

THE REGAL FRITILLARY IN SASKATCHEWAN

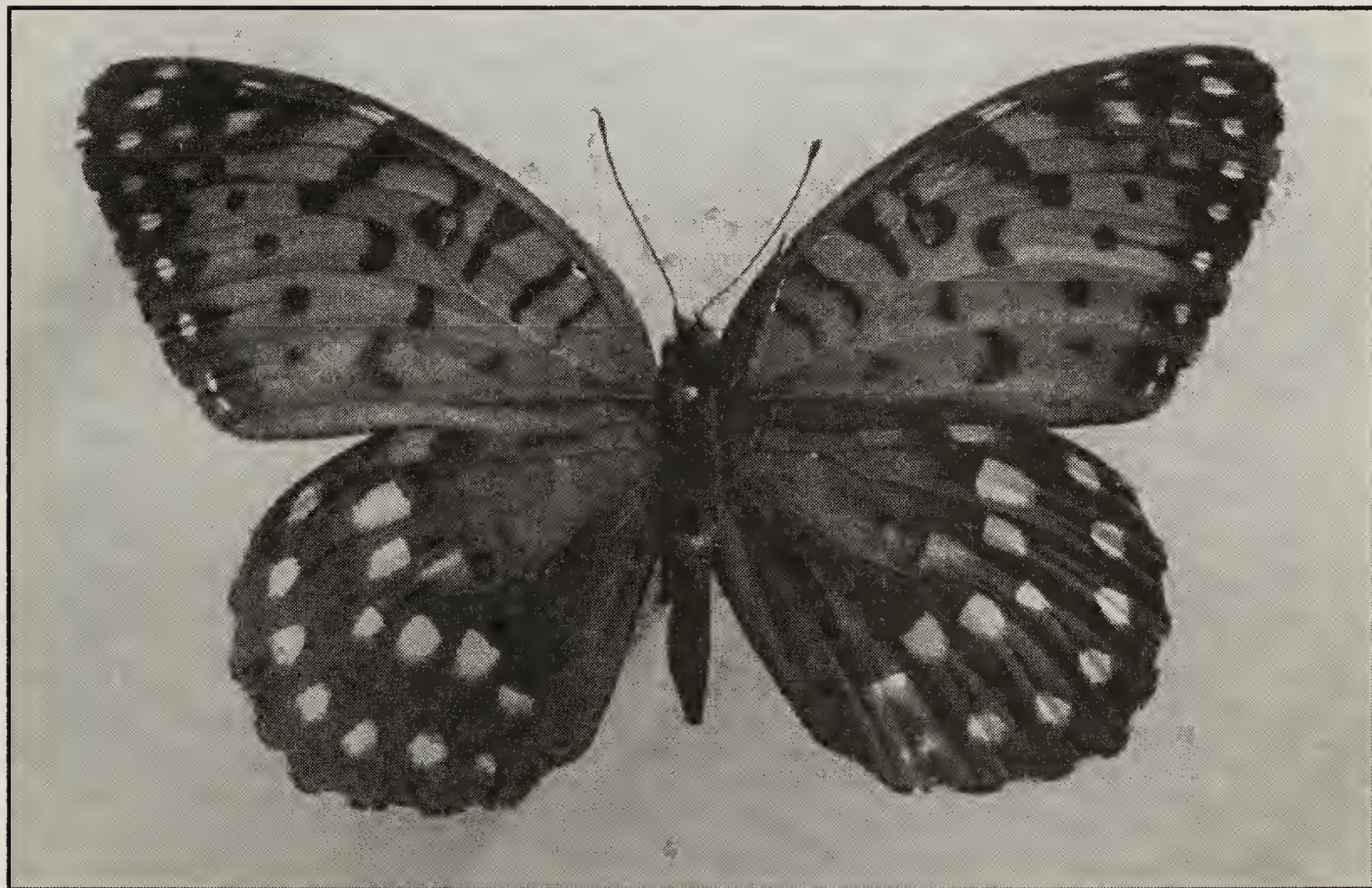
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On 26 July 1998 Ross Layberry (one of the authors of "Butterflies of Canada" - see page 63) was collecting butterflies in the area of Big Muddy Lake, SK. He saw a large butterfly heading northward over an alkali flat. It was flying, with the aid of a tail wind, about the height of a person. After a chase of several hundred metres he managed to catch it. It was a worn specimen of the Regal Fritillary (*Speyia idalia*) and a first record for Saskatchewan. It had previously been taken north to southern Manitoba and eastern Montana.

This beautiful butterfly is the largest of our fritillaries, with a wingspan from

6.6 to 9.2 cm. It looks like a typical fritillary on the upperside of the forewings with black markings on an orange background. The hindwings are unique, however, being black with two rows of pale spots. On the underside, the hind wing spots are well silvered and surrounded by dark brown.

The food plants of the Regal Fritillary are violets. Fresh specimens collected in southern Manitoba one summer suggested a temporary colony might have been established. Most western Canadian specimens are evidently strays.



Regal Fritillary - Kansas Specimen

Keith Roney