

the time required to complete a generation contradicts the temptation to think that the successive peaks represent successive generations. If all the facts of the temperature experience of a population in the cocoons could be known, it might account for a first flight peak in July instead of June, for example, but might not account for two flight peaks separated by a month. Our present knowledge is simply inadequate for an hypothesis concerning this.

The author used equipment and facilities of his former employer the Agriculture Canada Research Station at Saskatoon, in performing the experiments described in this paper. He acknowledges the invaluable assistance of Charles G. Devlin, technician, in their performance.

¹ PUTNAM, L.G. 1984. Diapause in the beet webworm. *Blue Jay* 42(1):22-24.

CHINESE ELM — A NEW FOOD PLANT FOR THE MOURNING CLOAK BUTTERFLY

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Chinese Elm is a rapidly growing foreign tree brought into the Pas area in the past 10 years. It winters well here and seedlings are starting to appear in gardens and along buildings from the adult trees. It has all the appearance of becoming a weed tree and is so treated now by the Saskatchewan Department of Agriculture.

It was something of a surprise this past August to find several dozen almost fully grown larvae of the Mourning Cloak Butterfly on a Chinese Elm hedge on 3rd Street in town. With the able assistance of my six-year-old nephew, Kevin Krivda, we collected some 60 spined larvae and kept them with fresh elm leaves in a large covered cardboard box in the greenhouse. This was 18 August. By 25 August most had pupated. A week later butterflies were flying all through the greenhouse. We released many by leaving the doors open but preserved a good set for future study. They were a shade on the small side either due to our drought this year, or that the Chinese elm was partly unsuitable to them as diet.

Most years large, fully grown larvae can

be easily collected along the Saskatchewan River. Here they feed on Sand-bar Willow. This may be the normal food for the Mourning Cloak in these parts. Only once did I see a colony of larvae on Trembling Aspen.

There is only one other local record of Mourning Cloak larvae on Chinese Elm trees. These were about 20 feet up in the tree in August 1979. The sudden switch of an insect to a new food plant is always worth recording.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Although Mourning Cloaks prefer willows for their food-plants, they will also feed on poplars and elms, especially in urban areas where there are fewer willows. In fact in some areas they have been so involved in feeding on American Elm, (*Ulmus americana*) the caterpillar has been called the "Spiny Elm Caterpillar". On July 4, 1984, Bill Hausecker, of Maryfield, Saskatchewan, pointed out to me (Ronald Hooper) a colony of Mourning Cloak caterpillars in his backyard which were feeding on Siberian (Manchurian) Elm (*Ulmus pumila*).
- R. Hooper