
INSECTS

LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY BUTTERFLY COLLECTORS IN SASKATCHEWAN

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The first resident butterfly collector of whom we have record in present Saskatchewan is "Miss F.M. Pierce, of Moose Mountain, N.W.T." Frances "Frankie" Michell Pierce was one of eight children of Captain Edward Michell Pierce, the organizer (in 1882) of the upscale British settlement, Cannington Manor, northwest of present Redvers, Saskatchewan, complete with tennis courts, foxhounds, fox hunts, and an agricultural college. Frankie collected insects, including a Variegated Fritillary, in 1884 (FP in Table 1), and forwarded them to C.J.S. Bethune in Toronto.¹

On 8 November 1885, Frankie was the first bride married in the first church consecrated in the Anglican Diocese of Qu'Appelle — All Saints Church at Cannington. Frankie married Samuel Spencer Page, 1857-1916, the first teacher and later first Member of the Legislative Assembly for the new constituency of Cannington in the North West Territories Legislative Assembly, 1891-1894 and 1894-1898, and first Clerk of the Legislative Assembly.⁶

Later in the 1880s, probably in 1887, Cora E. Rose and her two little sons collected 30 kinds of butterflies, and sent them to Henry Skinner, M.D., of Philadelphia. In her covering letter, Cora described the location of her farm as "30 miles north of an old Hudson [sic] Bay Post called Fort Qu'Appelle; the only foliage is willow and poplar." One of the butterflies Cora collected was at that time thought to represent the type specimen for a new subspecies of the Common Alpine, *Erebia epipsodea sineocellata*.⁷



Purplish Copper on Stiff Goldenrod near Saskatoon

Photo by Anna Leighton

Cora's husband, Robert J. Rose, had homesteaded on the southwest corner of section 18, township 24, range 11, west of the second meridian, and built a small shanty there in 1883. He broke 12 acres that year, 3 the next and nearly 11 the third summer. This land is today a mile west of Highway 310, 7 miles south and almost 2 miles west of Ituna, or 20 miles north and 11 miles east of Fort

Qu'Appelle. Cora and their two children did not move from Fort Qu'Appelle onto their farm until 28 September 1886. The 29 species/varieties collected by Cora Rose are listed as CR in Table 1.

In 1883, about four years before Cora Rose began her collections, a collector from Toronto, Gamble Geddes, aide-de-camp to the Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario, came through in 1883 on the new Canadian Pacific Railroad. He collected briefly at Brandon on 10 June, then took a side-trip north to Fort Ellice (Hudson's Bay Company post 9 miles east of the present Saskatchewan boundary near where St. Lazare, Manitoba, is today), on 12 June, where he collected Common Checkered Skipper, then considered rare, as well as Common Alpine, Summer Azure, Silvery Blue, Meadow Fritillary, Garita Skipper, Northern Cloudywing, and Sleepy Duskywing. He also visited Fort Qu'Appelle, where he collected an Arctic Blue; Moose Jaw, where he collected an Orange Sulphur and a Western Branded Skipper; and Swift Current. Somewhere in Saskatchewan he took what is now known to be simply a Silvery Blue, but which W.H. Edwards described as a new species, *Lycaena afra*. Then Geddes went on to Medicine Hat (at that time in the postal district of Assiniboia) on 15 June, and Calgary on 30 June. He made a side trip north to Edmonton on 8 July, returned to Fort Macleod on 23 July, Pincher Creek on 25-30 July, then west to Garnett Ranch at the eastern end of the Crow's Nest Pass on 8 August, and Belly River on 15 August.³

In 1884, Geddes returned once more from Toronto, leaving Winnipeg on 29 June, reaching Swift Current on 1 July (where he collected a Gray Copper and Edwards', Callippe, and Variegated Fritillaries), and Calgary on 3-7 July.⁴ (See GG in Table 1).

Another itinerant collector was H.H. Lyman of Montreal who stopped for a day in Regina, 5 August 1890, and collected what he felt was a new variety of Plains Skipper, *Pamphila manitoba*, for which he wished to give a subspecific or variety name of "assiniboia."⁵ (See HL in Table 1).

Two other collectors are known from single specimens. George M. Dawson, with

the British North America Boundary Commission, collected an Aphrodite Fritillary at Wood Mountain, presumably in late June 1874.² (See GD in Table 1). N.H. Cowdry collected an Anise Swallowtail at Regina, probably between 1882 and 1895² (see NC in Table 1).

These six amateur lepidopterists received recognition in print. We have no way of knowing whether other early butterfly collections were destroyed or found their way at least temporarily into local museums. Gollop would appreciate anyone with information about such collections contacting him at the address above.

Acknowledgements

We thank the late Lloyd Rodwell, Saskatchewan Archives, for many courtesies, and Mary Houston for making photocopies of relevant articles.

1. BETHUNE, C.J.S. 1885. *Euptoieta claudia*, Editor's note. *Can. Entomologist* 17:60.
2. EDWARDS, W.H. 1897. Butterflies of North America. Houghton Mifflin, Boston.
3. GEDDES, G. 1883,1884. List of diurnal lepidoptera collected in the North-west Territory and the Rocky Mountains. *Can. Entomologist* 15:221-223; 16:56-57.
4. GEDDES, G. 1889. Notes for collectors visiting the prairies and Rocky Mountains. *Can. Entomologist* 21:57-58.
5. LYMAN, H.H. 1892. *Pamphila manitoba* Scud., and its varieties. *Can. Entomologist* 24:57-59.
6. PIERCE, LILY. 1924. The settlement of Cannington Manor, vol. 2, pp. 787-792, *In: John Hawkes, The Story of Saskatchewan and its People* (S.J. Clarke, Chicago).
7. SKINNER, H. 1889. Butterflies at Qu'Appelle, Assiniboia. *Can. Entomologist* 21:238-240.

