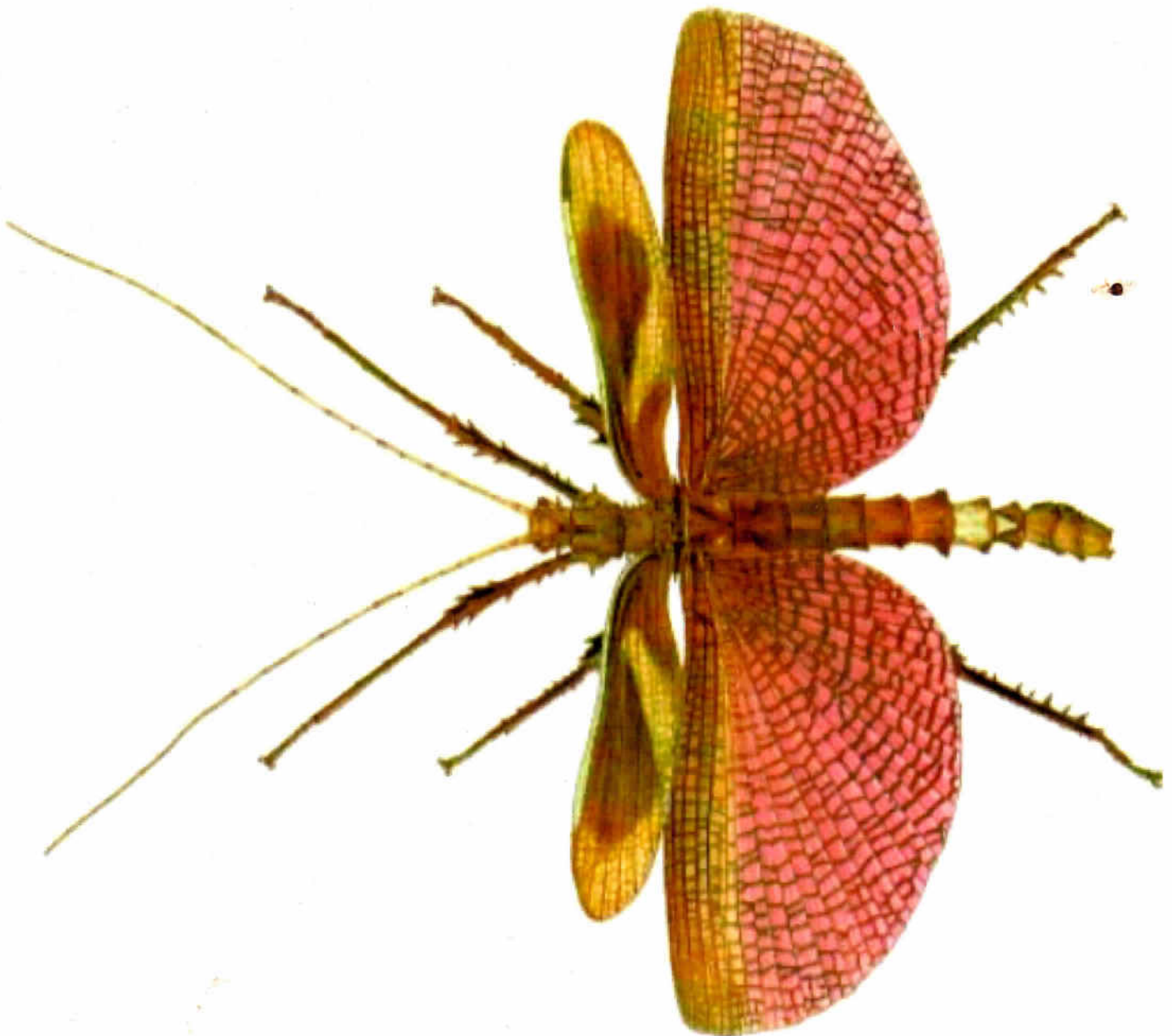
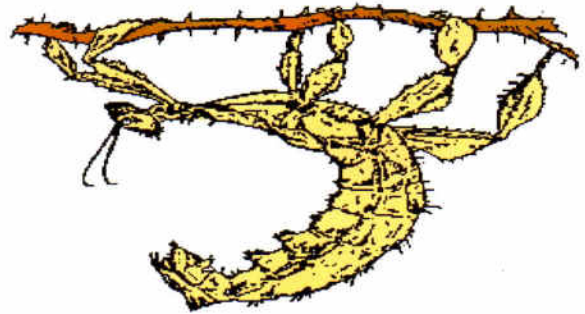


# The Phasmid Study Group

JUNE 2006  
NEWSLETTER No 106  
ISSN 0268-3806



*Heteropteryx dilatata* (Jungle Nymph) male, by Ron Baxter (from his book Rearing Stick & Leaf Insects).

# THE COLOUR PAGE!



*Peruphasma schultei* by Phil Bragg – see page 10.



*C. sangneoligatus* hatchling by Chris Pull



*P. schultei* hatchling by Chris Pull – see page 10.



*P. macklottii* hatchling by Chris Pull



*P. siccifolium* hatchling by Chris Pull



*Carausius* sp. by Jaromir Zajicek (see Natalie's article, page 13)



*Acanthoxyla prasina* by Mieke of Sticktalk



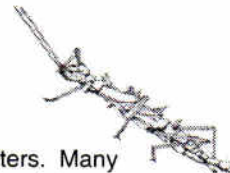
Phoebe, 2 and a half years old, holding Benjie's adult male *Eurycantha calcarata*

From Sticktalk



*Peruphasma schultei* by Tom of Sticktalk

Also, see page 10.



Welcome to the June PSG Newsletter.

**New Printers.** I was very impressed with the excellent quality of the last Newsletter by our new printers. Many members advised me that they were impressed too. One minor point is that some black and white pictures seemed to come out a bit dark, perhaps something we can work on.

**Twenty Pages.** We have some fantastic contributions in this issue, so many thanks to all the contributors for their very hard work - much appreciated. We even have a phasmid-based puzzle thanks to Chris Pull, which will please many members. I am however disappointed that we managed only 20 pages for this issue. (I could have stretched them to more, but the next choice was 24 pages). So, as usual, I would be most grateful for some more contributions, please.

**Summer Meeting.** I look forward to seeing you at the Summer Meeting on **Saturday, 8<sup>th</sup> July, 11.30am, Natural History Museum, London.** See the agenda on page 15. We ask members to please bring some livestock for the display – see page 10. The subject of the display is the subfamily *Heteropteryginae*, which includes *Heteropteryx* and *Haaniella*; there are no rules for the display, just bring in your favourite specimens male, female, adults and/or nymphs, in a suitable container with food, labelled however you wish but to include your name, PSG No, and a few details about your specimen(s). This takes the place of the usual competition slot. However, we have a special, one-off competition at this meeting. It could not be easier, just bring along your Jungle Nymphs (*Heteropteryx dilatata*) on the day, in a suitable container. Registration details etc will be fully explained in the meeting room on the day. Please bring ANY of your specimens, so we can compare notes and have a good display though, of course, the main purpose of the competition is to find the heaviest specimen (hope the person doing the weighing –George? - has some thick gloves!).

**PSG Website.** I have just been advised that we have major problems on this site, in particular that the members' area and the all-colour Newsletter are difficult for members to get into, these are being sorted out. (See page 16 for password).

