

profitable extent. We begin to be better acquainted with the previous stages, and this acquaintance will bring these characters into more prominence. I doubt embryological characters to be of generic value. But very little is certainly known about them, and nothing known is ready for our use. The parts serving for propagation have probably a higher value than generic characters. Characters for genera should be of a co-ordinate value. I think it is obvious that a genus should never be accepted if its characters are not satisfactorily given, and that genera based on the mere specification of a type should never be accepted.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DEAR SIR,—

In the early part of June I found on the Wax-Myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*) three larvæ unknown then to me. I regret now that want of time prevented me from making an accurate description of them, but my notes simply say: "Looks like a *Geometra*—may be small *Catocala*; prettily marked with dark grey; central segments underneath white or light grey."

Only one of the caterpillars produced an imago, and this proved to be *Catocala badia*. It was about fourteen days only in the chrysalis state, and I am now forced to the conclusion that *C. badia* must be double brooded.

W. V. ANDREWS.

P. S.—From what I have observed of the larval habits and appearance of *Catocala*, I am convinced that this genus should be very close to *Geometra*.

W. V. A.

Brooklyn, July 7th, 1876.

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER.

DEAR SIR,—

As an example of retarded development, let me mention that three or four years ago I laid aside some old cocoons of *Samia cynthia*, which I thought were empty, and to my amazement, three splendid specimens have this season made their appearance. I know that wonderful stories are told about the abnormally long continuance of some Coleoptera in the chrysalis form, but I never before observed a similar instance in Lepidoptera. Do you know of any?

How are you off for *Schaphinotus elevatus* up there in Ontario? A few days ago, in half an hour, I took thirty from under old railroad ties lying along the track. I was sufficiently *elevated* with my success for one day, and ceased further operations, lest I might exterminate the species!

J. C. MORRIS, Baltimore, Md.

IMPORTANT CAPTURES.

DEAR SIR,—

I made, as I think, a very important capture on the 26th of August which you and some of your readers may be interested in knowing, viz., two fine, fresh and absolutely perfect examples of *Catocala marmorata* Edwards. This is, I think, unquestionably the handsomest of all our known species of *Catocala*. I was not a little surprised, and as might well be imagined, delighted beyond measure to find two such unexpected strangers. My friend, Mr. Charles Dury, of Cincinnati, informs me in a letter received from him a few days ago that he also took one this season in his locality. A figure and description of this truly regal insect may be found in Strecker's work, Plate 9, No. 6. In a note accompanying his description he says: "One can but regret that so little concerning this fine species is known; the original description contains no further remarks than 'from Yerka, California,' and we can only hope that time, which 'at last sets all things even,' will enable us to receive specimens and learn more concerning this superb insect."

My specimens are both males; they were found on the trunks of two separate trees (White Wood or Tulip tree), fifty or sixty feet apart, about five feet from the ground, and both were started before I noticed them, but their flight was very short—only darting around to the opposite side of the tree, where they remained perfectly quiet until I covered them with the bottle.

The peculiar brown dash or band which obliquely traverses the primaries near the posterior extremity, is more dense in my specimens than is represented in Strecker's figure. Mr. Dury says in his it is quite black.

The abdomen of Mr. S.'s figure is, as he tells us, nearly imaginary, the specimen he had to work from not having any remaining, and he was not certain even as to which sex it belonged. The abdomen of mine is very much like *parta*, but heavier, and a shade darker. Length of body $1\frac{1}{2}$ in.; diameter of abdomen in middle, $3\frac{1}{2}$ lines. Anal brush white beneath and blackish above.

Both specimens are alike in size and expand $3\frac{1}{16}$ in. No one could fail to be impressed with the princely appearance of this rare insect, and unhesitatingly accord it the first rank among its peers in the interesting group to which it belongs.

Catocala have been very abundant here this season. I have taken between 900 and 1000 specimens, and among them some rare species and some that I seldom or never took here before. For example, I have taken *atarah* (as has also my friend, Mr. C. Whitney, in N. H.), which I believe has not been recorded before as occurring north of Texas. I have also taken *amasia*, and a species allied to it, which may prove to be an extreme variety. This also is put down in the published authorities as a southern species. Mr. Whitney informs me he also has taken this species in N. H. this season. And now *marmorata*, which hitherto has been known only as a Californian species. I have one, and perhaps two, that I think are new species, which I may give you a description of when I get time. After a while I may also prepare you a list of the species of *Catocala* occurring here.

JAMES ANGUS, West Farms, New York.

HOW DO SPECIALISTS PREFER TO RECEIVE MATERIAL?

DEAR SIR,—

Dr. Henri de Saussure writes in the introduction, page xix, to his Synopsis of "Solitary Wasps" (Amer. Wasps) as follows:

"In a great many collections it is usual to spread the wings and legs of the Hymenoptera. This is mere amateur's work, of no utility for study, sometimes even quite opposed to the purpose in view, by dissimulating the character of the insects instead of exposing it to view. This practice is to be regretted, moreover, by its increasing the value of the insects, on account of the time and expense wasted thereby, so that one is loathe afterwards to place them in the softener, when it becomes necessary to dissect the moth."

In connection with this, I would ask whether Dipterologists and Micro-lepidopterologists prefer things (to be sent to them for study) *spread* or merely pinned. Mr. V. T. Chambers is satisfied to get Tineidæ dead and dry, and even untouched by a pin. Let Mr. Cresson and other specialists announce their preferences. I should be glad to see published the names and addresses of such gentlemen as now are engaged in the study of Tortricidæ, Pyralidæ and Alucitæ, of which groups I will contribute all my accumulated Californian specimens without reserve.

JAS. BEHRENS, P. O. box 1,173, San Francisco, Cal.