



Phaëton

The Official Newsletter of the
Maryland Entomological Society

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APRIL MEETING OF THE MES CANCELLED



Message from the President

Dear MES members,

I must regretfully announce that the April 17th MES meeting must now be cancelled due to the continuing health crisis. We will reschedule the speaker for the Fall season. Hopefully things will be back in order for the May meeting.

It is my sincere hope that all of you are well and staying safe as this will pass in due time. Meanwhile keep a watch on for the Spring emerging insects, they are beginning to show up. :)

Best Regards, Fred Paras- President MES.

IN MEMORIAM
Dr. Austin P. Platt, PhD
Oct. 29, 1937 - Apr. 7, 2020

It is with deep regret and sorrow that I have to announce the passing of Dr. Austin P. Platt on April 7. Dr. Platt was one of the founding members of the Society as well as one of our past Presidents. He was instrumental in not only the founding of the Society, but also in having us recognized as a Faculty Sponsored Organization by the University which has allowed for our being able to use the facilities at U.M.B.C since our inception. He, along with past member John Fales, also helped lead the lobbying efforts that led to the State Legislature adopting the Baltimore Checkerspot Butterfly as Maryland's State Insect.

Following his doctoral studies at Amherst, Dr. Platt came to U.M.B.C. in 1969 and remained here throughout his teaching career. Although his prior field of study was working with small mammals, he started working with butterflies and he eventually became a world recognized expert on North American Limenitis butterflies. He was quite an accomplished naturalist and outdoorsman whose interests included fossils, antique guns, Indian artifacts, and fly fishing.

Following his retirement, Dr. Platt divided his time between Montana, where his elder son lives, and Maryland where he and his wife volunteered their time at the Calvert Marine Museum in Solomons helping to curate the fossil collections.

On a personal level I was honored to count Dr. Platt ("Bob" as his friends often called him) as a close friend. As one of his earliest students at U.M.B.C. he instilled in me an abiding interest in butterflies, insects, and so much more of our natural world. He took me under his wing and out to the field for my very first butterfly collecting trip when I was his student and hired me to be his part-time lab assistant during my college years. From that sprung my lifelong interest in insect life and my lifelong friendship and admiration for him. He was always a kind, open, and friendly person with everyone he talked to. Considered by some to have a bit of a quirky personality, I often think back on some of his lectures when I was in his classes. He had a reputation as being a kind of "Prince of Puns" with some of the corny jokes he would sometimes employ to get a point across, but I always loved him for it none the less. He was my teacher, my mentor, and my very good friend. I regret his passing as will many of the rest of us who knew him, and will remember him fondly for the rest of my life

Respectfully Submitted
Philip J. Kean

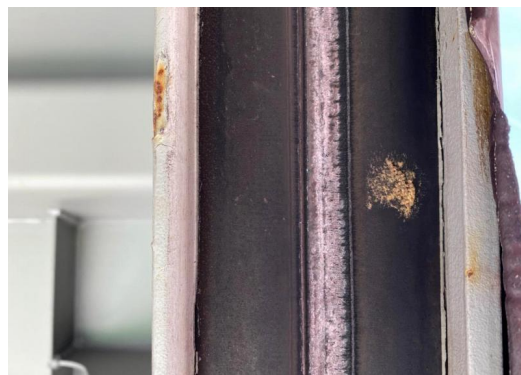
HONORING MEMBER DONORS

MES wishes to honor the following members who made charitable donations along with their recent membership renewals. These donations help with the printing and mailing of *The Maryland Entomologist*.

Robin G. Todd

**BALTIMORE CBP DETECTS DESTRUCTIVE
JAPANESE GYPSY MOTH EGG MASS ON COAL SHIP**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture confirmed Wednesday that an egg mass that Customs and Border Protection agriculture specialists discovered on a coal freighter at the Port of Baltimore March 22 was likely of the highly destructive Asian Gypsy Moth (AGM) species.



Egg mass of the highly destructive Lymantria dispar asiatica/japonica, also known as Asian Gypsy Moth.

CBP agriculture specialists inspected the M/V Mondial Sun and discovered the egg mass under a hatch door. The vessel, which arrived from the United Kingdom to take on coal, previously called on ports in China and Japan during the summer of 2019. Ports in Asia are high-risk ports for AGM. The M/V Mondial Sun departed Baltimore on March 24 destined to Japan.

CBP agriculture specialists removed the egg mass and treated the affected area with a pest spray oil. CBP submitted the specimen to the local United States Department of Agriculture pest identifier, who reported the egg mass as *Lymantria dispar asiatica/japonica*, the highly destructive Japanese gypsy moth. Asian Gypsy Moth (AGM) is one of the most destructive insect pests in the world. They are not known to occur in the United States.

[According to the USDA, AGM poses a significant threat](#) to our nation's forests and urban landscapes as it is known to be extremely mobile – females can travel up to 25 miles per day – is attracted to lights, can lay egg masses that could yield hundreds of hungry caterpillars, and is itself a voracious eater that attacks more than 500 species of trees and plants. If they would become established here, they could cause serious,

widespread damage to our country's landscape and natural resources.

