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Collections and Information Sought and found

Collections and Information Sought (and found, we hope)

First of all your editor looked in Roget's Thesaurus and made a list of synonyms possibly of use in titling this new section (only the 'official' recognition of the process and having a title make it new because we have always dealt with collections and information exchange). Quest, trace, hunt, discover, enquire, detect, etc., presented themselves but as we have the same aim as the Geological Curators' Group in this respect and there is considerable scope for joint explorations into collection and collectors' histories, the same title became the obvious choice.

Please send all queries and discoveries to the editor. This section will also include appeals for data in a more general sense.

SOUGHT

ANTS FROM HERTFORDSHIRE

In gathering information on ants in Hertfordshire, Brian Sawford, Senior Keeper of Natural History, North Herts Museums, Broadway, Letchworth, Herts, has come across the following collectors' names.

Apart from additional biographical information, do any members know of, or curate specimens of ants by these people? If so, the data and the presence of any manuscript material (notebooks, catalogues, diaries, etc.) would be welcomed for incorporation into this project.

.....

Butler, Edward Albert (1845-1925)

His main collections were passed to the BM(NH) and he seems to have concentrated mainly on Hemiptera-Heteroptera. Obituaries are given in Gilbert, P (1977) *A compendium of the biographical literature on deceased Entomologists*, BM(NH), London, 455pp.

Morris, ? -

Nothing known at the moment on this person who is thought to have collected ants in Hertfordshire.

B. S. Williams

Lived at Harpenden, Herts. (ca 1924-27).

Collected Coleoptera and Hemiptera.

Sent difficult species to Philip Harwood

Assisted Harwood in producing the Hertfordshire Coleoptera list, noted as collecting many specimens.

Published 'A further list of species of Coleoptera new to the County of Hertfordshire', updating Harwood's 1925 list. (*Transactions Hertfordshire Natural History Society*, 28; 172.
(See 'Found', p 335)

Robert Bernard Benson MA, FZS, FRES.

Born Berkhamsted, Herts in 1904; died (London ?) 5 November 1967.

Expert on Hymenoptera-Symphyta: worked on Symphyta in the Department of Entomology at the British Museum (Natural History).

Collected Symphyta in Buckinghamshire and South West Hertfordshire, collections in BM(NH); possibly also collected Coleoptera, Hemiptera and Hymenoptera - Formicidae. Probably collected with Philip Harwood (see below).

Joined the Hertfordshire Natural History Society in 1923 as a Life Member.

Lived at Dellfield, Featherbed Lane, Felden, Boxmoor, Herts from 1923 until 1961 or 62, then at Flat 10, 51/57 Ladbroke Grove, London W11.

Several papers published in the *Transactions of the Hertfordshire Natural History Society* including

'The Geum Leaf-miner and other alien Sawflies in Hertfordshire' (Vol. 20, p.87).

'Sawflies of the Berkhamsted District, with list of Sawflies of Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire and a survey of the British species (Hymenoptera-Symphyta)' (Vol. 21, p.177-231).

'The Sawflies of Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire. A further contribution' (Vol. 25, p.96-101).

Hertfordshire Natural History Society recorder for Hymenoptera and Orthoptera (ca 1944-1960); recorder for Insects, except small groups (1961 to 1967).

President of Hertfordshire Natural History Society - 1950/51; Vice-President 1952-54 and 1959/60; Council member 1954-58 and 1961/62.

Author of 'An introduction to the Natural history of British sawflies (Hymenoptera Symphyta). *Trans. Soc. Br. Ent.*, 10(2); 45-142. (1950) and 'Hymenoptera Symphyta. *Handbk Ident. Br. Insects*, 6 (2a-c); 1-252 + i-vi. (1951-1958).

Obituary in *Transactions of Hertfordshire Natural History Society*, 26; 217.

Philip Harwood

Lived at Harpenden, Herts (ca 1924-27).

Collected with R. B. Benson and worked with B. S. Williams on the identification of difficult species of Coleoptera.

Collected Coleoptera in south and south-west Hertfordshire (many records from the Harpenden area).

Published 'Coleoptera observed in Hertfordshire in 1924' *Transactions of the Hertfordshire Natural History Society*, 18; 113.

