

A RARE MIGRANT CALIFORNIAN TORTOISE SHELL BUTTERFLY AT THE PAS, MANITOBA

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Recently, in sorting and arranging an accumulation of butterfly specimens in my collections from the early 1960s a local specimen of *Nymphalis Californica* was located. It was taken on 8 July, 1961 on the height of land at the old Indian Cemetery at Big Eddy. This is on a gravel ridge overlooking Pike Lake and the adjoining chain of small Lakes. This may be a rare local instance of hill-topping of a foreign butterfly in these parts. The phenomenon has been well studied in Europe but not in Canada.

The author has never seen this species in this area before 1961 nor since this particular collection. It is a wind blown specimen very much out of its normal range, which is from B.C. to California. It has also been recorded from Iowa, Michigan and Pennsylvania in the U.S.A.

There are other published records where it has strayed a vast distance from its usual range. The climate is too severe here for it to become a part of the butterfly fauna. This is a good example of a specimen probing new areas into which it might expand and establish itself. From the photographic illustration it can be seen that the specimen travelled a long way. The wings are frayed and torn. Much of the scale structure is gone and the fine thoracic vestiture is gone also. This allows the shiny chitin to show through.

Migration of butterflies is linked to a yearly changing climate. The year 1961 was exceptional for insect abundance locally. It was a hot and windy summer. In such a year a species could travel 1000 miles and establish itself in a new area.

