

foreign countries. The National Organization for Public Health Nursing will meet with the association in 1937 for the first time. This organization will, it is expected, add another thousand members to the registration lists. The following related societies will meet with the association as usual: The American Association of School Physicians; International So-

cietiy of Medical Health Officers; Conference of State Sanitary Engineers; Conference of State Laboratory Directors; Association of Women in Public Health and Delta Omega. Dr. Reginald M. Atwater is the executive secretary of the association, and the headquarters offices are at 50 West 50th Street, New York, N. Y.

## DISCUSSION

### THE DISTRIBUTION OF BLACK WIDOW SPIDERS

IN a recent article by D. C. Lowrie<sup>1</sup> the geographic distribution of the black widow spider, *Latrodectus mactans* (Fabr.), is discussed. The author adds Indiana to the list of states from which the spider is known and refers to the records given two weeks previously by L. H. Townsend<sup>2</sup> for Illinois and Oregon as though they were the first for those states. Moreover, he makes a statement to the effect that it has not yet been recorded from the following states: Minnesota, Iowa, Virginia, Delaware, New Jersey, Connecticut, Rhode Island and Vermont. A few weeks later Jeffers<sup>3</sup> recorded the spider from Virginia. There is no doubt that it occurs in all these states, as it has been found in the regions bounding them. As a matter of fact, records for some of them have been available in entomological literature. For the benefit of those interested who may not have access to this literature I repeat them here.

For Virginia the spider was first recorded by J. H. Emerton<sup>4</sup> in 1875, from Hog Island. It has also been recorded as abundant in the Norfolk area by L. D. Anderson and H. G. Walker,<sup>5</sup> and from various localities by C. R. Willey.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, Dr. Bogen<sup>7</sup> cites cases of arachnidism from this state and gives three medical references. In a supplementary paper<sup>8</sup> two more references are added.

For Illinois the spider has been recorded by W. J. Spicer<sup>9</sup> from near Pittsfield, near Springfield and from Barry. For Oregon, by H. H. Stage<sup>10</sup> from Klamath Falls, and by D. C. Mote<sup>11</sup> from Roseburg and elsewhere.

For New Jersey the spider has been recorded by C. H. Hadley<sup>12</sup> from Moorestown, and by R. C. Cassel-

bury<sup>13</sup> from near Ocean City. For Rhode Island a specimen from Cranston has been recorded by A. E. Stene.<sup>14</sup> Specimens have been collected in Connecticut at Killingworth on May 16, 1933, by Dr. A. Petrunkevitch; at North Plains on October 28, 1934, by Dr. S. C. Ball; at Norwichtown on June 25, 1935, by A. Latham, and at Leetes Island on September 29, 1935, by D. S. Riggs. These have all been recorded by Dr. W. E. Britton.<sup>15</sup>

In addition to the above the following records are published for the first time. In Connecticut a specimen was taken by P. G. Howes at Stamford in 1912; by V. R. Short at Westbrook on June 8, 1935; by Mrs. W. Harrington at Woodbridge on October 7, 1936; by Mrs. I. J. Longo in Bridgeport on September 15, 1936, and two were found by D. S. Riggs in the nest of a mud dauber wasp at Cheshire on August 19, 1936. In Vermont specimens were collected in June, 1935, by Miss E. B. Bryant at Brandon and by C. H. Paige at Woodstock.

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### THE BLACK WIDOW SPIDER IN VIRGINIA

AS G. W. Jeffers states in SCIENCE for December 11, 1936, it is rather surprising that the black widow spider *Latrodectus mactans* has not been recorded officially in Virginia, although this is the case, according to D. C. Lowrie in SCIENCE for November 11, 1936. Jeffers finds it fairly common at Farmville, Va., and concludes that it probably occurs elsewhere in the state.

The writer has found it under boards at Arlington Farm, Va., near Washington, D. C., in the Alleghenies at Camp Todd, Augusta County, Va., at 1,000 feet, and at the foot of Walker Mountain near Deerfield, Augusta County, Va., all within the last two years.

Many years ago the writer found it very abundant at Thompsons Mills near Hosehton in northern Georgia. At this time little mention was made of this spider and the writer strongly doubted the venomous nature of its bite. Several attempts were made to test its bite between the fingers, but he could not get it to use its fangs.

<sup>13</sup> *Entom. News*, 46: 260-261, December, 1935.

<sup>14</sup> *Insect Pest Surv. Bul.*, 16: 306, August, 1936.

<sup>15</sup> *Conn. Agr. Exp. Sta. Bul.*, 383: 350. April, 1936.

<sup>1</sup> SCIENCE, 84: 437, November 13, 1936.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 84: 392-393, October 30, 1936.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 84: 533-534, December 11, 1936.

<sup>4</sup> *Occ. Papers Boston Soc. Nat. Hist.*, 2: 153, 1875.

(In reprint of N. M. Hentz's "Spiders of the United States.")

<sup>5</sup> *Insect Pest Surv. Bul.*, 12: 404, November, 1932.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 14: 296, November, 1934.

<sup>7</sup> *Arch. Int. Med.*, 38: 623-632, November, 1926.

<sup>8</sup> *Ann. Int. Med.*, 6: 375-388, September, 1932.

<sup>9</sup> *Insect Pest Surv. Bul.*, 15: 419, November, 1935.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 14: 164, July, 1934.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 14: 209, August, 1934.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 15: 389, October, 1935.