apparently associating with a honey-coloured species of ant.

But I must stop this lengthy enumeration, having said enough I am sure to show my Ottawa brothers of the Ottawa Field Naturalists' Club that April has not been an unprofitable month for us Entomologically in Vancouver Island and to make you, Mr. Editor, wish that you could have a little of our British Columbia early spring in exchange for some of your prolonged, but healthy and pleasant Ottawa winter.

Gabriola Island, Nanaimo, B.C.,

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