Table 1. BUTTERFLIES COLLECTED IN SASKATCHEWAN BEFORE 1895
(in taxonomic order)

1870s-1880s Scientific Name	Current English Name	Collector	Current Scientific Name
<i>Eudamus pylades</i>	Northern Cloudywing	GG	<i>Thorybes pylades</i>
<i>Nisoniades icelus</i>	Dreamy Duskywing	CR	<i>Erynnis icelus</i>
<i>Thanaos brizo</i>	Sleepy Duskywing	GG	<i>Erynnis brizo</i>
<i>Pamphila manitoba</i>	Common Checkered Skipper	CR, HL	<i>Pyrgus communis</i>
<i>Amblyscirtes tessallata</i>	Common Checkered Skipper	GG	<i>Pyrgus communis</i>
<i>Thymelicus garita</i>	Garita Skipperling	CR, GG	<i>Oarisma garita</i>
<i>Pamphila idaho</i>	Western Branded Skipper	GG	<i>Hesperia colorado</i>
<i>Pamphila cernes</i>	Tawny-edged Skipper	CR	<i>Polites themistocles</i>
<i>Papilio cipris</i>	Anise Swallowtail	NC	<i>Papilio zelicaon</i>
<i>Papilio rutulus</i>	Western Tiger Swallowtail*	CR	<i>Papilio rutulus</i>
<i>Pieris protodice</i>	Checkered White	CR	<i>Pontia protodice</i>
<i>Colias philodice</i>	Clouded Sulphur	CR	No change
<i>Colias eurytheme</i>	Orange Sulphur	CR, GG	No change
<i>Colias christina</i>	Christina Sulphur	CR	No change
<i>Colias scudderii</i>	Giant Sulphur	CR	<i>Colias gigantea</i>
<i>Chrysophanus dione</i>	Gray Copper	GG	<i>Lycaena dione</i>
<i>Chrysophanus florus</i>	Purplish Copper	CR	<i>Lycaena helloides</i>
<i>Chrysophanus helloides</i>	Purplish Copper	CR	<i>Lycaena helloides</i>
<i>Lycaena neglecta</i>	Summer Azure	GG	<i>Celastrina neglecta</i>
<i>Lycaena lygdamas</i>	Silvery Blue	GG	<i>Glaucopsyche lygdamus</i>
<i>Lycaena afra</i>	Silvery Blue	GG	<i>Glaucopsyche lygdamus</i>
<i>Lycaena scudderii</i>	Northern Blue	CR	<i>Lycaeides idas</i>
<i>Lycaena rustica</i>	Arctic Blue	GG	<i>Agriades glandon</i>
<i>Euptoieta claudia</i>	Variiegated Fritillary	FP,CR,GG	No change
<i>Argynnis cipris</i>	Aphrodite Fritillary	GD	<i>Speyeria aphrodite</i>
<i>Argynnis edwardsii</i>	Edwards' Fritillary	GG	<i>Speyeria edwardsii</i>
<i>Argynnis nevadensis</i>	Callippe Fritillary	GG	<i>Speyeria callippe</i>
<i>Argynnis lais</i>	Northwestern Fritillary	CR	<i>Speyeria hesperis</i>
<i>Argynnis bellona</i>	Meadow Fritillary	CR, GG	<i>Boloria bellona</i>
<i>Melitea carlota</i>	Gorgone Checkerspot	CR	<i>Chlosyne gorgone</i>
<i>Grapta progne</i>	Gray Comma	CR	<i>Polygonia progne</i>
<i>Vanessa antiopa</i>	Mourning Cloak	CR	<i>Nymphalis antiopa</i>
<i>Vanessa milberti</i>	Milbert's Tortoiseshell	CR	<i>Nymphalis milberti</i>
<i>Pyrameis cardui</i>	Painted Lady	CR	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>
<i>Limenitis arthemis</i>	White Admiral	CR	No change
<i>Coenonympha typhon</i>	Common Ringlet	CR	<i>Coenonympha tullia</i>
<i>Satyrus Var. boopis</i>	Common Wood-Nymph	CR	<i>Cercyonis pegala</i>
<i>Satyrus Var. olympus</i>	Common Wood-Nymph	CR	<i>Cercyonis pegala</i>
<i>Erebia discoidalis</i>	Red-disked Alpine	CR	No change
<i>Erebia epipsodea</i>	Common Alpine	GG	No change
<i>Erebia epipsodea sine-ocellata</i>	Common Alpine	CR	<i>Erebia epipsodea freemani</i>
<i>Chionobas varuna</i>	Uhler's Arctic	CR	<i>Oeneis uhleri</i>
<i>Danaus plexippus</i>	Monarch	CR	No change

CR: Cora E. Rose; FP: Frances M. Pierce; GD: George M. Dawson; GG: Gamble Geddes; HL: H.H. Lyman; NC: N.H. Cowdry

* Probably Canadian Tiger Swallowtail, *Papilio canadensis*



White Admirals on faeces

Photo by Chris Adam

Many species of blues [butterflies] have evolved symbiotic (mutually beneficial) relationships with ants. This usually consists of the caterpillars exuding a sweet substance known as honeydew, which is then taken up eagerly by the ants. The ants are thought to provide some protection from arthropod predators such as beetles to the sweet-bestowing larvae.

Canada's only records of Southern Cloudywing, Poweshick Skipperling, Ottoe Skipper, Dakota Skipper, Gulf Fritillary and Mexican Fritillary (Butterflies) are all from Manitoba.

Nothing is known of the history of a specimen of a Lace-winged Roadside Skipper in the Royal Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History or its collector, W.D. Leathers.