

## NOTES ON GENERAL ZOOLOGY, 1942.

By F. H. HAINES.

**Arachnida.** *Salticus scenicus* Clk. was active on 2nd March on walls and posts, occurring, curiously, indoors on 4th. Many "Wolf Spiders" (*Lycosidae*) were running on the ground at the beginning of March. Several species of the Family hibernata both as adults in cavities in the ground and as young. Later the woodland soil was, when the sun shone, swarming with *L. lugubris* Wlk., the little black and white males being over long before the other sex, which lives through the summer. There was much gossamer on the mornings of 20th and 22nd May, containing many minute spiders of the sub-families *Erigoninae* and *Linyphiinae*. On 27th June, *Panorpa communis* was seen with a young *A. diadematus* Clk. as prey, transfixed between cephalothorax and abdomen. The blooms of *C. pratensis*, a favourite butterfly flower in fields, here, are much haunted by *Misumena vatia* Clk. which takes heavy toll of *M. aurinia*. On 13th July a *Thomisus onustus* Wlk. was found with a large larva underneath the same plant, containing two perfect specimens of *A. aglaia* and a fresh *P. sylvanus* (*Ochlodes venata*, Brem. and Grey), E.M.M., Vol. LXXVIII, p. 245. Much gossamer occurred on nights of 23rd July and 17th and 24th Aug. On 28th a great number of *A. diadematus* Clk. was apparent: in contrast to its comparative scarcity in the last two seasons. From the night of 23rd Sept. to that of 3rd Oct. gossamer was again particularly evident. An investigation of the webs on 4th Oct. showed that they were largely the work of *L. triangularis* Clk. and *L. montana* Clk. of some size, and of not very small *Araneus* spp. and *M. segmentata* Clk. On 13th Oct. an immature *A. quadratus* Clk., which is common here, was seen.

(ER) writes that "*Miranda aurantia* Luc. is still flourishing at Southbourne, and a new colony has been found at Parkstone, Poole, so it is spreading. We have no knowledge of how *M. aurantia* came to this country, but, probably, in packing." It is easy to imagine that the cocoons of eggs could be carried in this way. Perhaps our allied *A. diadematus* was thus introduced into America.

**Phalangidea.** On 4th Oct. a phalangid was seen running over gossamer apparently with predatory intent.

**Amphibia.** A still active *Bufo vulgaris* Laur. was on a step on 20th Oct. and another on Rockford Common on 23rd. (EFC), Leckford, says they were unusually plentiful in the water-meadows. They are not usually common at Leckford.

**Reptilia.** Sand Lizard (*Lacerta agilis* L.). Several were seen at Apple-lade on 14th April and 4th May. On 11th June they were noted as very frequent. On 24th Aug. one was basking on a post by an outer door here and examples were commonly found sunning themselves on exposed posts and woodwork. Both species appeared far less timorous than usual, and abundant. Common Lizard (*Lacerta vivipara* Jacq.). On 25th March one was active at Linwood On 3rd May one was met with on Rockford Common and on 9th they were common here. This species now appears as common as the other. On 27th Aug. conspicuous numbers of both species were on the move, this one coming into the house and basking on such steps and posts as have a southern aspect. On 30th Sept. a large specimen was still very active. Slow-worm (*Anguis fragilis* L.). Was seen in New Forest on 1st May and two here, together, on 19th, by a ditch. One was found dead on 12th Nov.: perhaps disturbed during hibernation. (EFC) Leckford writes that there they were in normal numbers. Grass Snake (*Tropidonotus natrix* Sch.). Seen in New

Forest on 1st May; on 16th some of different sizes were seen in the pond here; on 17th they were noted again as more common than usual. (EFC), Leckford, says that the species was in normal numbers. Adder (*Vipera berus* L.). Immature examples were very common in the spring, as well as adults throughout the season. The young seen thus early are last year's progeny, the young of the year being produced in July and Aug. On 21st March a young one was found dead on the heath; on 16th a half-grown one was seen; on 30th a rather small red specimen was noticed in a clearance here; on 1st June another young red adder, about the size of a Slow-worm, was brought in from North Hollow, Linwood, and a large red Adder was seen in a damp field. On 7th July remains were found, suggesting that one had been killed and partly eaten by Badgers. On 25th a large gravid dark, rusty female was seen in Appleslade Enclosure. (HL) considered that the species was particularly common. On 2nd Oct. an individual was seen basking in a low field. (FCF) relates that a curious blue variety was seen on a heath at Bournemouth: on returning an hour later the identical specimen was found  $\frac{1}{4}$ -mile further on, although two considerable turf barriers intervened. The blacker markings on the lighter ground of the male, which is smaller, will often distinguish the sexes, but the colouring varies greatly. Adders are very nocturnal, like their foreign allies.