**PSG Species Questionnaire.** Included with your Newsletter should be a questionnaire in an envelope, seeking information on which species of phasmids you keep. This is a survey to see which species are in viable culture, so **please do take the effort to complete the questionnaire (thank you)**, and return it quickly in the envelope. Also, many thanks to Kristien Rabaey, and Phasma, for organising this survey. I'll put the results of it in a future Newsletter.

Regards to all, **Mike Smith**

**Diary Dates (Please send me details of any shows etc you are aware of – this list is getting a bit short!)**

**Newark Insect Show**  
 Sunday, 18th June, 2006, Balderton Leisure Centre, Newark-on-Trent.  
 (Conyact: Paul Holt, 01636 674723 or 07901 577251).

*This information is given in good faith, but the PSG cannot be held responsible for a wasted journey. So please check with the organisers that the event is still on, and at the times and places shown.*

**PSG Summer Meeting**  
**Saturday, 8th July 2006 – 11.30 am, Palaeontology Demonstration Room, Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road, London.**

**AES Exhibition**  
 Saturday, 7th October, 2006, 11am. Kempton Park Racecourse, Staines Road, Kempton Park, Sunbury-on Thames, Middlesex.  
 (Contact: AES, PO Box 8774, London, SW7; E-mail: [wayne@theaes.org](mailto:wayne@theaes.org)).

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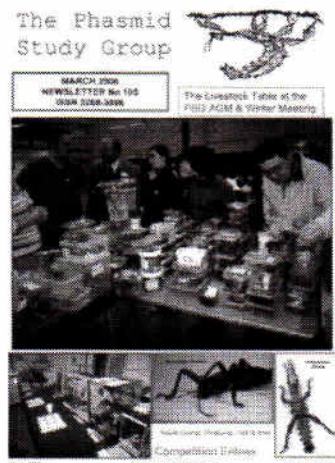
**BLATTODEA (COCKROACH) CULTURE GROUP – UPDATE.** Annual subs 20 euros (about £15) for British & other European, 30 euros (about £20) overseas. Membership enquiries: Roland Dusi e-mail [Roland.Dusi@frunol-delicia.de](mailto:Roland.Dusi@frunol-delicia.de) , Tel: +49(0)34202 65300. Website:<http://www.bcg-online.com>. Their first Newsletter was brilliant, thanks for the free copy, keep up the good work.

The Stick Talk list is totally independent of the PSG, though many Stick Talk list members are also members of the PSG. If you want to join the list, e-mail: [admin@sticklist.com](mailto:admin@sticklist.com) It's totally free of charge; and if you do not like it, just send an e-mail asking to be taken off the list. It is also moderated by hard-working moderators, so it's secure, safe from abusive language, and there will be no spam. As a Stick Talk list member, you will receive one e-mail on most days. Typical issues raised are in the following short extracts - enjoy. (Some typical photos from Stick Talk often appear on The Colour Page). Stick Talk is e-mailed to over 280 subscribers in over 30 countries worldwide.



By Mike Smith

**NEW PRINTERS.** I received my PSG Newsletter today, and I have to say that it seems to be of much higher quality than the original versions. Having a quick flick through I can see there are several interesting topics, and it looks as though it will prove to be a brilliant read. Well done Mike! *Chris Pull.* The better quality paper and state of the art laser printers, have produced a Newsletter of excellent quality. In particular the colour pictures have come out pin-sharp, almost to photo standard. Hopefully this will encourage people to send me more pictures for future Newsletters..... *Mike Smith.* The new style Newsletter is f-a-n-t-a-s-t-i-c!!! I must admit, I didn't really feel any need to change away from the old style, but now I've seen the new one, I love it!! Its really great - well done. *Natalie Ford.* I want to start by congratulating Mike Smith, for a wonderful PSG Newsletter. All I can say is WOW!!!! really nicer than the other ones, thank you and all the contributors, like Benji, Stephen, Chris Pull, George B, also congratulations to Ian and Sarah for their new position in the PSG committee. As soon as I got the Newsletter, I read it about 2-3 times, I did not want to miss anything. *Francisco Torres.* Wow! I just got my PSG newsletter in the mail and it is great! I love the new printing job and the pictures and articles are terrific. I was surprised however to see one of my photos and a bit of news about my stick insects in there also. I do like surprises! Thanks. *Kim Sinclair.*



**BLOATED ETS.** My friend who is a biologist has narrowed the field from the slides I provided to her on the bloating disease which decimated my ET culture. Apparently it is water born in nature. I have been collecting my blackberry leaves near the edge of the creek - and they had actually been under the raging creek water for about a week at one time. I'm assuming I did not wash them well enough. Lesson - DO NOT clip blackberries that can be splashed or submerged by a creek, and wash them well. *Patrick (Crusher) Dalton.*

**KEITH'S WEBSITE.** A view of food plants [for phasmids] with photos can be seen on my renewed website:- <http://www.phasmatania.org> although not complete as yet, I hope it will be helpful. A thought also occurred to me that a list of food plants with names of species would be a good idea and eventually I will incorporate this into the site. *Keith.*

**CORRECTION.** The dog Storm, pictured with big teeth in the March Newsletter, belonged to Chris Luffman, not Chris Pull - apologies for this misunderstanding. *Editor.*

**WHERE DID IT START?** To newer members who haven't heard it yet, here is The Sticktalk Story; I hope this answers a lot of your questions about Sticktalk. I don't like to draw so much attention to myself, but you asked for it. I have always had a fascination for stick insects, but never considered keeping any myself, until one day about 5 years ago when I saw some Indian sticks in very poor condition at a pet shop. Of course, I had to rescue them and give them a good home. Wanting to know more about stick insects, I went browsing on the Internet and found a stick insect "Newsletter" among many websites dealing with insects. It was a privately owned, automated forwarding list. I signed up and the fun began. I learned a lot about those 6-legged creatures, made many friends on the list and was given ova to provide me with many different species of stick insects.

I had been a member of that list for over a year, when I got that nagging feeling that one day this list may come to an end. So I started collecting names and e-mail addresses of many of the members. Sure enough, there came a point when the owner of the list decided to modernize the list and offer a Forum Board instead. I knew I was going to miss my daily stick mail and I was sure other members would too. So I started my own manual forwarding list and named it Sticktalk. It was supposed to be a temporary solution until another list could be established, but my new list was such a success that I decided to keep it going. I had a lot of fun doing it, but after a while I suffered some major burnouts as well. It is quite a job moderating a list such as this day in, day out without a break.



