

# NOTES ON INSECTS AND MARINE LIFE AT GRAND FOND BAY, MONOS

by Peter R. Bacon .

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## INSECTS

The most abundant butterflies in Grand Fond Bay were *Heliconius melpomene*. Specimens of *H. erato* were taken. Other species collected from the area behind Villafana's house included small brown *Euptychia renata*, and *Ageronia ferentina* which was well camouflaged against the whitened tree trunks. Specimens of *Catopsila* sp. and *Danais* sp. were observed, and deeper in the forest *Morpho peleides* the large blue species was fairly common.

On the beach itself the red nymphs of the Pyrrhocorid bug *Dysdercus ruficollis* were numerous running over the stones. It is difficult to imagine what they were feeding on. The adults were found under the bark of trees and also on the Sea Island Cotton (*Gossypium* sp.) which is presumably their food plant. All the adults seen were copulating, walking about rapidly as they did so. The three pairs collected remained thus for three days !!!

Three Scarab beetles *Pinotus agenor* were found rolling dung balls along. Numerous Elaterid beetles *Pyrophorus pellucens*, with two bright luminous spots on the thorax were caught at night among the fireflies, and a palm weevil *Rhynchophorus palmarum* was taken while flying at night.

In the forest along the dry bed of the stream the Embiopteran *clothoda* was observed to be very common where it had spun its webs on tree trunks and termite nests. A single specimen was collected by C. Collins. Insect galls were abundant (including those of the Cecidomyid midge *Iatrophobia*) on the leaves of trees and bushes. A Fulgoroid bug, family Cixiidae, *Mnenosyne* sp., a green hawk moth caterpillar, and a small grey looper caterpillar were also collected.

A few Hymenoptera were observed attending to flowers close to the beach. These included the small black stingless bee *Trigonia trinidadensis*, and the wasps *Pepsis fulgipennis* and *P. xanthocerus* (Family Pompilidae.)

Some cocoons were noticed on a tree beside Villafana's house but it was too high to ascertain what insect had formed them; possibly they were the cocoons of a bagworm moth.

Some lice were taken from the bats trapped in the nets. Also two parasitic Diptera which proved to be *Pterellipsis aranea*, family Streblidae.

Sandflies and mosquitoes were not very abundant near the shore, though the latter were common in the forest.

As a general statement on the insect life of Monos it would be fair to say that insects do not appear to be as numerous as in many forest areas on mainland Trinidad.

## MOLLUSCA

### (a) Marine

Among the empty shells cast up on Grand Fond beach the most numerous were of the Lamellibranchs, *Asaphis deflorata*, the Gaudy Asaphid, and *Chione granulata*, the Beaded Venus shell. Other species collected include *Chione cancellata*, *Chama mecerophylla* and the common oyster *Isognomon*.

A single specimen of the Paper Bubble Gasteropod *Haminoea petiti*, and the Atlantic *Modulus*, *Modulus modulus*, were also collected.

Other mollusca were collected in Tardieu Bay, these included the periwinkles *Littorina zic zac* and *L. nebulosa*, the former common in cluster on the rocks in the tidal zone. The wide-mouthed Dog shell *Purpura patula* and the scorched mussel *Brachidontes exustus*, with numerous Chitons *Acanthopleura granulata* were found in the same region of the rocky shore. A piece of coral was also found there which, when broken open, revealed two boring molluscs, *lithophaga* sp.

### (b) Land Mollusca

5 species were collected, being found easily on the patches of burnt ground where their empty shells were clearly seen. These have not been identified. Many specimens of the large snail *Bullimus* sp., which lays hard shelled eggs, were collected in the forest, the shells measuring 4-5 inches in length.

### Marine fauna from Tardieu Bay, Monos

In addition to the mollusca mentioned above observation and a small collection made in a few minutes from the rocky caves on the eastern shore of the bay produced specimens from the following groups.

#### Porifera

Green and blue Keratose sponges.

#### Coelenterata

Madreporine corals, a solitary coral, *Fungia* sp. Two different Hydroids and carpets of small green anemones.

## **Platyhelminthes.**

2 Planarians.

## **Nemertea.**

Numerous worms found by breaking open coral and rocks.

## **Annelida**

3 species of Polychaete worms.

## **Arthropoda**

The Isopod *Talorchestia* was common on the exposed rocks. Also a small brown centipede was seen as the tide exposed the rocks. Acorn barnacles and shore crabs were present in large numbers.

## **Ectoprocta**

Extensive white polyzoan growths covered rocks and sponges.

## **Echinodermata**

2 small brittle stars were found crawling over a sponge.

The genera and species of all the marine forms have not yet been determined, but the variety of animals to be found on the shore indicates that further investigation by the club would prove interesting.

(Peter R. Bacon, St. Mary's College, Port of Spain)