**Cheiroptera.** A Bat, apparently Natterer's (*Myotis nattereri* Kuhl.), was hawking over a bed of rhododendrons at 10 a.m. (S.T.) on 6th June. I think it took a Bee-hawk. There is still a great absence of bats here, probably owing to the limited number of suitable shelters at hand. A few Pipistrelles and a large Bat (? Natterer's) seen, a few evenings ago, are, practically, all noted, though some evenings have been very favourable for flight. The one or two Pipistrelles (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus* Schreb.), whose beats are known, appear capricious and irregular in their flight, even in Aug. and Sept. The Long-eared Bat (*Plecotus auritus* L.) of course occurs at Linwood, and has been caught, and perhaps Dauberton's Bat (*Myotis daubertoni* Leis), over water, at Ellingham. No Noctule (*Vesperugo noctula* K. and B.) was seen again this year.

**Insectivora** (Hedgehogs, Moles, Shrews). Hedgehogs (*Erinaceus europaeus* L.) have not been common. Moles (*Talpa europaea* L.) have been abundant on most of the damper ground. So far as can be judged, even *Sorex araneus* L. was very scarce. *S. minutus* L. and *Neomys fodiens* Pall. were not seen at all.

**Rodentia** (Squirrels, Dormice, Mice, Rats, Voles, Hares, Rabbits). Squirrels (*Sciurus vulgaris* L.). Notwithstanding the abundance of hazel nuts, Horse and Sweet Chestnuts in the autumn, they were still very scarce at Linwood. Beech mast and acorns were scanty. Wood Mouse (*Mus sylvaticus* L.) was rather active in the house early in the year, taking exposed provisions. A few not quite full grown and in poor condition were found dead indoors. Their real, or apparent, great scarcity during most of the year was remarkable. House Mouse (*Mus musculus* L.). Was not found at all in the house or near it. On 4th Nov., Rev. H. Purefoy FitzGerald wrote that some houses about Shawford were overrun with mice of very light build, very active and light grey in colour. One person had killed 110 in one night in her kitchen. A specimen sent seemed indistinguishable from an immature, badly nourished House Mouse, and its dentition was similar. A second specimen submitted was even less in size and less in weight: both far less than those proper to an adult Harvest Mouse which, when young, can look very like a House Mouse. But it seemed impossible that an invasion of young mice, all of the same age, should occur in such manner. The genus is not an American one, and there is no kindred European species, so an alternative species by introduction was ruled out. Mr. Hayman, of the British Museum, when consulted, identified the animal as an immature House Mouse, pointing out that, apart from differences in the molars, it showed, when the upper incisor teeth were viewed from the side, the

characteristic notch in their posterior surface, near the tip. Perhaps the numbers were, to an extent, over-estimated, and there was a curious synchrony in the late litters of many parent mice.

Neither Rats (*Mus decumanus* Oal.) nor traces of them were seen here. A solitary Bank Vole (*Eutamias glariolus* Schreb.) was caught by a tom-cat on 17th April, but no other was noted, and even Field Voles (*Microtus agrestis* L.) were, apparently, surprisingly scarce. Traces of Water Voles (*Arvicola amphibius* L.) were seen in a ditch on 22nd May. Both pond and stream appeared all but free of them. Some increase in the number of Rabbits (*Lepus curvulus* L.), locally, was noted quite early in the year.

**Ungulata.** On 10th Jan. five buck Fallow Deer (*Cervus dama* L.) were browsing on the hill at Appleslade. On 10th July two females or almost hornless males were seen on Rockford Common. All deer have been much less in sight of late, and it is to be feared that their numbers have been seriously reduced hereabouts. The presence of Japanese Deer in the Forest must be borne in mind. Lydekker points out that they stand lower at the shoulder than the Fallow Deer, have the ground colour of the fur dark or yellowish brown, with the greater part of the tail white.

**Cetacea.** (HA) informs me that the British Museum authorities tell him that the dead specimen of Risso's Grampus (*Grampus griseus* Cuv.) found by him (Vol. XV, Pt. 2, p. 210) is the only known record for the Solent.

Kind help, for which I am grateful, has been forthcoming from several quarters. The following abbreviations are used:—

|                     |        |                          |        |
|---------------------|--------|--------------------------|--------|
| C. W. Andrews       | (CA).  | Col. F. C. Fraser, M.D., |        |
| H. Andrews          | (HA).  | F.R.E.S.                 | (FCF). |
| Miss E. F. Chawner, |        | H. Lea, Mr. and Mrs.     | (HL).  |
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