Ursula with a sub adult female *E. goliath*

In time my friend, Natalie Ford, created a website for us, so we could attract new members. Later Derek Pattenson volunteered to create a website from which we could send the messages. And almost 950 issues of the new Sticktalk have since flown through cyberspace. I hope Sticktalk will continue for a long time, in one form or another. *Ursula.*

**FEEDING PARECTATOSOMA M.** I've found that the *Parectatosoma* are happy with eucalyptus, though down south here the hypericum is fine and they always have some available. They share a cage with the *Extats* and *goliaths*, (which have exclusively eucalyptus) but I've found the PMs on the eucalyptus as much as the hypericum, and the hypericum never seems to get eaten... *Derek TP*

**THANKS.** I am as always indebted to the contributors of Stick Talk for their kind permission to use their contributions and pictures in the PSG Newsletters to inform our PSG members and promote Sticktalk. Many thanks, *Editor.*

## TROPICAL FOOD PLANTS by Benjie Mabanta

(Based on an original contribution to Sticktalk). Regarding tropical food plants for sticks, I'll bet that there are a lot more different species of plants that sticks will take here in the tropics than what our friends from temperate areas have available and it is just a matter of trying them out. Unfortunately, I have not had the time to go on a full blown experiment as to what these may be. Meantime, here is a list of what I know that may be suitable as food plants for sticks aside from guava and mango:

- a. macopa, chohm-poo (in Thai), or Java Apple (in English) with scientific name *Syzygium samarangense*, and other plants from the Myrtaceae family of which guava (*Psidium guajava*) is also a member.
- b. Tamarind or *Tamarindus indica* which I am sure Thailand has plenty of.
- c. Camachile or *Pithecellobium dulce*
- d. Rambutan or *Nephelium lappaceum* from the Sapindaceae family
- e. Lychee or *Litchi chinensis* also from the Sapindaceae family which also includes longgan (don't know the scientific name)
- f. Schefflerias from the family Araliaceae (Tiffany says this is well taken by *Trachyaretaon bruckneri*)
- g. Aratilis or *Muntingia calabura*
- h. Santol or *Sandoricum sp.* (cottonball fruit)
- i. Durantha may also be suitable



j. Indian tree - I do not know its scientific name but I have attached two pictures of it from the street where I work. This is a tall growing straight tree with branches growing downward from the main trunk. I use this a lot and sticks only take the new leaves found on the tips of branches which are orange-green in colour that have not turned into dark green. (Top two pictures).

k. *Acacia longifolia* - this tree originates from Australia and is well taken by Australian species (Eucalyptus may also be available in your country). I use Acacia a lot to currently feed my *Ctenomorphodes briareus* and *Eurycnema* as well as *Extatosoma* when I had them before. I have attached pictures of these as well as I went out of the office during lunch break today to take these just outside our building. (Bottom two pictures).

As you can see, I get my food plants beside the road so I have to thoroughly wash them and soak them in water for at least an hour before I place them in the bug cages.

I'm sure there are more food plants. Please share with us if you do discover other plants.

## CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE PSG NEWSLETTER

Please send any contributions to the Editor anytime (but by **15th August** for a place in the September 2006 PSG Newsletter, 1st August to *guarantee* a place):-

**Mike Smith, 13 Runnacles Street,  
Silver End, Witham, Essex,  
CM8 3QN, England, UK.**

**Tel: 01376 584388.**

**E-mail: [editor@stickinsect.org.uk](mailto:editor@stickinsect.org.uk)**

*(Max 2MB per e-mail, please).*

I find MS Word as an E-mail attachment, or on floppy disk or CD, easiest to cope with. I also prefer that any pictures to be sent are inserted into an MS Word document. I can however deal with a wide range of other formats - including handwritten (but handwritten articles may be delayed as it takes me much longer to process them). **Please do not send me e-mails of over 2 megabytes, instead break it up into separate e-mails, or send by post on a disk, many thanks.**

(Unless the contributor specifically requests otherwise): Discs, and hard copies of photos etc are not returned to the contributor. Also, all contributions to the Newsletter will be deemed to be submitted for use in the PSG Website (and vice versa), the Belgian-Dutch Phasma for translation, the German Arthropoda for translation, and Lukasz Czok's Polish website for translation ([www.phasmids.prv.pl](http://www.phasmids.prv.pl)).

The editor may make minor changes to contributions, where deemed necessary, without contacting the author (unless the author specifically requests otherwise). For significant changes, the editor will always contact the author before publication.

**PSG COMMITTEE** (full information of the committee's role profiles are available on request. Please contact any committee member for details)

**CHAIRMAN** *Judith Marshall*

To arrange meetings within the NHM, Dept. of Entomology, The Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road, London SW7 5BD.  
(Tel: 020 7942 5610; Fax 020 7942 5229) E-mail: [chairman@stickinsect.org.uk](mailto:chairman@stickinsect.org.uk).

**TREASURER/MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY** *Paul Brock*

To receive membership applications and renewals, and keep track of PSG finances. "Papillon", 40 Thorndike Road, Slough, Berks. SL2 1SR.  
(Tel: 01753 579447 Phone after 5pm) E-mail: [membership@stickinsect.org.uk](mailto:membership@stickinsect.org.uk).

**SECRETARY (Shared role)** *Ian Bushell and Sarah Houghton*

To produce agendas and minutes for PSG meetings  
E-mail [secretary@stickinsect.org.uk](mailto:secretary@stickinsect.org.uk).

**PHASMID STUDIES EDITOR** *Phil Bragg*

To produce agendas and minutes for PSG meetings, and edit the more technical/scientific articles, for Phasmid Studies.  
8 The Lane, Awworth, Nottinghamshire, NG16 2QP.  
(Tel: 0115 9305010). E-mail: Currently not available on e-mail

**EXHIBITION & MEETINGS OFFICER** *Paul Jennings (assisted by Paul Taylor)*

To assist the PSG in having a presence at relevant exhibitions and meetings.  
89 Brackensdale Avenue, Derby, DE22 4AF. Tel: 01332 343477.

**LIVESTOCK COORDINATOR** *Janine Fletcher*

To coordinate between those with surplus livestock and those wanting species.  
125 Malvern Drive, North Common, Warmley, Bristol, BS30 8UY.  
Tel: 01179 604917, E-mail: [livestock@stickinsect.org.uk](mailto:livestock@stickinsect.org.uk).

**LIBRARIAN** *David Robinson*

To keep all relevant information for general reference. Tel: 01908 653493, e-mail [librarian@stickinsect.org.uk](mailto:librarian@stickinsect.org.uk)

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**

*Paul Taylor* (PSG Website Master) E-mail [webmaster@stickinsect.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@stickinsect.org.uk)

*Kristien Rabaey/Rob Simeons* (European representatives)

*Cameron Die Königin* (PSG Competition Organiser)

*Ian Abercrombie*

Vacancy (Holder & seller of PSG merchandise) [Please apply to Chairman]

**PSG MEMBERSHIP 2006**

Subscription rates for 2006 are: United Kingdom £9.00; Europe £11.00; and Overseas £12.00. If you are not a member of the PSG, and wish to join, please send your subscription to: Paul Brock. "Papillon", 40 Thorndike Road, Slough, Berks. SL2 1SR, England, together with your name, address (including post code and country), phone No, and e-mail address (if any). Payments can be made by Cheque, Postal Order, International Postal Giro, or a cheque in £ sterling drawn against a London Bank. Cheques, etc, should be made payable to "The Phasmid Study Group". **PLEASE NOTE, unfortunately, we are unable to accept Eurocheques.** UK members only may also pay by Standing Order, please contact the Membership Secretary for a form. Cash may be sent in your own currency, but if so please add £3 for exchange rate variations. However there is a serious danger that bank notes will get lost in the post so, if you must send bank notes, this is entirely at your own risk. If you send cash, it is recommended that you do so by registered post. Payment can also be made on our website using Paypal (via website [www.stickinsect.org.uk](http://www.stickinsect.org.uk)), but Paypal is not currently available in every country in the world. Also go to the website for full details of the benefits of PSG membership.

