A Preliminary Report on the Geometridae of Iowa

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A PRELIMINARY REPORT ON THE GEOMETRIDAE OF IOWA

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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 pometaria 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. Euchaena 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.

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Fig. 1. *Haematopsis grataria* Fab.

Fig. 2. *Euchlaena obtusaria* Hub.
3901—PTUCHOPODA INDUCTATA GN.  4743—S. TENEBSOSATA HLST.
4020—DREPA NA ARCUATA WLK.  4746—ITAME RIBEARIA FITCH
4026—ALSOPHILA POMETARIA HARRIS  4751—I. SULPHUREA PACK.
4046—NEMORIA BISTRIARIA HBN.  4756—I. COORTARIA HLST.
4087—CHLORISSA PISTASCIARIA GN.  4774—I. LATIFERRUGATA WLK.
4095—CHLOROCHLAMY S CHLOROLEUCARIA GN.  4807—PARAPIA UNIPUNCTATA HAW.
4149—SCOPULA ENUCLEATA GN.  4812—TORNOS SCLOPACINARIUS GN.
4158—S. INDUCTATA GN.  4908—ANAVITRINELLA PAMPINARIA GN.
4204—HAEMOTOPSIS GRATARIA FABR.  4918—ANACAMPTODES VELLIVOLATA HLST.
4205—TIMANDRA AMATURIA WLK.  4952—NAKOPHORA YPSILON FORBES
4234—DYSPTERIS ABORTIVARIA H. S.  4958—PHIGALIA TITEA CRAM.
4401—LYCGRIS DIVERSILINEATA HBN.  4966—LYCIA URSARIA WLK.
4535—PERCNOPTILOTA OBSTIPATA FABR.  4968—AMPHIDIASIS COGNATARIA GN.
4559—EUPHYIA CENTROSTRIGARIA WOLL.  4991—EUGONOBAPTA NIVOSARIA GN.
4573—EUYPE HASTATA L.  4993—LYTROSIS UNITARIA H. S.
4599—EUDELE MENDICA WLK.  4994—EUCHLAENA SERRATA DRU.
4603—E. UNICOLOR ROB.  4995—E. OBTSARIA HBN.
4605—BAPTA SEMICLARATA WLK.  4997—E. JOHNSONARIA FIRCH.
4606—B. VESTALIATA GN.  5001—E. ASTYLARIA WLK.
4640—PTEROSPODA OPUSCULARIA HLST.  5005—E. TIGRINARIA GN.
4654—FERNALDELLA FIMETARIA G&H.  5007—XANTHOTYPE SOSPETA DRU.
4657—MELLILLA ANTHOMETATA WLK.  5010—X. URTICARIA SWETT.
4663—PHYSOSTEGANIA PUSTULARIA GN.  5044—NEMATOCAMPA LIMBATA HAW.
4665—PHILOBIA AEMULATARIA WLK.  5054—METANEMA INATOMARIA GN.
4688—SEMITHISHA DENTICULATE GRT.  5059—ENNOMOS SUBSIGNARIUS HBN.
4723—S. OCELLINATA G&  5072—PERO HONESTARIUS WLK.
4726—S. MELLISTRIGATA GRT.  5082—P. MARMORATUS GROSSE.
4735—S. SNOWIATA PACK.  5161—SICYA MACULARIA HARR.
4739—S. S-SIGNATA PACK.  5170—DEUTERONOMOS MAGNARIUS GN.

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