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A Preliminary Report on the Geometridae of Iowa

Elizabeth Jerrel
Iowa Wesleyan College

H. E. Jaques
Iowa Wesleyan College

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A PRELIMINARY REPORT ON THE GEOMETRIDAE OF IOWA

ELIZABETH JERREL AND H. E. JAQUES

For the convenience of anyone desiring information on the family Geometridae, order Lepidoptera, the following list of species reported from Iowa has been prepared. The Geometridae are universally distributed in all parts of the world where vegetation is found. They are rather frail in structure, with considerable expanse of wing in relation to the size of the body. They are either semi-diurnal or crepuscular. Over 800 species of Geometrids are known to occur within the limits of the United States and Canada, of which 61 have been found in Iowa. This number could doubtless be greatly enlarged by more intensive collecting.

The larvae are commonly known as measuring worms or loopers, because, the anterior pairs of prolegs being totally aborted, they progress by bringing the posterior somites close to the anterior ones and looping the median somites. This, combined with the elongated form, causes these larvae when at rest to assume positions in which the body extends from the posterior prolegs in a twig-like manner. The front parts are not really free, however, as they are connected by a slender thread of silk to some point nearby. The larvae also suspend themselves from branches on a long thread of silk to escape perching birds. Dichromatism is often revealed among the larvae, part of a brood being green, the remainder brown or yellowish.

In some species of this family the adult females are without wings, such as the spring and fall cankerworms: *Paleacrita vernata* Peck. and *Alsophila pomataria* Har. This characteristic considerably facilitates their control, the females, after emerging from pupae in the ground, being caught in tanglefoot or some other similar substance when they attempt to climb the trees to deposit their eggs.

Haematopsis grataria Fab., the Chickweed Moth, (Fig. 1.) is very common, and is often seen by the roadsides where it has the habit of clinging to grasses and flying up when disturbed. The larvae feed upon *Stellaria media* (L.), the common chickweed. It ranges from the Atlantic to the Mississippi and beyond. *Euchlaena obtusaria* Hub., (Fig. 2) is, like the preceding species, a native of the eastern half of the continent.

For some twenty years the department has been making general collections of insects throughout the state in an effort to determine their geographical and seasonal distribution. The accumulated information of this specific group must be recognized as only fragmentary. It should be added that the Order Lepidoptera has not been as intensively studied as has several other orders.

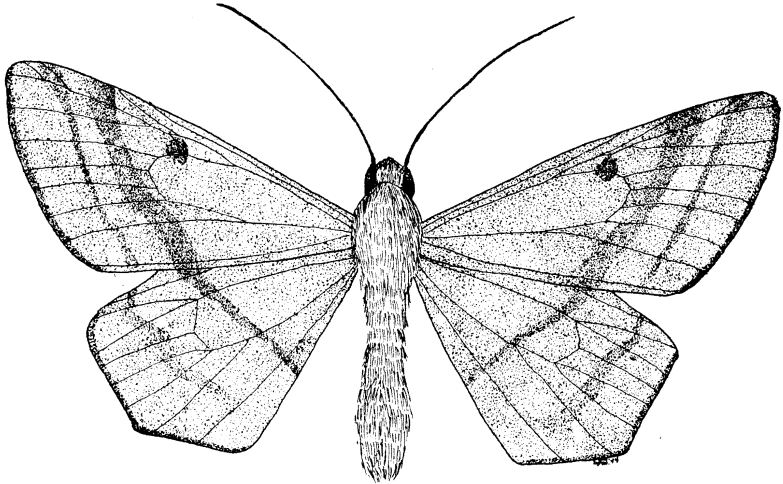


Fig. 1. *Haematopsis grataria* Fab.