Albert Piffard

Extract from the *Transactions of the Hertfordshire Natural History Society*, 13; 249 'A preliminary list of Hertfordshire Diptera' - 'Mr Albert Piffard, of Felden, Boxmoor (Herts.) - extensive collection of flies now in the British Museum'. This collection was formed during the last decade of the 19th century and contains many thousands of specimens all carefully labelled

with date and place of capture. Most were taken within the vicinity of Piffard's home and have now been incorporated into the collection of the BM(NH).

In the *Transactions of the Hertfordshire Natural History Society*, 18; 93 there is reference to Hymenoptera collected by Piffard near Boxmoor, Tring, Herts.

An Atlas of Australian Birds

The Royal Australian Ornithologists Union is in the process of compiling 'An Atlas of Australian Birds'. The aim of this publication is to determine the past and present distribution of all Australian bird species, including details of their breeding ranges. Included in the publication will be details of present locations of specimens and information about collectors.

Penelope Paton, who is correlating this information, has spent three months in the U.K. gleaning details from some of the larger, more well known collections. Inevitably there are collections, both large and small, which she has been unable to study, due to lack of time or because she did not know of their existence.

If your museum holds any Australian avian material, including eggs and skeletons, Penelope Paton would like to hear from you. Whilst full information is the ideal, it is realised that information may be in a form which makes retrieval difficult. If this is the case any information, however incomplete, would be most welcome, even if it is merely an indication of the presence of specimens.

Details should be sent to, or further information can be obtained from:

Mrs. P. A. Paton,
c/o Dr. David C. Paton,
Dept. of Ecology and Evol. Biol.,
University of California,
Irvine,
California,
U.S.A. 92717

Francis Buchanan White (1842-94)

F. B. White was a noted entomologist and botanist, the founder of the Perthshire Society of Natural Science and the 'Scottish Naturalist', and author of the 'Flora of Perthshire' (published posthumously in 1898). After his death most of his family emigrated to Canada but his descendants there do not possess any of his (presumably) extensive correspondence or manuscript notes. However, there is a small chance that they may have been deposited somewhere in Britain. Would any member with any information which may lead to their discovery, please contact:

Michael A. Taylor,
Keeper of Natural Sciences,
Perth Museum & Art Gallery,
George Street,
Perth.

HUDLESTON, Wilfrid Hudleston (1828-1909)

Dr. Colin Forbes has put a descendant of this important palaeontologist in touch with us. Hudleston is best remembered for his palaeontological work on Jurassic gastropoda but he had early interests in ornithology as Mrs. Hudleston's letter below points out. His other interest in marine biology led to his greatly aiding the founding of the Dove marine laboratory at Cullercoats now part of the University of Newcastle-on-Tyne.

Mrs. Hudleston's letter reads as follows:

"W. H. Hudleston was my husband's Great-Uncle. Family diaries have recently been brought to our attention and revived our interest in Great-Uncle Wilfrid, especially so since we have met his grand-daughter. In his pre-geological days W. H. Hudleston - or W. H. Simpson as he was then called - was an ornithologist. His collection of stuffed birds and eggs was divided in two, one half descending down my husband's line of family. [His will dated 1908 speaks of the collection of birds at Cayton Hall to go to his brother Rev. John Henry Hudleston (1834-1912), while the collection of birds and eggs at 8 Stanhope Gardens, London with the minerals in the same cabinet as the eggs to go to his wife]. When my husband was a schoolboy of about 13 years [1927] his father died and the representative of some Museum or other either called at the house or wrote saying that 'they' had one half of the collection and could they please now have the other half. This they were allowed to do, and undoubtedly collected it. We cannot, however, trace any part of the collection. Dr. Forbes tells me that you may be able to help us with this query. He also suggests that failing this information being to hand, you might be able to publish a request for information in the Newsletter.

It would also be interesting to know of any outlying bits of his geological collection. I think first choice went to the Sedgwick, but I believe that the widowed Mrs. Hudleston [she was Rose second daughter of William Heywood Benson of Littlethorpe, Yorks. whom he married in 1890 and who survived him] was empowered to sell off or otherwise dispose of parts of the collection.

