

FOR FARMERS, STOCK BREEDERS AND GARDENERS

NEWSY NOTES

BY AGRICOLA

THE ORDER OF INSECTS (2)

Review. The class Insecta belongs to that division of the animal kingdom called the Arthropoda or "joint footed." The other three classes are the Crustacea, or lobsters, etc. The Arachnida or spiders; and the Myriapoda, or centipedes, etc. Insects have not more than six legs usually two pairs of wings; always two antennae; and the head, thorax, and abdomen are distinctly separated. There are possibly one and a half million distinct species of insects in the world.

Before we proceed to classify the orders of the insects, it will be necessary to glance, however briefly, at the changes which take place in its life history before an insect assumes the perfect or "imago" condition. The ancients believed that all things came from the egg ("ab ovo") and this is nearly but not quite true. Oviparous generation is undoubtedly the rule among insects; but there are certain departures from that rule. It is, for instance, well known now that the aphides or plant lice increase viviparously (by a kind of internal budding) without the intervention of the male during the summer; and at the approach of cold weather lay eggs which hatch in the spring and carry on the race. There are other abnormalities which will be considered in their proper place, for the insect world is full of surprises; but for the present we will consider the egg as the first stage in the life history of the insect. When the egg hatches, the larva, which is the second stage, is liberated and begins feeding immediately. This is the growing stage and the larva changes its skin ("moults" some call it) several times before it changes to the next stage—the pupa. The pupal stage as a rule, is inactive, the pupa never eats and is often enclosed in a cocoon. After a time the pupa bursts its case and issues forth as an imago or perfect insect.

When an insect presents in succession each of these four stages it is said to undergo complete metamorphosis, and in order not to dismay my young friends I may say the long word just means "change." But it is to be noted that some insects as the crickets and true bugs (including the bedbug) have no pupal state, the animal continuing active, and of course feeding, from the egg stage to that of the perfect insect. Scientists tell us that such insects display "incomplete metamorphosis." There is, lastly, a small group sometimes called aberrant insects, which have no metamorphosis at all; though we must observe that many writers, including the late Lord Avebury, dispute their position as true insects.

There have been many systems of classification proposed for the Insecta all of which have proved, upon trial, to be more or less defective. Perhaps the classification known as the "metamorphic" (because based primarily upon the metamorphosis) is the most convenient and natural, and accordingly will be used in the present notes, in spite of minor defects.

The orders of insects which undergo a complete metamorphosis are: (1) Hymenoptera, (2) Coleoptera, (3) Diptera, (4) Siphonaptera (sometimes included under the Diptera) as a section, the Aphaniptera, (5) Lepidoptera, (6) Trichoptera, (7) Macoptera, (8) Neuroptera.

These orders display incomplete metamorphosis: (9) Hemiptera, (10) Physopoda or Thysanoptera, (11) Orthoptera, (12) Euplexoptera, (13)

Mallophaga, (14) Corrodentia, (15) Isoptera, (16) Plecoptera, (17) Odonata, (18) Ephemeroidea.

The anomalous groups mentioned as having no metamorphosis have been variously classified but for our present purpose we may regard them as comprised in the order Thysanoptera.

In the last three paragraphs there is, as it were, a skeleton sketch of the subject which has been expanded into the "Insect Book" of the Public Library. Skeletons, though very necessary, are not agreeable objects in themselves, and the student may well be forgiven for passing casually over the above list; the more so since each of the orders will be treated separately, and clothed with, it is hoped, more of general interest. The student is, nevertheless urged to preserve the list.

RARAE AVES!

Mr. J. Frank Sterns, of Souris, writes: "On Saturday, Nov. 4th a flock of five geese, flying very low, passed over Souris. I did not see them but they were observed by several, among them Mr. M. A. Paquet and Mr. Herbert Jackson, both of whom are observant, and interested in bird life. Their description—smaller than the Canada geese, brownish in color, and with white neck and head—leads me to believe that they were "Blue Geese." This seems worthy of note as I have never known of this variety to be seen in this section before.

Although the Blue Goose is not included in the list of Birds once published as an Island bulletin, we may well believe it to be an occasional visitor. Reed says that geese breed to the east of Hudson Bay, and that a few accidental birds have been taken on the Atlantic coast. Otherwise they travel down the centre of the continent, and through the Mississippi valley to the Gulf coast of Mexico. Dr. Taverner classes them among the birds of Eastern Canada, and says that the white head and dark body are the best "field marks." I thank Mr. Sterns for a very interesting record.

