

Curled Dock (*Rumex crispus*) leaf. The outside was covered with a sort of a netting. Through the netting you could see something orange that occasionally made a slight movement. I thought for sure it was some kind of copper, but to my surprise it turned out to be a Curculionid weevil. However, this is not so disappointing as it seems, for it is part of our small, but fastly growing collection of beetles. It is surprises like this that help make things interesting for the student of nature.

BUTTERFLIES

If you are now collecting butterflies in Saskatchewan, or are interested in starting this fascinating hobby, will you please let me know, as I am trying to gather as much information as possible on their distribution in this province. This field is somewhat understudied and a thorough research requires the co-operation of as many naturalists as possible.

—Ronald Hooper, Somme

Umbrella-worts in Saskatchewan

ARCHIE BUDD, Swift Current

The Umbrella-worts have rather peculiar flowers and are a little puzzling when first encountered. Below the flowers is a membranous, five sided involucral bract which generally flattens out when the flowers mature. On this bract are from one to five flowers, with no petals but with coloured united sepals, generally pinkish in colour. The number of stamens varies from three to five in each flower, and they protrude conspicuously when the flowers first open. The base of the calyx is constricted or drawn in just above the single seeded ovary. The leaves vary somewhat but are generally lanceolate or linear-lanceolate, fairly thick and are borne oppositely on the stem, with either a very short stalk or none at all.

The commonest species in Saskatchewan is the Hairy Umbrella-wort, (*Oxybaphus hirsutus*) which bears glandular hairs and is found on light sandy soils. There is a form of this species which is almost hairless and this is about as plentiful as the hairy form.

Another species is the Heart-leaved Umbrella-wort, (*Oxybaphus nyctagineus*) a native of eastern Manitoba and the States adjacent to the south. This has larger, ovate to cordate leaves, mostly with definite stalks and reddish coloured inflorescence. This plant seems to be spreading westward along the railway tracks and in some places near Swift Current has taken full possession of the cinder fill alongside the tracks and is competing for domin-



ance with the Smooth catchfly.

The garden plant, Four-o'clock or Marvel of Peru is one of the Umbrella-worts as is the plant from which jalap, the purgative, is obtained. The Umbrella-worts have been placed in several genera, *Allionia*, *Oxybaphus*, and more recently, have been put into *Mirabilis*. Probably the common name has reference to the somewhat umbrella shaped involucre. Dr. Stevens, the well known botanist of North Dakota, fittingly calls it Wild Four-o'clock.