"While most of the country remains hunkered down against coronavirus, Customs and Border Protection agriculture specialists remain on duty protecting our nation's vital agricultural resources against Asian Gypsy Moth and other highly destructive insect pest invaders," said Adam Rottman, CBP's Area Port Director for the Area Port of Baltimore.

CBP agriculture specialists and USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) inspectors have conducted AGM inspection training with AGM high risk countries (Far East Russia, South Korea, Japan, and Northeast China) to help lower AGM risks.



CBP agriculture specialist (right) inspects a coal ship in Baltimore.

Additionally, vessels making port calls in Asia generally implement stringent inspections to detect and remove egg masses, and foreign governments in the AGM high risk countries during the AGM high risk periods inspect and certify that vessels departing their ports are free of AGM or egg masses.

Read the rest of the article [here](#).

SCIENCE-RELATED ONLINE VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES

If you have some extra time on your hands are looking for activities you can do from home, here are some online volunteering opportunities related to learning and science:

- **Smithsonian Digital Volunteers** - The Smithsonian Institution is the world's largest museum, education, and research complex, but even they could use a little help sometimes. Help make their collections more accessible by volunteering online to transcribe historical documents or edit Wikipedia articles related to their artifacts and research.

- **Zooniverse** - Zooniverse is a platform for people-powered research that literally wouldn't be possible (or practical) without the help of online volunteers. Spend as much or as little time as you'd like identifying endangered animals, classifying galaxy systems, or transcribing Shakespearean manuscripts.
- **Project Gutenberg** - Founded in 1971, this may just be the virtual volunteering effort that started it all. The goal is to create the largest digital library, and so far they've amassed 59,000 free eBooks. Volunteer by donating eligible materials, transcribing books into a digital form, or proofreading others' work.

THE LEPIDOPTERISTS' SOCIETY 2020 ANNUAL MEETING CANCELLED

UPDATE 3/27: We regret to inform our members that the LepSoc 2020 Annual Meeting is **CANCELLED**. WCU has cancelled all on-campus events through at least June. We will plan on holding the 2021 meeting at the same location on the same week in 2021 (June 15 - June 18), Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, North Carolina. LepSoc leadership appreciates all of the hard work by the organizing committee, and we look forward to seeing everyone in 2021!

The 69th Annual Meeting of the Lepidopterists' Society will be held from Tuesday, June 16 – Friday June 19, 2020 in Cullowhee, North Carolina. We will be meeting in conjunction with the Southern Lepidopterists' Society and the Tropical Lepidoptera Society. The meeting will be hosted by Western Carolina University and Dr. James Costa. WCU is the westernmost university in the UNC system, located in a valley between the Blue Ridge and Great Smoky Mountains. Online registration will be done through WCU. We encourage contributed papers and posters by anyone who is interested in presenting! Look for links for registration and abstract submissions and additional details coming soon.

Find more information at <https://www.lepsoc.org/content/annual-meeting>.

ONLINE ENTOMOLOGY RESOURCES FOR KIDS

With everyone stuck at home for the foreseeable future, here are some links for online entomology resources for kids, including informational pages, games and activities.

<https://www.kidsolr.com/science/entomology.html>
<https://ento.psu.edu/public/kids/resources-for-educators>
<https://entsocalberta.ca/resources/learn/>
<https://entomology.unl.edu/scilit/entomology-games>

2019/2020 PROPOSED MES EVENT SCHEDULE

Regular MES lecture/meetings are held at the University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC) on the 3rd Friday of each of 6 months coinciding with UMBC's academic year. Proposed events for the upcoming MES membership year are:

Oct 18: The Love Bugs screening
Nov 15: James Butler (US Army) – Entomology in the
US Military
Feb 21: Dr. Ken Belt (UMBC) – Aquatic Insects
Mar 20: CANCELLED
Apr 17: CANCELLED
May 15: Members' & Students' Presentations & Elections
Jul: MES BugBlitz
Sep: Member's Picnic

Than Oars divide the Ocean,
Too silver for a seam—
Or Butterflies, off Banks of Noon
Leap, plashless as they swim.

**OCT 2019-SEP 2020 MES MEMBERSHIP YEAR
OFFICERS**

President	Frederick Paras
Vice President	Philip J. Kean
Secretary	Janet A. Lydon
Treasurer	Edgar A. Cohen, Jr.
Historian	(vacant)
Faculty Sponsors	Frank E. Hanson
Journal Editor	Eugene J. Scarpulla
E-newsletter Editors	Aditi Dubey

SUBMITTAL DEADLINES

May 2020 issue of the *Phaëton*:

Please send member news items by 8th May 2020.

Send e-newsletter drafts to Addie at aditid26@gmail.com.

September 2020 issue of *The Maryland Entomologist*:

Please send first drafts of articles and notes ASAP.

Send drafts to Gene Scarpulla at ejscarp@comcast.net.

A BIRD CAME DOWN THE WALK
By EMILY DICKINSON

A Bird came down the Walk—
He did not know I saw—
He bit an Angleworm in halves
And ate the fellow, raw,

And then he drank a Dew
From a convenient Grass—
And then hopped sidewise to the Wall
To let a Beetle pass—

He glanced with rapid eyes
That hurried all around—
They looked like frightened Beads, I thought—
He stirred his Velvet Head

Like one in danger, Cautious,
I offered him a Crumb
And he unrolled his feathers
And rowed him softer home—