THE ENTOMOLOGIST

VOL. 90 DECEMBER, 1957 NO. 1135

NOTES ON SOME MIRIDS (HEM.) COLLECTED ON BOOKHAM COMMON

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THE following observations were made whilst collecting with Dr. A. M. Massee on Bookham Common, Surrey, on July 4, 1954.

Capsodes gothicus (L.)

Large numbers of both sexes of this species were taken by sweeping the luxuriant vegetation either side of " Central " path between the railway station and the Isle of Wight Pond. By selecting the areas swept it was found that *C. gothicus*, whose host plant was unknown, was taken in numbers only on *Lotus uliginosus* Schkuhr. (identified by E. W. Groves). One last instar larva was found, and Mr. Groves has kindly shown me some of these he collected at Bookham on June 14, 1953; so it would appear that this species normally becomes adult during the third or fourth week of June. Several of the females were gravid so that egg-laying must occur in July; only odd specimens surviving until early August.

Butler (1923) describes some larvae which he thinks belongs to this species; from the specimens I have it is possible to confirm that his descriptions represent the second, third and fourth instars.

Ovarian egg (Fig. 2).—Length 1·4–1·6 mm.; maximum breadth 0·3 mm.; white with thin operculum.

5th instar larva (Female) (Fig. 1).—Length 4·5 mm.; length of antennal segments: I—0·5 mm., II—1·25 mm., III—0·75 mm., IV—1·0 mm. Head, blackish-red with pale Y mark. Thorax, blackish-red with two especially dark areas on the callosities and with the margins and a central stripe pale; wing pad especially dark. Abdomen deep red, mottled with small pale areas; opening of stink gland black. Antennae and legs, black with slightly pale areas on centre of hind femora and base of femora, trochanters and apex of coxae pale. Entirely covered with strong black hairs, which are 0·12–0·25 mm. in length.

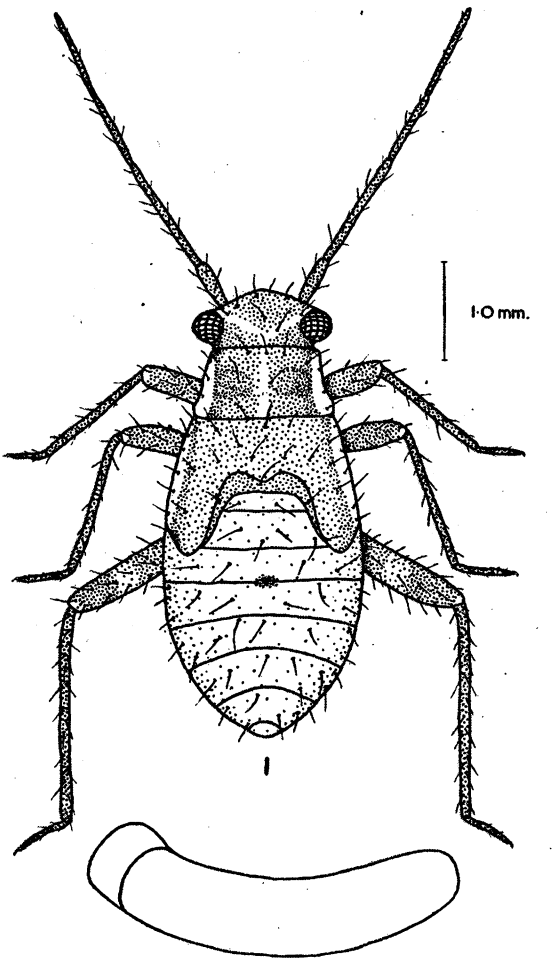

FIG. 1.—*Capsodes gothicus* (L.), female fifth instar larva.
FIG. 2.—*C. gothicus* ovarian egg.

Polymerus nigritus (Fallén)

Large numbers of adults and larvae of the fourth and fifth instars were swept off *Galium aparine* L. growing luxuriantly along a fence near the Isle of Wight enclosure. Kullenberg (1946) associates this species in Sweden with *G. boreale* L. and *G. verum* L. and Butler (1923) more especially with these bedstraws in chalky and sandy places, although mentioning finding it in some numbers on *G. aparine*. However, whenever I have found *P. nigritus* in southern England in numbers, it has always been on a luxuriant growth of *G. aparine* and I am convinced that this is the major host here.

Hoplomachus thunbergi (Fallén)

Several adults of this active bug were swept from its normal host plant *Hieracium pilosella* L., growing on a slight mound near central path just south of Isle of Wight enclosure. It is not recorded from Bookham Common by Leston (1951).

References

BUTLER, E. A., 1923, *A Biology of the British Hemiptera-Heteroptera*. London, 696 pp.

KULLENBERG, B., 1946, Studien über die Biologie der Capsiden. *Zool. Bidrag. Uppsala*, **23**: (suppl.), 521 pp.

LESTON, D., 1951, Notes on the Hemiptera-Heteroptera of Bookham Common, *Lond. Naturalist*, 1951: 49–62.

EARLY EMERGENCES in 1957.—In an interesting note in *The Entomologist* (1957, **90** : 136) C. G. M. de Worms draws attention to the very early dates of appearance of various species of Lepidoptera. He attributes this to "the remarkably mild weather which prevailed during the first three months of the year (1957)". It seems likely that conditions in the previous autumn and late summer must also have played some part in inducing the early emergence of certain species. This is suggested to us for the following reason: We reared quite a variety of Lepidoptera from the caterpillar to chrysalis stage and then, as usual, overwintered them in breeding cages in a corner of the bathroom. There is nothing to suggest that conditions in this bathroom vary much from one winter to another, but in 1957 we had some extraordinarily early emergences compared with other years. For example, an Orange Tip (*Anthocharis cardamines*) hatched in January and several Large Whites (*Pieris brassicae*) did likewise. Two Privet Hawk Moths (*Sphinx ligustri*) hatched during the first week in March and the Large Elephant (*Deilephila elpenor*) and Small Elephant (*D. porcellus*) were out even earlier.—CHARLES LANE and MIRIAM ROTHSCHILD; Elsfield Manor, Oxford.