HUNTER RIVER NOTES

"A Friend of the Birds" sends a few brief notes which I am glad to incorporate into this column. They read, partly: "Bird life is almost nil around here. A flock of our neighborhood's pigeons are our only feathered friends of late. The goldfinches came one day, with golden voices as well as feathers, but as the Cosmos seed had not ripened, they did not stay." "Jack Miner's articles in The Guardian are of great interest to us. It would be a splendid idea for teachers to read those articles from week to week to their pupils—Grade I inclusive. (I find grade ones very ardent bird students, with eyes nearly as sharp as the birds.)

"We enjoyed Mr. Tuft's visit very much. The children were wild about the pictures. I was very proud of the boys and girls as they answered Mr. Tuft's questions promptly and correctly. On Mr. Tuft's advice we are ordering a new bird guide.

"Do we have the Mourning Dove here on this Island, Mr. Agricola? Jack Miner says in today's article (Nov. 4th) that "those beautiful creatures will come clear across the continent to you, if you will go a step towards them." He perhaps refers to different birds. I wonder? "This fall some of the sprotomans bagged quite a number of ducks

-POTATOES-

Buying table stock Mountain Potatoes and Turnips at our Warehouse until Wednesday, November 22nd.

Paul A. Murray
CHARLOTTETOWN

which they said were "Sea Ducks" marched through Pannonia to meet his foe. Maximus had hitherto triumphed by treason and fraud but he now found himself confronted by superior military talent, and his troops were defeated whenever they attempted to oppose the enemy, Aquila itself, in spite of its almost impregnable walls, was obliged to open its gates, and Maximus was taken and slain. The reader is advised to look up Kipling's "Pook of Pook's Hill" (Public Library) for a graphic account of the times and career of Maximus.

The old historians have made this expedition a fertile source of fable. It is pretended that the island was so thoroughly drained of its forces that it was never again able to withstand the northern barbarians; that the vast host of Britons who had followed the usurper into Gaul, settled in America and gave it the name of Brittany; and that the "seven thousand virgins" who afterwards figured as martyrs, were maidens sent over from Britain as wives for these settlers. These stories have no foundation in accurate history; all we know is that after the death of Maximus, Theodosius marched into Gaul where he appointed one of his eastern officers, Chrysanthus by name, as governor of Britain. Chrysanthus probably took back with him the most of the British troops and perhaps some reinforcements as well, since he is said to have restored the island to a state of tranquility. After ruling Britain for a short time he returned to the east.

The emperor Theodosius died in 395, and left the western dominions to the feeble Honorius. For a time the military genius of Stilicho, his chief counsellor, arrested the fate of the Roman Empire, and gave Britain some years of unusual peace. During this reign was composed the "Notitia Imperii," a document which gives an account of the military force then employed for the protection of the island, and the disposal of the chief dignitaries of the Empire, both civil and military, throughout the world. It shows that the twentieth legion, so long stationed at Deva (Chester) had been entirely withdrawn, but two legions still remained, with numerous bands of auxiliaries. The sixth legion still remained in its old quarters at Eborac, which it had occupied for almost three centuries, but the second legion had been moved from Isca (Caerleon) to Rutuplae in Kent, presumably as a defence against the Saxon marauders.

The "Sea Ducks" are a group or class, not a single species. Nine different kinds of ducks come under this heading, in our region, so that more particulars are necessary to ensure identification. Sea ducks have a broad flap on the hind toe, says Reed's Guide. River ducks have no web or flap on the hind toe, and do not dive for their food. See also Dr. Taverner's "Birds of Eastern Canada" for the two classes.

The Mourning Dove is included among the P.E.I. birds because of the capture (shooting?) of a specimen here in 1905. The record gives no particulars except the date. As nothing more has been heard of the species, this was evidently an accidental straggler. The "capturing" effectually prevented the bird from becoming a yearly visitor.

This brings up the meaning of Jack Miner's dictum about the birds coming clear across the continent "to you if you will go a step towards them." The idea is of course that if we display the least kindness to these little wanderers, they will come back to claim our protection. The Miner sanctuary itself is standing proof of this.

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There would still seem to be, in some minds, a misapprehension as to what the British "dole" really is. Owing perhaps to its ill-chosen name, it is supposed to be money paid by the State to the individual without any equivalent (as work being returned; a sort of indiscriminate charity, which has broken down the morale of the recipients. This is an unfair statement, a friend tells me. When times were good in the Old Country, the Government passed a law, requiring every workman to put a certain percentage of his weekly wages into a fund which they (the Government) took charge of. The employer who made his profit from the labor of that workman, was constrained to place a similar amount in the fund, and the Government made a contribution of a like sum. I recollect that the first two parties (Labour and Capital) made a great fuss when the Act was passed.

