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A VARIETY OF BASILARCHIA ARCHIPPUS.

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Basilarchia archippus, new variety, *lanthanis*.*—Differs from *archippus* proper in that the extramesial black stripe crossing the secondaries is, on the upper surface, subobsolete.

The type specimen (Pl. 5, fig. 2) was taken at Albany, N. Y., in June, 1902. The paratype, illustrated (fig. 1), came from Hudson, N. Y. These butterflies are representative of a series of twelve, eleven of which are still in the possession of the authors. More than a score of others have been seen within the last ten years, and intergrade forms are common.

While in general opposed to the practice of designating a form as a variety merely because it differs more or less strikingly from an arbitrarily assumed norm, we have considered that in the present instance an exception should be made. The value of a name is measured by its usefulness, and should *lanthanis* prove to merit the attention of no one but the catalogue-maker, it will be justly ignored. If, however, the loss of the black stripe is a logical step in the evolution of the wing design of *archippus*, whereby its mimicry of *Anosia plexippus* becomes more complete, the existence of this variety may be a fact of more than ordinary biological interest.

The problem which the species presents will be discussed in a paper soon to appear in the Proceedings of the Entomological Society of London, and as a distinctive name for the stripeless variety will facilitate that discussion, it was thought advisable to publish this brief description in advance.

SOME NEW NORTH AMERICAN JASSIDÆ.

BY E. D. BALL, LOGAN, UTAH.

Phlepsius attractus, n. sp.—Resembling *floridanus*, but with an evenly rounding vertex and a smaller number of spots on the costa. Length, ♂ 4.25 mm.

Vertex twice wider than long, scarcely half the length of the pronotum, margins parallel, the anterior one rounding evenly to the front

**λανθάνω*.—I escape notice.

5. Antennæ with two ring-joints.....6.
 Antennæ with three ring-joints.....9.
6. Antennæ 12-jointed.....*Metastenus*, Walk.
 Antennæ with 13 joints.....7.
7. Clypeus with a median tooth.....*Hemitrichus*, Thoms.
 Clypeus without a median tooth.....8.
8. Mandibles three-toothed; abdomen basally maculate with
 yellow.....*Dimachus*, Thoms.
 Mandibles two-toothed; abdomen without yellow at
 base.....*Hemadas*, new genus.
9. Antennæ strongly clavate.....*Habritys*, Thoms.
 Antennæ not strongly clavate.....*Dinarmus*, Thoms.

All of the genera are said to have 13-jointed antennæ, with the exceptions of *Disema* and *Metastenus*. In specimens of *M. acanthocini*, Ashm., however, there are three ring-joints instead of two, making the antennæ 13-jointed, so that in the above table this species would run to the genus *Dinarmus*. The first ring-joint is so small that it is easily overlooked, as it was by Dr. Ashmead, and it is very likely that Walker has made the same mistake in the original description of the genus.

A NOTE ON THE HABITS OF APHILANTHOPS.

BY C. N. AINSLIE, BUREAU OF ENTOMOLOGY, WASHINGTON, D. C.

It has been for many years a matter of common knowledge that some fossorial wasps store their nests with various sorts of insects which they seize, carry away and place, in a disabled condition, in their egg-chambers for food for their larvæ when these emerge from the egg. A great number of observations have been made bearing on this subject, but much still remains to be learned. It is probable that the habits of the vast majority of species are yet practically unknown, except in a very general way. The following note may have interest, because it is believed nothing has been recorded concerning ant-catching by wasps.

Early in August, 1908, while marooned at Albuquerque, New Mexico, waiting for delayed mail, I noticed one day beside a concrete walk that bordered a vacant lot in that city a throng of large red ants which resembled *Pogonomyrmex occidentalis*. The bunch was seething with excitement, and stragglers were continually coming and going. As I watched I noticed a small quadrate-headed wasp drop from the upper air to the

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hard-trodden soil, alighting without previous reconnoitering. She stood perfectly motionless, not even dressing herself after the manner of her kind when idle. Presently an ant hurried by, busy about nothing, as usual, when instantly the wasp gave chase. The ant dodged and doubled as it fled, but the wasp overtook and seized it after a very brief and intensely active resistance, for a *Pogonomyrmex* is by no means a helpless infant in a skirmish. The wasp and its still riotous victim rose heavily into the air and ascended at a sharp angle of flight, until they were lost in the blue of the sky. During the next few minutes I saw the same performance repeated again and again, with variations, until dozens of the ants had disappeared heavenward with the predatory wasps.

So intent were the wasps on their work that they seemed not in the least disturbed by my presence, and I managed to secure a number of both wasps and ants by taking quick advantage of the struggle always incident to the moment of capture.

Occasionally an ant, when pursued, would dodge around a blade of grass or rush beneath some welcome shelter and elude its hunter, but this happened in only a few cases. So swift and certain were the motions of the wasps that even with a vantage of six inches or more an ant once followed was almost certainly doomed. The wasps never, so far as I observed, assisted themselves with their wings to gain speed, but played fair with their victims and ran them down. The struggle generally lasted a second or two on the ground, and, as I have said, appeared to be continued fiercely in the air, judging from the frenzied actions of the two as they rose aloft.

It was clearly useless to attempt to locate the nest of the wasps, and I contented myself with observing the manner of capture. Some day some one will be at the nest when the ants are brought in, and the rest of the story will then be available.

Mr. J. C. Crawford, of the National Museum, has kindly determined the predatory wasp as *Aphilanthops taurulus*, Ckll. Another species taken at the same time and under the same conditions is possibly an undescribed form of the same genus. The ants, the victims of the assault, have been identified by Dr. W. H. Wheeler as *Pogonomyrmex barbatus*, F. Smith, subsp. *rugosus*, Emery.

I learn that several wasps of a genus nearly allied to *Aphilanthops* are preserved in the National Museum with ants pinned with them. This would argue in favour of a habit similar to the one recorded above, but no notes accompany these specimens referred to.