We are also trying to locate a number of missing family portraits which are thought to have been sold, along with W. H. Hudleston's portrait, about 1950. Do you by any chance know of the whereabouts of his portrait (oils, I gather)? To locate even one portrait would almost certainly give some lead on the others. I am neither an ornithologist nor a geologist, but I do find Wilfrid Hudleston, like his father, an entertaining diarist. It seems a great pity that his direct descendants do not have any portrait of him.

I shall be very grateful indeed for any information which you can let me have.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs. N. A. Hudleston
Cayton Hall,
South Stainley,
Harrogate, Yorks., HG3 3LY."

Reproduced verbatim from a forthcoming Geological Curators' Group Newsletter. The possibility of further inter-related research topics is likely to increase if we have a regular "Collections and Information Sought" section to the B.C.G. Newsletter.

Please send material and information to the Editor in the first instance.

FOUND

Further information on one of the possible active hymenopterists in Hertfordshire has been provided.

Benjamin Samuel Williams (1891-1941) obituary *Entomologist's Monthly Magazine* Vol. 77 (1941).

In 1942 Liverpool Museum obtained the main beetle collection of Williams which contains almost all the British species known in the 1930s. The museum had lost almost all its insect collections in the blitz and engaged the well-known Harry Britten of Manchester Museum to obtain replacement material. We obtained this collection for £50 from Mrs. Williams *via* E. C. Bedwell who had been charged with its disposal to a worthy home.

The collection contains syntypes of at least 3 species, paratypes of at least 4 more and figured specimens of at least a further 6. Williams described 5 species but only one has not been subsequently sunk in synonymy and the fate of even that is at present uncertain. He co-operated with many of the coleopterists, in particular Philip Harwood.

By chance I found out that Williams collecting notebooks were the property of his son-in-law Mr. C. Mackechnie-Jarvis, another well known coleopterist. The following information is derived from Mr. Mackechnie-Jarvis and the relevant notebooks which he kindly lent to me.

Williams was a very disciplined collector. From 1909-1914 he collected macro-lepidoptera, 1920-1931 coleoptera and subsequently hemiptera, (I know of no ants). Apparently Williams established a reference collection of beetles (other groups too perhaps!) for the newly established agricultural laboratories at Rothamstead. I have not checked up on this or to see if there is a large number of coleoptera from Frederick Bates of Leicestershire (brother of H. W. Bates of the Amazon and mimicry). That collection was given to Williams by Professor G. W. Nicholson when the latter was no longer competent to look after it.

I look forward to hearing of any success Brian Sawford has in tracking down further details of the collections. The Frederick Bates material would contain many interesting specimens.

Ian Wallace,
Merseyside County Museums,
Liverpool.

Hudleston, W. F.

The aforementioned G.C.G. Newsletter (now retitled *The Geological Curator*) has been published, Volume 2(8), and much additional information has been traced on the geological side. The editor hopes that some other facts, concerning his zoological activities, can be provided by his colleagues especially in the north east.

Please help to fill this space
in the next issue!

18th March, 1980.

Mr. P. Davis,
Sunderland Museum & A.G.,
Borough Road,
Sunderland,
SR1 1PP

Museum and Art Gallery Service for Yorkshire & Humberside

Dear Mr. Davis

I am writing to ask for your help in locating models of human parasites for inclusion in an exhibition that is currently being researched and titled "The Life that Lives on Man".

The exhibition will be intended for the general public and will be based upon the book of the same title by Michael Andrews. We propose to show how the human skin is a self-renewing system which supports countless organisms. We propose also to consider this system in terms of ecology and to show the necessary relationships between the various factors in this system.

Our exhibitions tour the Yorkshire and Humberside area for a period of two years each and all exhibits loaned are comprehensively insured and handled only by experienced personnel.

The models I am seeking are of :

Pediculus humanus capitis - the head louse
Pulex Irritans - the human flea
Cimex lectularius - the bed bug
Dermatophagoides pteronissinus - the dust mite
Demodex folliculorum - the follicle mite
Sarcoptes scabiei - the scabies mite
Phthirus Pubis - the crab louse

You will note that the creatures I have listed are by no means all benign. Although our emphasis will be on the normal inhabitants of our skin I think it would be unfair to neglect mention of some of our less friendly but still quite common tenants.

I look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,



Russell Boyd,
Senior Exhibitions Researcher