When times became bad, and the workman was laid off work, the fund was drawn upon and the Government paid a fixed sum weekly to the unemployed man. This he called "the dole," a name which has only its brevity to recommend it. It would be an injustice to require him to work for this money, seeing that he had already earned it during the good times; and as for breaking down his morale, it would have been much more seriously affected had he not had the benefit of his enforced thrift. The provision of employment by the State is another matter entirely but if the revelations of a Montreal alderman, lately made through the public press are any criterion, it is just as liable to deteriorate the character of the recipient as is the "dole."

Maximus stayed for a time at Treves, then when a favorable opportunity presented itself he treacherously seized the fortresses guarding the Alpine passes, and making a secret and forced march, passed into Italy and entered Aquileia as emperor of the undivided west. Theodosius was now roused to revenge by this bold usurpation, and

ROMAN BRITAIN A.D. 395

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Charlottetown Experimental Farm Notes

Apple Day

The Boy Scouts' Association is putting on an Apple Day on November 18th and will sell about fourteen barrels of Fancy McIntosh Red apples, grown and packed in Prince Edward Island. These apples have been inspected and approved by the Superintendent of the Experimental Station.

Autumn Farm Overhaul

This is the season when a check-up should be made of farm implements to see that they are safely stored. Farm buildings should be inspected and leaks in roofs repaired, widow ashes riddled and broken glass replaced. All windows should be cleaned so that all possible light may enter during the short days of early winter. Cobwebs, dust, etc., should be removed from ventilators and eave troughs should be cleaned of leaves. The water system should be inspected, overhauled and necessary replacements made. S.e. that it is protected from frost. Drains should be cleaned and flushed out.

Prevent Land Washing

A few furrows following the contours of the plowed fields will often prevent land washing from heavy winter and spring rains. The formation of deep gullies that will have to be filled before cropping will be avoided in this way. Land drainage is important and surface drainage will take care of most of this in Prince Edward Island, but a little planning and a few hours work at this season will do much to improve conditions for early seeding next spring.

Freezing and Thawing of Turnips

Due to the unusually troublesome weather conditions farmers have been unable to harvest their turnips promptly and at present large quantities of them are frozen in the ground. From this difficulty arises the question as to the effect of freezing and thawing upon turnips. It is generally believed that they are benefited if frozen once. Successive freezing and thawing, however, breaks the plant cells, changes the starch to sugar and predisposes such turnips to destructive storage rots. Turnips which have been pulled during the recent cold spells should be used up first. Frozen roots may be cooked for hog feed, but for stock feed they would be better left in the frozen state and thawed out as required.

Principle Of Grading

Grading is based on the principle that it is sound business to classify live stock, live stock products, and other Canadian commodities in such a way that the consumer will be able to recognize and purchase quality products and that the producer will be enabled to obtain a higher price. Experience has proved the value of this theory. The identification of top quality beef under red and blue ribbon bands, the grading of poultry, the segregation of eggs and fruit into quality grades which are known to practically every Canadian consumer, and other grading activities have been a tremendous incentive to quality production with resultant benefit to producers. Grading has not only served to create better prices for quality products, but has also brought about a substantial increase in consumption. At the same time, through grading Canadian products maintain their high level of excellence in the markets of the world. In this way, the new regulations which are soon to be put in force with reference to the grading of bacon for export to the British market will solidify Canada's premier position as an Empire source of food products.

Canadian Condensed Milk

The administration of the regulations under the Meat and Canned Foods Act pertaining to the manufacture, importation and sale of condensed, evaporated and dried milks is assigned to the Dominion Dairy and Cold Storage Branch. The exports of these Canadian dairy products showed a decided increase for the year ended last March. Evaporated milk exports jumped from 7,824,000 pounds in 1931-32 to 16,123,800 pounds in 1932-33, while the increase of condensed milk was from 7,407,400 pounds to 7,824,000 pounds during the same period. The export of skim-milk powder amounted to 3,737,300 pounds. The increase in exports is due to the high quality in manufacture, to the preferences extended to the Dominions by the United Kingdom Import Duties Act, and as a result of the agreements negotiated at the Imperial Economic Conference at Ottawa.

Spinning and Weaving

Send me in your wool to be spun into Yarn and wove into Blankets. The charges are: single yarn 23 cents doubled 26 cents per pound. Blankets \$2.00, and if unlaundered \$1.85; it takes five lbs. of wool per Blanket. Wool must be well washed and all dirt and burrs picked out. The size of single yarn is medium, and doubled yarn fine, medium, coarse and hooking yarn. Put shipper's name on all parcels and owner's name, address and instructions inside. Send by mail or freight. Freight will be paid on 100 lb. lots.