**WANTS & EXCHANGES**

Do not forget that your spare ova (eggs) should be sent to our **Livestock Co-ordinator, Jan Fletcher** (requests always outweigh offers – so please send Janine your spare livestock). Also, your requests for ova, etc may go to Jan too.

125 Malvern Drive, North Common, Warmley, Bristol, BS30 8UY. Tel: 01179 604917, e-mail: [livestock@stickinsect.org.uk](mailto:livestock@stickinsect.org.uk).

Janine advises that she currently has a surplus of the following ova (eggs) PSG Nos: 11, 4, 9, 14, 15, 18, 19, 23, 25, 32, 44, 55, 73, 82, 85, 100, 101, 103, 144, 145, 164, 166, 169, 173, 174, 181, 182, 183, 195, 208, 221, 224, 227, 235, 236, 237, 240, 250, 255, 256, 259, 260, 263, 264, 266, *Bacteria* sp. (Panama), *Calynda* sp., *Neohirasea japonica*, and *Sceptrophasma* sp. (Thailand). Also the following nymphs: PSG Nos: 38, 69, 84, 126, 163, 195, 192, 215, 255 and *Sceptrophasma* sp. (Thailand). (If you want any of these, please contact Janine).

The following ova were currently wanted by members (if you can spare any of these, please send them to Janine): PSG Nos: 2, 10, 12, 13, 14, 18, 19, 20, 21, 25, 26, 29, 31, 35, 59, 60, 69, 70, 72, 76, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 110, 111, 112, 117, 125, 126, 127, 128, 154, 177, 186, 190, 193, 199, 247, & 258.

JAN ALSO ADVISES THAT MEMBERS SHOULD NOT SEND HER, OR SEEK FROM HER, ANY NYMPHS WITHOUT FIRST CONTACTING HER, AND MAKING APPROPRIATE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THEIR ARRIVAL. OVA, HOWEVER, MAY NORMALLY BE SENT ANYTIME. (Please include your phone No in any e-mail to Janine).

Janine apologises that she cannot attend the PSG Summer Meeting, but assures us the ever popular Livestock Exchange WILL still take place as normal (probably run by Ian Bushell, Cameron DK, and Ian Abercrombie).

**NOTICE** It is to be directly understood that all views, opinions or theories, expressed in the pages of "The Newsletter", are those of the author(s) concerned. All announcements of meetings, requests for help or information, are accepted as bona fide. Neither the Editor, nor Officers and Committee of "The Phasmid Study Group", can be held responsible for any loss, embarrassment or injury that might be sustained by reliance thereon.

## Some Useful Questions / Answers For People New To Stick Keeping By Natalie Ford

A while ago I responded to some questions asked on Sticktalk (an email group for Phasmid enthusiasts) regarding how to care for and breed *Extatosoma tiaratum* and *Medauroidea extradentata*. As the questions are probably ones that anyone new to stick-keeping may want to know answers to, Mike (Smith) thought it would be a good idea to publish the information in the Newsletter. So, here it is...! Please note "E.t." and "M.e." are used as abbreviations for the species names.

### **What is the optimum temperature and humidity to keep *Extatosoma tiaratum* and *Medauroidea extradentata*?**

-You should keep both species at a comfortable room temperature, allowing it to drop several degrees at night time. This is generally the same for the majority of phasmid species. As for humidity, M.e.'s should be kept at low humidity so a well ventilated cage is best and I, personally, also keep my E.t.'s in this environment too, but many people have success keeping their E.t.'s humid (i.e. restricted ventilation) so you could try both.

### **On average how long does it take to reach adulthood for these species?**

-I'm not sure for M.e.'s but I suspect it's fairly quick - around 3 months but I'm sure you can easily find this information on the web. For E.t.'s I find it varies: if you get some with good, strong genes, they can mature in about 4 months, however, much of the stock in culture is less strong and can take up to 6 months. A diet of fresh, varied food (with leaves changed regularly) will also help keep your insects strong. If you find any nymphs that are particularly slow to grow, unfortunately these usually never make it to adulthood.

### **After their last skin shed how long is it before they start laying ova?**

-This is usually around 3 weeks for most species. ["Skin shed" = moult].

### **Is there a way to tell which skin shed they are on?**

-Not really, this is usually just learned with experience.

### **I know stick insects can regenerate legs, but how old is too old to do this?**

-Generally stick insects will try to regenerate a missing leg as long as they still have at least 2-3 skin sheds before adulthood.

### **On average how long does it take for their ova to hatch?**

-You should easily be able to find this information on the web but I would guess M.e.'s take 2-3 months. E.t.'s can take between 5 and 12 months, although 6-9 months is most common.

### **What is the optimum temperature and humidity to incubate their ova?**

-I would recommend to keep all ova at room temperature (20-24°C). You can keep ova warmer and this will speed up hatching, but it can also mean that the insects don't develop properly and may hatch weak or sometimes even deformed, so I always recommend room temperature. As for humidity, this is species-dependant: E.t. ova do best kept at medium-high humidity, however, I suspect M.e.'s could be kept at low humidity. Near hatching time, all ova appreciate a light spraying of water once a week as this helps ensure the nymphs don't get stuck in their shells.

### **What percentage of ova should I expect to hatch?**

- This varies enormously with each species. With M.e.'s its quite high, I'd guess around 80% but you can check this with information on the web. E.t.'s can vary a great deal depending on how strong the stock's genes are but on average I would say 60-80%. However, not all of these will make it to maturity so I always keep quite a few eggs - if you end up with too many babies, there will always be people willing to take spare E.t.'s! For other species, it's a good idea to find out in advance roughly the percentage of ova that will hatch; otherwise it's very easy to end up with far, far too many babies! Although other stick insect enthusiasts will do their best to help out if you end up with a baby explosion, please try your hardest to avoid this as keeping your babies to sensible numbers is part of being a responsible pet-owner.

### **How long should I hang on to ova before throwing them away? I've had some hatch way over a year.**

- Again, this depends on the species, I guess a year would be sufficient for M.e.'s but two (maybe 2½) years may be better for E.t.'s.

### **Can I increase the percentage of ova hatched by feeding certain foods to the female?**

- I really don't know...but, certainly providing a varied diet and keeping their food fresh will help breed healthier insects, so I guess it could help the fertility of the eggs.

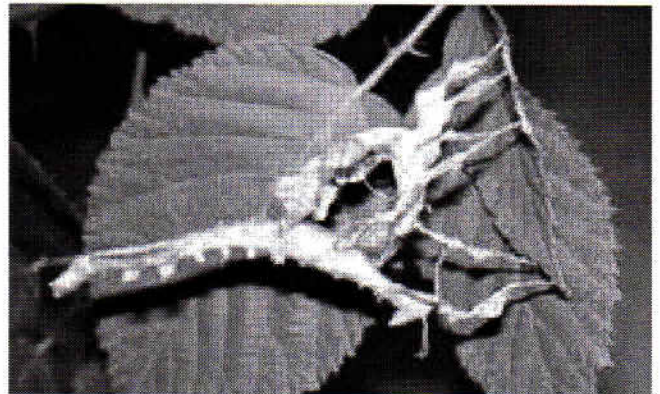
### **My ET's should eat eucalyptus as hatchlings but they didn't seem to take readily to it. I've heard this decreases stunting and deformities, and I have noticed if I don't get my hatchlings to eat something within several days of hatching they die. Is there a specific type of eucalyptus they should be eating?**

-I think it's misleading to say hatchlings "should"/"must" eat a certain food...many E.t. generations are bred purely on bramble, although Eucalyptus is what they eat in the wild. Your best bet is to offer a variety of food then they can choose what they wish to eat. For E.t.'s I would ensure bramble is always available and also offer Eucalyptus and Oak if possible. If you find your babies are still dying try different levels of humidity to see which they do best in.