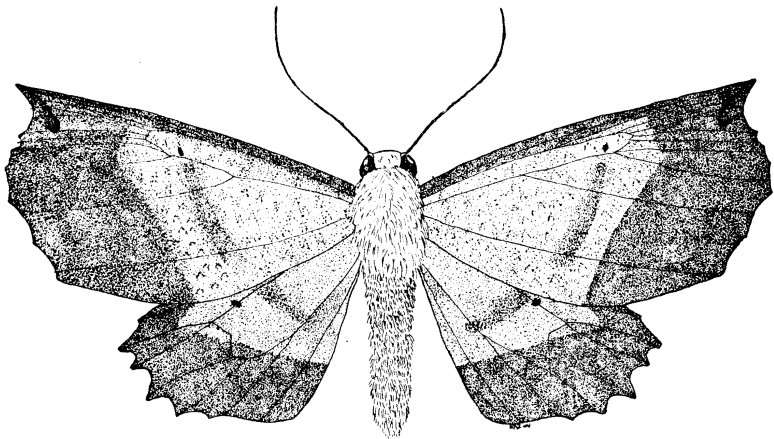


Fig. 2. *Euchlaena obtusaria* Hub.

- 3901—PTYCHOPODA INDUCTATA GN.
 4020—DREPANA ARCUATA WLK.
 4026—ALSOPHILA POMETARIA HARRIS
 4046—NEMORIA BISTRIARIA HBN.
 4087—CHLORISSA PISTASCIARIA GN.
 4095—CHLOROCHLAMYS CHLORO-LEUCARIA GN.
 4149—SCOPULA ENUCLEATA GN.
 4158—S. INDUCTATA GN.
 4204—HAEMOTOPIS GRATARIA FABR.
 4205—TIMANDRA AMATURARIA WLK.
 4234—DYSPTERIS ABORTIVARIA H. S.
 4401—LYGRIS DIVERSILINEATA HBN.
 4535—PERCNOPTILOTA OBSTIPATA FABR.
 4559—EUPHYIA CENTROSTRIGARIA WOLL.
 4573—EULYPE HASTATA L.
 4599—EUDELE MENDICA WLK.
 4603—E. UNICOLOR ROB.
 4605—BAPTA SEMICLARATA WLK.
 4606—B. VESTALIATA GN.
 4640—PTEROSPODA OPUSCULARIA HLST.
 4654—FERNALDELLA FIMETARIA G&H.
 4657—MELLILLA ANTHOMETATA WLK.
 4663—PHYSOSTEGANIA PUSTULARIA GN.
 4665—PHILOBIA AEMULATARIA WLK.
 4688—SEMIOTHISA DENTICULATE GRT.
 4723—S. OCELLINATA G&.
 4726—S. MELLISTRIGATA GRT.
 4735—S. SNOVIATA PACK.
 4739—S. S-SIGNATA PACK.
 4743—S. TENEBROSATA HLST.
 4746—ITAME RIBEARIA FITCH
 4751—I. SULPHUREA PACK.
 4756—I. COORTARIA HLST.
 4774—I. LATIFERRUGATA WLK.
 4807—PARAPHIA UNIPUNCTATA HAW.
 4812—TORNOS SCOLOPACINARIUS GN.
 4908—ANAVITRINELLA PAMPINARIA GN.
 4918—ANACAMPTODES VELLIVOLATA HLST.
 4952—NACOPHORA YPSILON FORBES
 4958—PHIGALIA TITEA CRAM.
 4960—PALEACRITA VERNATA PECK.
 4966—LYCIA URSARIA WLK.
 4968—AMPHIDASIS COGNATARIA GN.
 4991—EUGONOBAPTA NIVOSARIA GN.
 4993—LYTROSIS UNITARIA H. S.
 4994—EUCHLAENA SERRATA DRU.
 4995—E. OBTUSARIA HBN.
 4997—E. JOHNSONARIA FIRCH.
 5001—E. ASTYLUSARIA WLK.
 5005—E. TIGRINARIA GN.
 5007—XANTHATYPE SOSPETA DRU.
 5010—X. URTICARIA SWETT.
 5044—NEMATOCAMPA LIMBATA HAW.
 5054—METANEMA INATOMARIA GN.
 5059—ENNOMOS SUBSIGNARIUS HBN.
 5072—PERO HONESTARIUS WLK.
 5082—P. MARMORATUS GROSSE.
 5161—SICYA MACULARIA HARR.
 5170—DEUTERONOMOS MAGNARIUS GN.
 5184—APICIA CONFUSARIA HBN.
 5211—PROCHOERODES TRANSVERSATA DRURY.

IOWA WESLEYAN COLLEGE
 MT. PLEASANT, IOWA