WM. LANDRIGAN,
65 Queen Street, Charlottetown.

Jack Miner And The Birds

By Jack Miner Himself—A History of This Notable Bird Lover's Life

KNOWLEDGE AND WAYS OF THE WILD DUCK

In the previous chapter I have just given you a faint taste of some of the enjoyable hunts Providence has permitted me to have. If it were possible I would like to throw in a whiff of the home-grown savory dressing, when mother opened the old-fashioned elevated-oven door. But as I grew older, ducks, like all migratory birds, got scarcer until I seldom ever want to hunt them. Yet I have always liked, to see wild ducks, both on the table and in the air.

In April, 1902, I secured some wild duck eggs and succeeded in raising three, two ducks and a drake. But it was several years before I got a pond suitable, as artificial ponds cost more than duck eggs. Then in 1905 Mr. Forest H. Conover of Leamington gave me three young black mallards that were hatched from eggs direct from the marsh. In 1907 I built my first real spring-water pond. I always kept the wings of my old birds clipped or pinioned, and the young we usually sold to sportsmen for decoys, but in 1908 I concluded that it was worth more to me to see them flying around, and that fall a bunch of the young went away. I naturally thought they had gotten out to the lake and were decoyed before some pump-

The next spring several black mallards dropped in the pond and acted and looked for all the world like the ones that had gone away the previous fall, but the question was, these ducks came several days apart, and if they were the same ones they would come back together; so I just gave in, and said they were tame because they were with my domesticated wild ducks that was all. Another point I argued with myself against their being the same ducks: These young tame ones that had left the previous fall, would be shot by the first man that ran across them, because they wouldn't know an enemy.

However, about April the 20th all the wild ducks left. One Sunday evening in June I was tapping the food tin and calling a few young wild ducks in the park when my wife's voice rang out from the house saying, "Here are your ducks out!" As I looked up, here was an old black mallard duck and eight young ones, about one-half grown, working away to get in at the gate. For a few minutes I stood perfectly bewildered, in thought. My ducks were all around my feet: what duck was this, with eight young, trying and trying to get in at the gate? How did she know there was a gate there? At length I went and opened the gate: she withdrew to the north along the fence; the gate opened to the north but the young were to the south a few feet, and as I stepped around them they toddled, in single file, along the fence and worked their way in through the opening. As soon as the mother saw they were all through the wire netting, she just stepped back from the fence and flew over, like a crow; dropping down she spoke to her family and all walked into the water together. I then went and got my feed tin and tapped it as I usually do to call all the ducks, and sure enough, this strange duck came right up, but her family stood back; in fact, they did not come out of the water. Again I tapped the tin and she turned her head sideways, looking at me with first one eye and then the other, as much as to say, "How long will it take you to tumble? Don't you know I am one of the ducks you raised last year, and that I returned here to my home last March, and went away to my nest about the 20th of April; and now I have brought my family here to Safety Inn."

The fact was hard for me to believe, but I was compelled to, for the very next week another black mallard, which was evidently her sister, came home, and when I got up one morning she was standing at the gate with a broken family of four ducklings as much as to say, "Will you please let my babies in?" Useless to say her request was granted.

In less than two weeks these old ducks and their young would all eat out of the pan; in fact, I would put feed in my pockets and the old ones would climb up on my lap and put their heads in my open pocket and scatter feed to their young.

This duck story I know is beginning to sound strange to you, but remember, I have only just started telling you how they have cornered me up, and made me frankly confess I didn't know anything about them. Why do these old ducks, in every

case when they return with their young (that of course cannot fly) bring them around to this gate to be let in? How do they know there is an opening there? It is plain to be seen they have thinking ability enough to know that that is where we human beings enter the park and that there must be an opening there.

Another mystery is, where did they bring their young from; where did they hatch them, and so forth? In answer to this, young ducks, at three days old, can run as fast as adult Bob White quail.

Since this happened, we know of one old duck that hatched her young over four miles away and was home with them inside of a week. In another case a lady telephoned that the school children were trying to catch some little wild ducks in the ditch, and that the old duck had a tag on her leg; this was after four o'clock, and these ducks were over a mile away from here, but at six o'clock she and her family were in our north pond, scudding over the water, catching flies.