### **Do *Baculum extradentatum*/*Medauroidea extradentata* eat eucalyptus?**

-I'm not sure but if you give it a try, you'll find out! Please note any new/experimental food must always be offered in addition to their usual food. Stick insects will starve themselves if they don't like the food on offer.

Many thanks, Natalie. If anyone can add anything else, please let me know. Editor.



*Extatosoma tiaratum* moulting. Picture Glenn Patrick.

# Basic Notes On Methods For Propagating Foodplants *by Edward Baker*

[Many thanks Edward for your first contribution to the PSG Newsletter. It is an excellent and interesting subject, and your offer of more contributions is much appreciated. I presume that ideally the live plants would be used in the bigger cages?]

**Whenever possible I offer phasmids live, growing foodplants.** This has a variety of advantages, including the reduction in the number of collecting trips, increased lifetime of foodplant, and the fact the insects always have perfectly fresh leaves to eat. The plants can be grown in small pots, or take-away style food containers which are ideal for insects kept in small propagators or similar. By pinching out the growing tips of each shoot compact and bushy plants are produced, which are ideal for being placed inside cages. Foodplants can be obtained from a variety of places; some such as bramble are best collected from the wild, whereas tropical species are best from garden centres or from seed ([www.ebay.co.uk](http://www.ebay.co.uk) is useful for seeds such as guava). The following notes may be used to obtain sufficient plants to feed your phasmids.

## **Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus agg*)**

Bramble may be propagated from leaf-bud cuttings. This essential consists of cutting a section of stem with around four leaf-buds (look for a little growing tip between last year's leaf and the stem). The bottom two are removed, the cutting dipped in hormone rooting powder, and buried up to the first remaining leaf-bud in potting compost. Keep warm and moist until new growth is established. This method is not the best one for bramble, but is mentioned as it can be applied with great success to roses and other closely related species.

The best way to grow bramble is to look in spring or early summer in woodland for small outcrops of bramble leaves amongst the leaf litter. These are almost invariably formed by long trailing canes growing just under the layer of leaves. By locating the cane and following it you will hopefully find a reasonable number of small rooted plantlets, which can be dug or often simply pulled out of the ground. The old cane should be cut off about 5cm [2 inches] from the new plantlet. These can be grown in small pots in general purpose compost.

It should be mentioned that the landowner's permission is required to collect plants in this way, and you should always be responsible about the number of plants you take from a given area.

A useful tip for trailing plants such as bramble is to use coat hangers to train the growing canes in a spiral, this allows a greater length to be grown in a compact shape more suited for cages. (This also applies to the less compact varieties of ivy).

## **Eucalyptus**

Trees are commonly available in garden centres. Seed should be cold stratified in a fridge for around four weeks before being grown in a mix of sand and compost.



## **Ferns**

Ferns have a more complicated germination procedure than the other plants. The pot should be sterilised in boiling water and the soil in the oven. Spores are sprinkled on the surface (once its cooled) and the pot covered in cling film. Keep on a windowsill away from direct sunlight. After a few months the pre-germination stage or prothalli will form a green mass on which the male and female reproductive organs will grow. These in turn will produce the actual new plants.

## **Fuchsia**

Not listed for many species but forms a welcome addition to the diet of several other species. Take cuttings from soft growing tips, removing any flower buds. The cuttings should be planted immediately in a propagator as they will root very easily. Keep cuttings 3cm apart to maintain humidity. Kept warm and moist the plantlets will form in around a month.

## **Guava**

Cover seed in a layer of vermiculite or perlite and keep warm and moist. Plants may sometimes be available from garden centres.

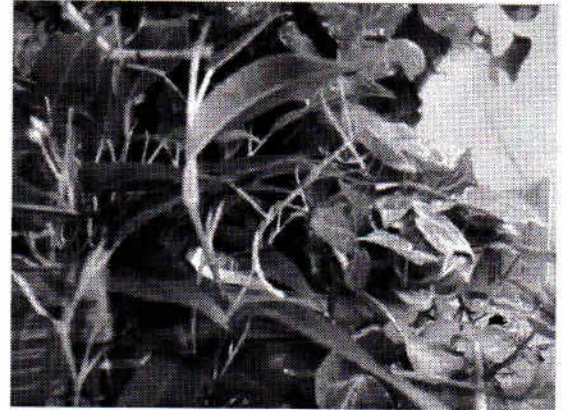
## **Ivy (*Hedera sp.*)**

Trailing stems can be induced to root by burying lengths of stem in compost with the leaves on the surface and leaving nature to work. Ivy may also be



propagated by taking 15cm sections of stem, removing lower leaves and potting in seed and cutting compost after dusting lightly in hormone rooting powder.

As with any plant species taking cuttings of established plants will remove the risk of systemic insecticides. It is possible to take cuttings from wild ivy, although the more compact and smaller-leaved varieties for gardens are more appropriate for all but the largest of cages.



**Oak (*Quercus sp.*)**

Collect acorns in autumn. Germination may be improved either by cold stratification in a fridge for around four weeks or being sown and kept outside in a pot sheltered from frost (do not allow the pot to become water logged). If possible collect acorns of a variety of species, and try to get acorns of the evergreen species.

**Privet (*Ligustrum sp.*)**

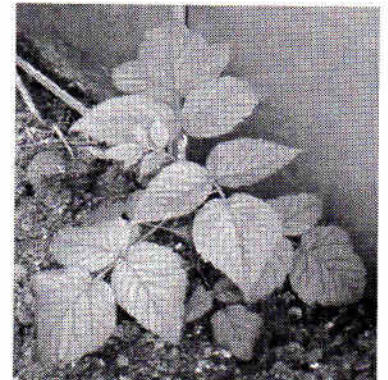
Take cuttings of woody or semi-woody stems, and continue as for ivy, but ensure if possible that there are several leaf-buds on the cutting sections.

All plants should be replaced before they are totally stripped of leaves, so that they are capable of regenerating themselves. They should be allowed as long as possible to regenerate before being used again. It is possible if there are not too many insects present to create a very eye pleasing arrangement in a suitable container if live plants are used. Care is needed to ensure that the light levels and humidity required by the insects and the plants is closely matched however.

I am currently in the process of converting an old beer keg into a Perspex fronted cage for phasmids – hopefully it will be completed in time to give details in the next newsletter! [Who drank the beer?]

**A Thorny Patch** by Alan Hendy

At the back of my garden runs a small lane, and on the other side of this lane lies an overgrown garden plot with two old apple trees and a patch of *Rubus fruticosus* (Rosaceae) Bramble about ten feet square. This old garden is full of wildlife and naturalised garden escapes ie Buddlia (butterfly Bushes) etc. Every six months or so an old chap comes along and cuts all the bramble right down to ground level and the new growth comes back with very thick stems with huge thorns, even the leaves have thorns on the upper surface.



