

## The Entomological Section.

*President*—Mr. GERALD B. CONEY, The Hall, Batcombe.

*Recorder*—Mr. A. E. HUDD, F.E.S., 108, Pembroke Road, Clifton.

*Treasurer*—Mr. W. A. BOGUE, F.E.S., The Bank House, Watchet.

*Secretary*—Mr. H. H. SLATER, Stawell, Bridgwater.

THE Entomological Section has made some progress during a very unpropitious season, when, owing to the prevalence of *Aphis* life, the leaves of all trees have been glazed with honey-dew, and our sugar was consequently ignored till mid-August. Larvæ have likewise been very scarce.

Next year we propose to print a list of the additions made to the county list since the *Victoria County History* was published; from which it will be seen that a little group of working entomologists have not been altogether idle. Will those members who have not yet got into touch with the Section—and any other working entomologists in any branch in the county, who are in the same position—kindly consider their captures within the last seven years or so, in the light of the *Victoria County History* list (a separate copy of which can be seen at, or borrowed by members from, the parent Society's Library), and acquaint the Secretary of the Section with any new records they may have made? Dates of capture are absolutely necessary when doing so, and, except in the few cases where precise publication seems undesirable, localities also. The latter, however, may be approximate.

The Section has sustained a great loss this year in the death of its first President, Mr. W. Macmillan, J.P., of Castle Cary. At the Sedgmoor meeting, Mr. G. B. Coney, of Batcombe Hall, Evercreech, was unanimously appointed *interim* President.

The Section had a very novel field "day" on Sedgmoor, on July 20th, 1911, when the peculiarities of the season revealed themselves. At that time of year, the grass-crops, which contain a number of unusual food-plants, are generally uncut and insects plentiful. This year Sedgmoor was mown and grazed bare, and almost dried up. The ditch insects, chiefly *Crambi* and *Pyrales*, were principally in evidence. What an odd *Aventia flexula* was doing there at all was not plain! However, in spite of few captures of note at our two sheets and fen lights, it was a pleasant meeting (somewhat enlivened by a wandering bull, who ended his manœuvres by getting hopelessly bogged in a peat ditch), and ended with supper at 2 a.m. We hoped to clear up the mystery of that elusive little insect *Schrankia turfosalis*, taken in plenty, "near Bridgwater" by the late C. G. Barrett, but which no one else has been able to find—nor did we.

As soon as the question of a suitable cabinet has been settled, a start can be made with the new county type collection of Lepidoptera. Some of us have been keeping duplicates for the purpose, and probably nearly half the recorded species will be available at once. Any donations of specimens for this purpose should be well set on black pins, with a label on the pin giving date and locality, and, if desired, captor's name. It is, perhaps, as well to add, that the collection will include, not merely species, but also specimens only which have been taken in the county.

Mr. G. T. Lyle, Bank House, Brockenhurst, Hants, has kindly consented to identify Ichneumons for us, as specialist. Will all our lepidopterists therefore kindly pin and set any ichneumons they may breed or obtain. Mr. Lyle asks that they may be labelled with date and locality, and, if possible, with the name of the host insect whence they emerged. The Secretary (of the Section) will be glad to forward any entrusted to him at the end of the season.



**The Ornithological Section.**

*President*—The Right Hon. LORD ST. AUDRIES.

*Recorder*—Mr. JAMES TURNER, Dovery Down, Porlock.

*Secretary and Treasurer*—Miss AMY SMITH, The Mount, Halse, Taunton.

THIS Section is creating an interest amongst ornithologists in various parts of the county. As the Section becomes better known, the members, who now number over thirty, will, we hope, be gradually increased.

While certain parts of Somerset are sufficiently represented by ornithologists of long residence in the county, there are other parts from which the officers of the Section would be glad to receive assistance, and more especially from the districts of Somerton, South Petherton, Wincanton, Bruton and Frome.

Members have received a type-written copy of the Rev. F. L. Blathwayt's "Birds of Somerset," compiled ten years ago, for the *Victoria County History, Somerset*, which gives a list of 258 species as having been recorded within the county up to that date. A type-written copy of the Recorder's notes and observations on Somerset birds, during a period of forty-five years, has also been sent out to members. The greater part of the cost of this type-writing has been kindly defrayed by the following donations:—The Som. Arch. and N. H. Society £1 1s., Mr. H. G. Turner £1 1s., Mr. C. Tite £1, and Mr. A. W. Turner, 10s. 6d.