But perhaps the most interesting case I had was when a farmer phoned me to come over and help him catch a crippled wild duck that went flapping out of the clover field in front of him. He said that she could just get over the fence, but he couldn't quite catch her. I firmly believed him, because he was still out of breath when he called me up. This story sounded good to me, so in a few hours I took a stroll around, and this wise old pet that he thought crippled was home with her family. What had she done; why, outwitted this intelligent man by leading him to believe she was crippled; then, as soon as he disappeared, she flew back into the clover field, dropped down and gave a few quacks that brought all her family out of the grass, and she continued their journey homeward. But the fact is that if there hadn't been danger of this man stepping on some of her babies, he would never have known she was there.

About the most touching duck scene I have ever witnessed was in 1913. A wild house-cat robbed an old gray duck of her seven young. I now and then heard her squawking, but I was looking for a hawk or weasel; some men that were making hay near by saw old Mrs. Cat as she sprang upon the last ducklings. The way the old duck carried on was pitiful. She flew and squawked around for two or three days. Then one morning I missed her altogether and concluded she had gone away to the lake. But on my way from the factory to dinner I happened to think of the brood of ducks the old Wyandotte hen was about to bring out, so I jumped the fence into the park. As I neared the old hen she started scolding, I raised her up, and all had hatched, an gone, but two. Where were they? My first thought was "Weasels;" but just as I was backing away from the coop I saw the eye of old Mrs. Duck. There she sat in the weeds, about four feet in front of the coop, as still as a corpse, and I was compelled to tumble, for here was the head of a sweet, tiny duckling projecting out of her feathers near her wings. This dear old, broken-hearted mother was sitting here, stealing this hen's ducks, as fast as she hatched them, and surely she knew they were not hers, for her ducklings were ten or twelve days old. As I looked at her I thought of the times I had crossed the street to meet some curly-haired little child that looked like my sweet little girl did. Well, when I went back again, the old hen was alone in the coop. The other two had hatched, and Mrs. Duck was gone with the eight, and she raised them all, for that cat never came back.

Another thing worthy of notice is that this is a well-settled farming country. I am three miles north of Lake Erie and about five miles north-east of Cedar Creek, which is the nearest natural duck marsh, and some of these cute old ducks, and some of their families until they are nearly full-grown, before they bring them home, and are seldom seen by any person, unless they happen to be in the big ditches.

A very small sportsman who stood six feet in height sprinkled corn in a living stream in order to get a shot at some of these ducks, and on Good Friday morning, 1911, he succeeded in getting a crack at a pair. As they flew up in front of him he killed the duck dead, but the drake fell with a broken pinion and ran into some rushes. After hunting him for fully one-half hour he went for his bird dog, thus giv-

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ing the drake nearly an hour to make his escape. When the dog arrived he took up the trail a once, but when he came to a ploughed field he apparently lost the scent. One week from the following Sunday Mr. Drake was at the park gate, trying to get in. Here he had been about nine days coming one mile and a half, dragging his broken wing. What handicapped him worst was a shot that had entered at the hip joint. I caught him and examined his wounds. As I let him down in the park he didn't flap away, as one would expect, but simply stood and looked for food. Fortunately for him only one of the bones was splintered and in less than six weeks he was flying again. But it took over two years for all the particulars regarding the shooting of him and the death of his mate to reach my ears.

Another fact worthy of notice is that the park gate is only thirty feet from our dining room window, and in every case these ducks come here to look for an entrance when it isn't at all likely they ever passed through this gate themselves. Only they see us enter there. Really, the way some of these birds expose their intelligence compels me to believe what I heard a farmer say at one of our Corn Growers' Conventions. This man rose up, stroking his beard; then, raising his right hand, he remarked, "I tell you gentlemen, there are a lot of things in this world we haven't come to yet."

Another interesting fact about wild mallard ducks is the extreme difference between the faithful mother and the lazy drone of a father; for as soon as the duck starts to set, the drake deserts her entirely and he lives the life of a Brigham Young for the rest of the season. In fact he hasn't got a bit more principle than some of us men! Hence the faithful mother has to be father and mother both to her family, hatching and guarding them from their enemies, and leading them to proper feed as well as supplying the necessary shelter and warmth. Yes, she is just as faithful and true as a kind washerwoman who is compelled to bring her nursing baby with her while she scrubs the morning away and earns two dollars, but willingly takes fifty cents, and on her way back to the place called home spends it all to relieve the hunger of the three or four more darling tots that are anxiously awaiting mamma's return while the lazy, good-for-nothing father is loafing around the smoky end of nowhere, wrapping garbage stories, and remarking about some lady who is passing the dirty window that is corroded with smut.

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