Here is a sample of some beautiful, new-growth bramble in my garden. I don't grow much, and I use it just for "emergencies". Mike Smith.

As this Bramble is so thick stemmed and thorny, I only use it if I am short for time even though it overhangs a picket fence and spills into the lane. This growth habit has been noticed by other PSG members around the UK in similar conditions and I wonder if this is some sort of ancient defence reaction by the bramble to discourage grazing etc?

**Wordsearch** by Chris Pull

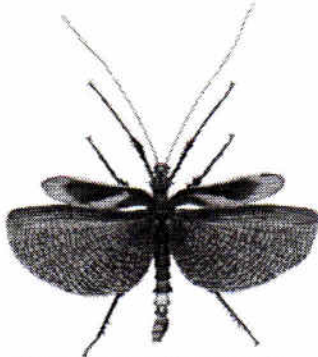
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E	K	Y	H	T	D	V	G	T	U	Z	W	A	E	D	C	V	L	I	I
B	N	N	P	F	Q	A	V	F	G	X	H	S	E	V	N	T	Q	W	U
E	C	B	M	S	A	H	X	M	E	U	C	A	L	Y	P	T	U	S	S
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F	D	C	P	U	O	R	G	Y	D	U	T	S	D	I	M	S	A	H	P

Here it is folks – a puzzle! The popular Puzzle Page feature has long gone as no-one sent me anything for it. So, thanks for this Chris. I'm always in the market for puzzles. **ANSWERS ARE ON PAGE 20.**

- 1. Phasmid
- 2. Stick insect
- 3. Head
- 4. Thorax
- 5. Abdomen
- 6. Ova
- 7. Nymphs
- 8. *Carausius morosus*
- 9. *Sipyloidea sipyulus*
- 10. *Eurycantha*
- 11. Eurycnema
- 12. Phyllium
- 13. Epidares
- 14. Bramble
- 15. Eucalyptus
- 16. Oak
- 17. Species
- 18. Ramulus
- 19. Phasmid Study Group
- 20. Food plant

## Heteropteryginae Insect Display For The Summer Meeting *by Cameron DK*

As mentioned in last year's Newsletters and PSG meetings, we're going to re-introduce themed insect collections to the PSG meetings. These will replace the competition event during the Summer Meeting; the competition running in the winter meetings as usual.



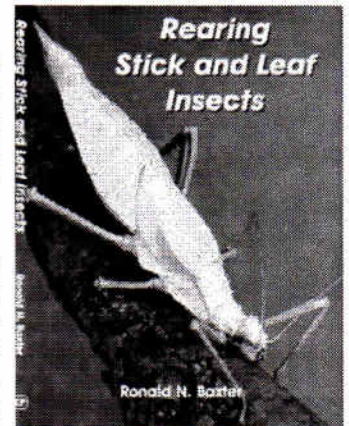
*Heteropteryx dilatata* male

By Ron Baxter (see front of Newsletter to see picture in colour)

The plan is to put on display as many species belonging to a group as is available in culture. The group could be those that are closely related e.g. in the same subfamily or those from a distinct geographical region. These used to be held until a few years ago and gave the members the chance to see a comprehensive group of insects both live and preserved.

After much deliberation, we're going with the subfamily *Heteropteryginae*, which includes two genera that are very much sought after by members, *Heteropteryx* and *Haaniella*. This should coincide with the search for the heaviest *Heteropteryx* event as highlighted in the last Newsletter. Consideration was given to displaying the larger taxonomic group, the family *Heteropterygidae* (that would also include the subfamily *Obriminae* - *Aretaon*, *Sungaya* etc, and the subfamily *Dataminae* - *Dares*, *Epidares* etc) but these

additional subfamilies will make their own display at a later date. The insects for the display have been sourced and it should give a really good opportunity to see most, if not all of the species currently cultured.



*Heteropteryx dilatata* female

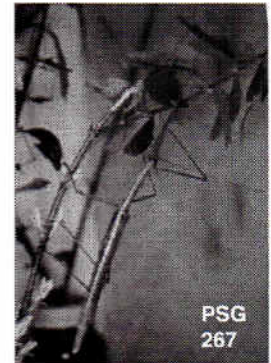
By Ron Baxter

(What a great book cover)

## Additions To The Culture List *by Phil Bragg*

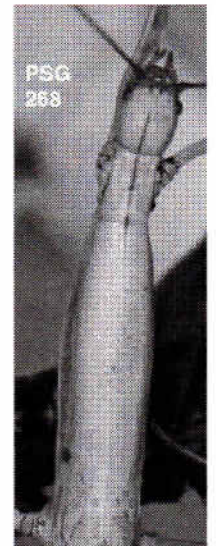
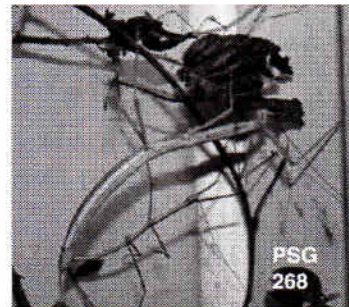
Four more species seem to have become well established and have been added to the culture list.

**PSG 267. *Asceles* sp.** [Salok is sometimes called Bansalok, "Ban" = "village of"] Collected in Thailand (Salok) by Christophe Bauduin. It feeds on hypericum and rhododendron and seems a particularly easy species. I was given six nymphs in October 2005 and gave away over 200 nymphs in April 2006, and I'm still over-run with them! Female 80mm, male 65mm. The nymphs are brown or greenish-brown; adults are very colourful with green legs, brown and green bodies, anal region of the hind wing is black, the costal region is brown with a yellow stripe, the fore wing is brown yellow and orange. As with other species of *Asceles*, the eggs are pinned to leaves. Eggs hatch quite quickly.



**PSG 268. *Leiophasma lucubense* (Brancsik, 1893)**

From Madagascar. Feeds on bramble and hypericum. I am told they do best on hypericum. I reared mine exclusively on bramble and most nymphs died in the second instar, although I do not know if this was related to the foodplant. There are several members with well established cultures. Female 125mm, male 70mm. The female is green and has a thin black line along the head and pronotum. The male is brown with green legs.



**PSG 269. *Pseudophasma castaneum* (Bates, 1865)**

(Collector unknown). Feeds on privet, and the adults at least will also eat hebe. Egg laying seems to be quite slow. Female 55mm, male 50mm. Some cultures have been distributed with the name *Pseudophasma psthiscum* (Linnaeus, 1758) on them. Cultures from Peru are *P. castaneum*. A culture of *P. psthiscum* from Guiana may still exist in France, but does not seem to have become well enough established to be distributed elsewhere.

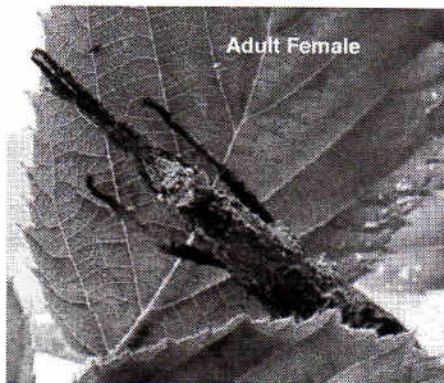


**PSG 270. *Peruphasma schultei* Conle & Hennemann, 2005**

Collected by Rainer Schulte in Peru in 2005 and brought into culture by Oskar Conle & Frank Hennemann. Feeds on privet. A very plump species, black with white eyes and tiny red wings. Female 55mm, male 45mm.

