POSSIBLE MIGRATION TENDENCIES OF *EREBUS ODORA* AND OTHER SIMILAR SPECIES

by FRANK P. SALA

Having read the most interesting account of the experiences of JOSEPH MULLER in his "An Attempt to Rear *Erebus odora* in New Jersey" (*Journ. Lepid. Soc.* 13: 17-18; 1959), the author was prompted to an answer, since Mr. MULLER's problem seemed a manifestation of some thoughts the author has been investigating. The following are ideas and conclusions reached as a result of observing and collecting this species and others similar to it.

The author has had several meetings with *Erebus odora,* both here in southern California and years ago as a boy in the Rochester area of New York state. To attempt an answer Mr. MULLER's question, "What is the foodplant of *Erebus odora* in New Jersey?", there probably is no foodplant for *E. odora* in New Jersey. How then does the insect get there, and why, one might ask. The author believes *E. odora* is a complete migrant visitor, and here are some reasons why.

In southern California, as along the Eastern Seaboard, *E. odora* is an occasional (probably annual) visitor. Here in southern California the insect generally undergoes one abortive generation, usually in the August-September period. Foodplants here are *Acacia delbotta* (principal foodplant) and other introduced ornamental Acacias along the coastal areas, and the native *Acacia greggi, Prosopis juliflora,* and *P. pubescens* of the deserts. *Erebus odora* is only a visitor here, however. Several factors contribute to this condition. First, *E. odora* has no diapause that the author has been able to note, passing continuously from generation to generation. Second, *E. odora* cannot tolerate frost, even fleeting freezes. The weather here in southern California, from November on, is subject to freezes at any time, and whenever they come, all activity of migrant tropical species such as *E. odora* is terminated for the year.

How then does *E. odora* come to be found here and in places like New Jersey and New York? The answer, in part, is in Mr. MULLER's account wherein he says, "It (*E. odora*) was a battered specimen — but — extremely lively." This indicates a probable lengthy period of previous-to-capture imaginal life. The fact (as his account states) that it lived nineteen days in captivity allows for a probably three to four weeks or longer imaginal span. A long imaginal span is not unusual for many Lepidoptera, especially members of the Catocalinæ. The species of the genus *Catocala* all live many weeks of the summer imaginally, terminating imaginally also with the frosts of autumn. *E. odora* is in addition a strong flier, capable of long distance flights. Thus the major requirements for a migrator are present.

Little directed research has been done on the subject of migration, especially where the species are on the move singly. The author believes both *E. odora* and *Thysania zenobia* (taken in New York, but not yet seen here

in southern California) are prime and spectacular examples of this category, surplus specimens leaving their normal habitat of Mexico and the West Indies during the chosen months of July and August to investigate northern areas.

It is significant that the weather patterns agree with this trend, perhaps even becoming the cause for it. Invading tropical airmasses push northward the farthest at this time. Along the Atlantic Seaboard the tropical storms and warm fronts lead the way. Likewise in the Central Plains. Along the West Coast, the northern edge of the tropical trade winds pushes the moist air from the Gulf of Mexico into the western deserts, causing sporadic and often heavy downpours, occasionally extending all the way to northern California and Nevada, along the eastern slopes of the Sierras. These airmasses possibly constitute the impetus for migration northward of hardier tropical species. In California, at least three Sphinxes, *Erinnyis ello, Pachylia ficus,* and *Erinnyis obscura* also wander in, along with several butterflies.

This account, which the author's investigations have led him to believe is the answer, in part at least, for misplaced species, is offered as food for thought. Certainly much additional effort is needed even to scratch the surface of problems like these. The author shall welcome specimen data, pro and con, and all thoughts, critical and other, as stimulus for further investigation and discussion.

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A NEW NAME FOR *PAPILIO ORION* CRAMER, A PREOCCUPIED NAME IN THE HESPERIIDÆ

by PADDY B. MCHENRY

Typhedanus crameri McHenry, new name, is proposed for *Papilio orion* (Cramer 1779) which is a homonym of both *Papilio orion* (Fabricius 1775) and *Papilio orion* (Pallas 1771).

No new name is required for *Papilio orion* Fabricius since it is a synonym of *Papilio odius* (Fabricius 1775) as pointed out to me by Mr. C. F. DOS PASSOS.

EVANS (1952) places this species in the genus *Typhedanus* Butler in his arrangement of the New World skippers.

References

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