These two sets of notes enable members to ascertain what species are merely local, those which are only visitors, and those which are of only the very rarest occurrence within the county. The amount of fresh information received by the Recorder is interesting and encouraging.

The annual fee for membership is 5s. ; but for members of the parent Archaeological and Natural History Society, 2s. 6d. The financial year is from January 1st to December 31st.

The Section is now free from debt, and the executive believes it only needs more members to ensure its continued usefulness.

The following occurrences, *inter alia*, have recently been recorded:—

*Little Owl* (*Athene noctua*), killed on 9th March, 1911, at Ile Abbots, and identified by the Taunton taxidermist, Mr. W. K. Petherick. This is the third recorded instance of this species in the county. *Gannet* (*Sula bassana*), killed at West Lyng, near Durston, on November 11th, 1911. This is the second record of the species in the county or on its coast. Purchased by the Somersetshire Arch. and Nat. Hist. Society for their museum. *Black Redstart* (*Ruticilla titys*), a young male bird, killed on October 21st, 1911, at Exebridge, near Dulverton, and presented by Mr. Theo. F. Tracy to Taunton Museum.

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## The Botanical Section.

*President*—The Rev. Preb. G. E. SMITH, Langford, Bristol.

*Recorder*—The Rev. E. S. MARSHALL, F.L.S., West Monkton, Taunton.

*Secretary*—Mr. W. D. MILLER, Cheddon, Taunton.

A MEETING of this Section was held at the Museum, Taunton Castle, on Tuesday, March 7th, 1911, the President (the Rev. Preb. G. E. Smith) in the chair.

Among those present were the Rev. E. S. Marshall, F.L.S. (*Recorder*), Mr. W. D. Miller (*Secretary*), Mr. T. W. Cowan, F.L.S., F.G.S., Miss Cowan, the Rev. W. G. Paterson, Miss Miller, Mr. C. Tite, and Mr. H. St. George Gray (*the Society's Curator*).

Letters of cordial interest were received from Mrs. Hawkins (North Petherton), Miss Ruddock (Clevedon), and Mr. H. S. Thompson, F.L.S.

Subscriptions on the following scale were decided upon for



members of the Section :—Members of the S. A. and N. H. Society and all ladies, 2s. 6d. ; gentlemen, not members of the parent Society, 5s. (to be reduced to 3s. 6d. for members of two or more of the Natural History Sections of the parent Society). The financial year, as with the other Sections, begins on January 1st.

It was proposed to hold two field-days in the course of the summer ; but, owing to various causes, these have not taken place. It is, however, very much to be hoped that there may be, in the coming season, such an increase in the membership of the Section as will encourage such proposals. Botanists will be interested to hear of the discovery by Mr. W. Watson of *Wolffia arrhiza* in a pond near Taunton.

Members of this Section will also benefit especially by Sir Prior Goldney's kindness in presenting to the parent Society the late Dr. R. C. A. Prior's collection of botanical books ; in which connection it should be mentioned that the botanical section of the Society's library is not a strong one, and that the gift of standard works dealing with Botany and its allied subjects would be most welcome. The new edition of "The Flora of Bristol," by Mr. J. W. White, F.L.S., has just been ordered ; Bath, Wells, Clevedon, Burnham and Weston-super-Mare are included in the book.

The chief event of the past season was the visit of the British Mycological Society to Taunton in September. Through the courtesy of many owners of woods, among whom may be mentioned Viscount Portman, Capt. A. F. Luttrell, the Hon. Mrs. Trollope, and Messrs. C. E. J. Esdaile, A. E. Newton, E. A. V. Stanley, and W. B. Broadmead, the members were able to carry out some interesting expeditions in various parts of the neighbourhood, and although the prolonged drought was unfavourable, a good deal of satisfactory work was accomplished. A paper by Mr. E. W. Swanton, dealing with some of the fungi found on the occasion is included in this volume of *Proceedings*.

The Hon. Secretary of the Botanical Section wishes to take this opportunity of commending the objects of the Section to all readers of the *Proceedings* who take any interest whatever in botany, or who may be aware of botanical work being carried on in their immediate neighbourhood. It is felt that the work of getting and keeping up to date the county botanical lists can only be done through some central organization, and co-operation for this object is cordially invited.

Two methods of helping are suggested. (1) Names of those willing to join the Section, accompanied by the small subscription mentioned above, may be sent to the Hon. Secretary (Mr. W. D. Miller, Cheddon, Taunton); (2) Specimens of plants in fresh condition may be sent for identification and record to the Rev. E. S. Marshall, West Monkton Rectory, Taunton.

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