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Butterfly Identification

The bird-wing butterfly pictured in Random Samples of 28 February (p. 1271) is not *Ornithoptera croesus* Wallace, but an exquisitely rare bilateral gynandromorph (female on the right side, male on the left) of one of the subspecies of *Trogonoptera brookiana* (Wallace). *Croesus* flies in the Moluccas, over a thousand miles east of the habitat of *brookiana* in Malaya and Sundaland.

At least no one can argue that the removal of this butterfly from its birthplace to the Osaka Museum of Natural History in Japan, by way of Kaoru Sumiyoshi's collection, will affect the survival of the species—gynandromorphs of this type are usually incapable of reproduction.

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Bullish about the Bear?

A Population Reference Bureau report summarized in Random Samples (14 Feb., p. 933) says that the Russian population will fall because the birthrate is low and projected to decrease and suggests that the population of elderly threatens "to crush pension systems." The presented graph shows that from 1995 to 2030 there will be an increase in the proportion of elderly in the Russian population. However, the graph also shows a projected decrease in the number of children, which more than balances the increasing number of elderly. The proportion of elderly to total population will indeed increase from 20% to 32% between 1995 and 2030, but this will be offset by a decrease in children under 15 from 21% to 11.5%. Russian working ages are defined by the report as 15 to 54 for women and 15 to 59 for men. The proportion of working-age to total Russian population will remain about the same: 58% in 1995 and 57% in 2030. As the Russian economy improves over the next 30 years, a baby boom may develop. Until then, there is reason to be bullish about the Russian bear.

There will also be a relative decrease in the U.S. child population. Between 1995 and 2050, the proportion of working-age to

total adult (working-age plus elderly) populations will decrease by 11%, but the proportion of working-age to total population will decrease by only 6% (1). Both child and elderly population levels affect the economy and the federal budget. Both should be considered in the current debates over Social Security and Medicare.

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References

1. *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1996* (U.S. Bureau of the Census, Washington, DC, ed. 116, 1996), pp. 15; *ibid.*, p. 17.

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*Giles et al. Immunology, 1994, 84:162-166
Pridmore et al. Eur J. Immunol. 1990, 20:201-206

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