[PSG270 is beautiful, see it properly in the pictures on Page 2.]

# *Pylaemenes quangxiensis* (Bi & Li, 1994) PSG248 by Chris Pull



**Introduction** I acquired this species at the PSG Summer Meeting in 2005, where I came away with 3 adult females. Although at first glance these insects may appear to nothing more than a piece of wood chipping, it is this uncanny camouflage that makes them so unusual and interesting to keep. Once you get past the fact they are so tiny, you realize how much colour and texture these insects have. I am writing this article because these insects are a new species to culture and as of yet there is very little care information available on them. This report describes the species from eggs to adults, and outlays how I and others have successfully kept and successfully bred them.

## **Classification**

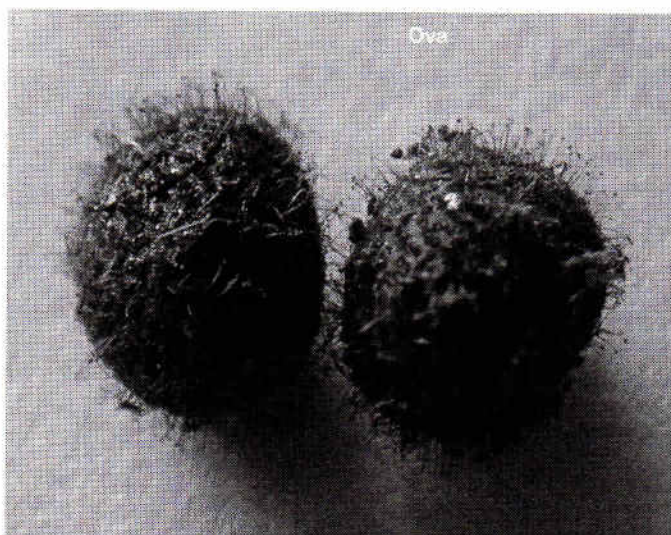
This species has been referred to as *Dares quangxiensis* and *Dares hongkongiensis*, but the correct name is now *Pylaemenes quangxiensis*. It has been moved several times to and from *Dares* and *Pylaemenes*, which has led to some confusion in the correct name. Guangxiensis is a member of the subfamily *Dataminae*. This subfamily also includes other members like *Dares validispinus* and *Epidares nolimetangere*.

## **Distribution**

This species originates from Hong Kong, China.

## **Species description**

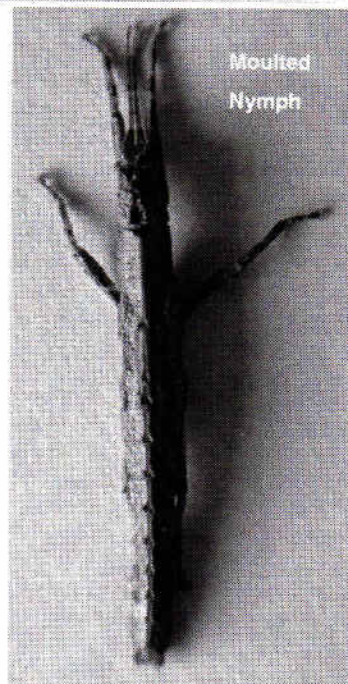
**-Ova** The large ova of this species are of an oval shape. They are a very dark brown and like many other *Dataminae* they are hairy. I believe the reason for this is due to the small size of the species it may be difficult for the females to distribute the ova far enough to prevent inbreeding. But if dropped to the ground, then the eggs maybe picked up by a larger animal and transported to another area because the hairs on the egg would latch on to the animals fur etc. They are approximately 4mm in height and 3mm wide.



**-Hatchlings** These are approx. 1.7cm long. When they first emerge from the egg they are maroon colored, although they quickly turn greyish-brown. They appear very flat and are a menace to pick up from a flat surface. They appear to have a skeletal appearance, with lots of ridges and grooves on the body. When disturbed sufficiently, the legs snap close to body and they drop from their perch. They are reluctant to walk at all stages in their life.



**-Moulted nymphs** As they moult, the nymphs seem to fill out and their appearance is more bulky. They also become a lighter, sandy brown, likable to *Orestes mouhotii* but without the intricate patterns. Behaviour is the same as the hatchlings, and they seldom move whilst being cleaned out, except the odd twitch of a leg.



## **-Adults**

This is an all female, parthenogenetic species. The short, chunky females have many bumps & lumps all over their body. The legs are thin and short. The whole insect looks rather like a piece of bark chipping, the legs being splinters! They also have a small 'crown' on top of the head. Antennae are short and don't extend past the legs. The colour is made up of various shades of brown. Those present at the last PSG meeting may recall Cameron making the slightly absurd comment that this species is very pretty, if viewed from the rear. After making sure I heard him correctly I made the mental note to check mine out when I got home.



To my surprise I discovered that, when viewed from the rear, adults have a charming little 'face', not unlike that of a crocodile or warthog, snout and all! I was going to include a photograph of this, but decided it would be more interesting for readers to look for themselves. This species is reported to be found commonly hidden amongst leaf litter, which explains its camouflage.

### Rearing

**-Accommodation** I keep this species in 'square' Tupperware tubs. I have a one or two inch thick substrate or vermiculite. Another point that was made at the last PSG meeting by Ian Abercrombie, (hope he doesn't mind me including this), was that the females mistake the large pieces of vermiculite as ova, so it's best to use a fine grade version. It's also been said that Dataminae species are sensitive to the chemicals used in tap water, so I use sterilized pond/rain water for this species. I don't spray them, but when the cage is starting to dry out I just pour some of this water into the substrate to absorb. I have never measured the humidity of the cage; however, I'd say its about 90% humidity, so very moist. I keep this species at room temperature, but usually it's slightly above this, due to the fact the container is almost totally enclosed. It might be nice to provide a piece of bark-cork as a hide, but I'm not sure it's necessary for the success of rearing. The dimensions of the container are as follows: 18x18x18cm (or approx. 7x7x7 inches).

**-Food plants** Bramble/Blackberry (*Rubus fruticosus* agg), and Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), are two successful food plants I have used so far. I've also tried them on Bamboo which they did eat for a week or so, but strangely the second time I tried it they wouldn't touch it. Perhaps the leaves had become tougher due to the colder weather. I have never tried it, however, Raspberry; (*Rubus idaeus*) is mentioned as being a food plant on the PSG culture list. In the wild this species has been reported to be found on various species of Yams.

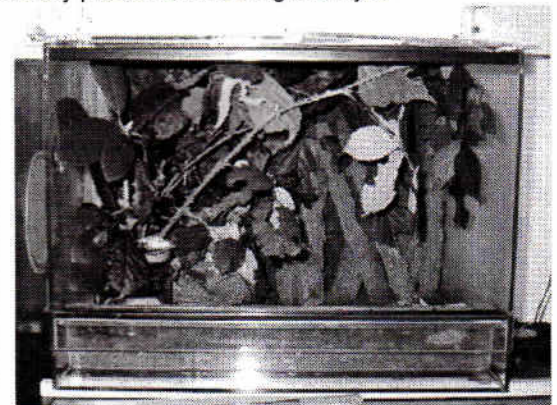
**-Breeding** In culture this species is an all female, parthenogenetic species. However, males have been found in the wild. Females start to produce ova 2-4 weeks after having moulted for the last time and about 1-3 eggs are produce per week by each female. As this species does not support an ovipositor, it is thought they do not burry their eggs, and when not given the chance I believe they are quite content with simply dropping them to the floor. However, if they are given a suitable substrate then they seem to bury their eggs quite happily. As I mentioned previously, I provide a substrate of vermiculite and the females bury their ova in this. I've also provided peat as a substrate before, with just as equal success as vermiculite.

