

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE MUTILLID GENUS *CHYPHOTES*.

On Aug. 21, 1894, I found at Santa Fé a specimen of *Chyphotes*, which I thought might prove to be a new species, as the legs are brown, with the femora and tibiæ, except their ends, black. The abdomen is also more elongate than in Blake's figures of *C. elevatus*, and the third segment is fuscous. The length of the insect is 9 mm. Mr. Fox, after comparing it with Blake's types, is persuaded that it is only a form of *elevatus*. It follows the rule already observed in certain bees of the genus *Perdita*, that individuals from higher elevations are darker.

The most curious thing developing from the examination of this specimen was, that Blake's account of the palpi of *Chyphotes* is all wrong. My example has the palpi honey-colour, maxillary palpi 6-jointed, lateral palpi 4-jointed. Formula for maxillary palpi 3 (46) (25) 1. Second joint of lateral palpi broadened. When I called Mr. Fox's attention to this, he wrote back that *C. elevatus* was really similar, the description being wrong.

T. D. A. COCKERELL.

PROPOSED BIOLOGICAL STATION.

The undersigned has it in view to found in New Mexico a Biological Station, and health and holiday resort for scientific persons, teachers, and kindred spirits. No loafers would be admitted, nor persons whose health was so poor as to prevent them from working.

Practically no funds are at present available, but it is hoped that if a very modest start is made, the means may in time be found to put the institution on a secure and permanent basis.

In such an establishment, scientific work may be carried on without any fear of interference by politicians and other self-interested or ignorant persons; while the Station might also come to be recognized as an independent educational centre, helping to promote the best interests of education in the broadest sense, as well as those of pure science.

The promoter hopes to be able, sooner or later, to secure the co-operation of a number of persons who will engage in the work for its own sake, and will not object to necessary privations or be afraid of the inevitable difficulties. Without enthusiasm, nothing can be done.

Three years' experience in this country gives the writer the highest opinion of the value of the climate for persons in the earlier stages of

phthisis (as he was himself when he came here); while the abundance of new and interesting forms of life, especially among the insects, is remarkable. Many interesting general problems, such as those of the life-zones, can also be studied in New Mexico to great advantage.

A beginning will be made this summer if students can be found. The undersigned will be glad to hear from any who are interested in the matter, and especially from those who might be inclined to work with him for longer or shorter periods during the present summer.

May 4, 1896.

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A MOTH OUT OF PLACE.

There has been added to the Society's collection a moth of more than ordinary interest. I sent to Prof. J. B. Smith, for determination, a box of specimens which were to me either new or doubtful. He kindly and promptly returned the same with the names of all except one, which was a *Plusia* quite new to him, and retained it for further study. In the letter to me accompanying the names, the Professor remarked: "No. 12 (*Tæniocampa vegeta*) is rather a surprise to me from your locality. Of course, it is not a *Tæniocampa*, but it has been so described." He then referred me to his catalogue of the Noctuidæ (Bulletin 44, of the U. S. N. M.) for what was known concerning the species. So I turned to it and found this on page 207:

"*T. vegeta*, Morr.

"1875. Morr., Proc. Ac. Nat. Sci., XXVII., 432, *Tæniocampa*.

"Habitat.—Texas.

"The type is in the Tepper collection. A correctly named specimen is also in the British Museum, from the Grote collection. The species is not a *Tæniocampa*, and probably belongs to the fasciatæ; but in default of sufficient study to place it certainly, I leave it here for the present. Mr. Slingerland has called my attention to the fact that *Cissusa spadix*, of Cramer, heretofore referred as a synonym of *Drasteria erectea*, is a distinct species. On examination I find this to be the fact, and it is more than likely that it will prove the same as the above species. Material for study is lacking, therefore the reference can not be positively made."

So it yet remains inaccurately placed from want of sufficient material for study. It seems also to have got far away from its supposed proper place of residence. Taken in London, at electric light, about the middle of April, 1896.

J. ALSTON MOFFAT.