The eggs were exceptionally well camouflaged amongst the peat I originally had in the female's container, so I removed the substrate after a few months of them laying and then poured it into a sealed container. The eggs were left like this until they hatched approx. 4-5 months after being laid. I think the ova would do well left in the cage with their parents. Personally, I now wait until I know lots of ova have been laid in the substrate and then remove it to be incubated. This method seems to work well for my culture. I kept these ova at just above room temperature. When the nymphs hatch, I put them straight into the adult's container and check on them periodically. I have had no problems with the hatchlings starting to eat, and to my knowledge I haven't lost a single nymph so far.

**-Problems** This appears to be a very easy species to culture and I haven't had any problems in rearing them yet.

Here are some comments on this species by other keepers:

Rob's setup "They are kept in a small cage of glass (see attached pic) the cage is 40x30x30cm. They are mixed with *Hoploclonia* gecko. On the bottom there is a layer of cocopeat of about 2-3 cm. So once in a while I spray this layer to keep it moist (not wet!). Now in winter I feed them with bramble and rhododendron, in summer also with oak, beech, hawthorn and hazel. The backside of the cage is pressed cork and against this there are some larger pieces of bark. The larger nymphs and adults like to hide during the day behind this bark. The ova are laid in the cocopeat and I leave them where they have been laid. I see the freshly hatched nymphs when I'm cleaning the cage. The cage only has two small ventilation strokes, one in the front, one on the top of the cage. I keep them fairly moist by spraying the cage once every two days. The temperature in my room now is about 24 degrees Celsius during the day and about 20-21 degrees Celsius during the night." - Rob Krijns.



"Here's my method - A layer of moistened vermiculite of about 0.5 cm thick is laid within a glass or plastic tank. The tank then has a tight fitting lid with limited ventilation to maintain humidity. Into this go both the insects and food plants. The plants used are blackberry, raspberry, oak, beech and hornbeam. The food is generally replaced on a weekly basis when the vermiculite is also sprayed, where necessary, to keep it moist. The food plant can also be sprayed to provide drinking water. The insects can then be comfortably kept in the tank indefinitely, along with any eggs laid. The eggs do not require any special treatment and do not need to be removed; they will hatch happily within the tank." - Cameron Die Königin.

### Similar species

I also keep *Dares verrucosus* & *D. validispinus* in the same conditions described in this article.

### Pronunciation

*Pylaemenes guangxiensis* - Pie-lem-eens guan-  
seen-sis.

### References

Phasmid Studies, Paul Brock.  
Journal of Orthoptera Research 2005,14(1): 23-26, PAUL D.  
BROCK AND MASAYA OKADA

### Acknowledgments

Thanks to Kristien & Rob Rabaey, Rob Krijns and Cameron Die Königin for sending me their culture information and further notes. Thanks also to Mark Bushell for first introducing me to, and giving me the chance to keep, this species.

# An Introduction to *Carausius* sp. PSG 230 by Natalie Ford



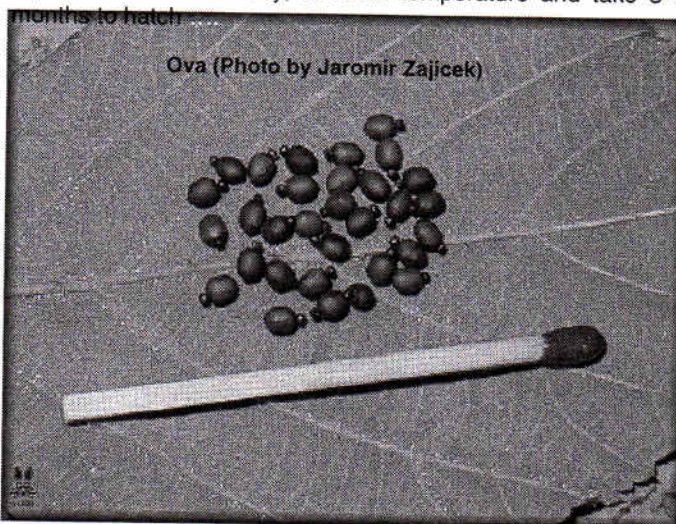
*Carausius* PSG230 is a fairly new species and there is little information about it on the internet, so I thought I'd write a short piece on this rather lovely species!

**Basics** A member of the Lonchodinae sub-family, *Carausius* PSG230 is a sexual species that originated from the Philippines and was collected by Andy Maluche in Bobon, Northern Samar. Both sexes are wingless, with adult males measuring around 8.5cm and females around 12cm body length. They are very easy to breed and have a wonderful temperament, making them suitable for beginners and children alike. They don't spray and appear to have no harmful defences that I am aware of.

**Food and Environment** This species feeds well on Bramble and Raspberry, but has also been reported to eat Oak, Hypericum, Cherry, Wild Cherry, *Schinus terebinthifolius* (Brazilian pepper plant – fairly common in the UK), and species of *Crataegus*.

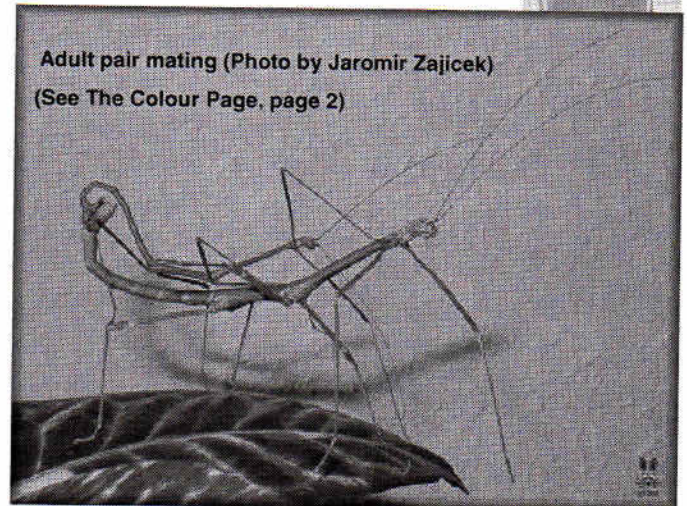
A cage that is at least 45cm high is required to allow sufficient height for successful moulting. Regarding the level of humidity at which this species should be kept, I have found very varying information – from very humid with no ventilation, to low humidity and very ventilated! Although several people have reported success keeping them in humid conditions, I found that I lost quite a few nymphs when kept in medium-high humidity environment (i.e. very limited ventilation), but have had 100% success keeping them in a well ventilated cage (two full mesh sides) with normal room humidity, spraying them on a daily basis.

**Ova** *Carausius* PSG230 ova are charcoal grey/dark brown with a prominent capitulum (lid). They are round and approximately 3mm long by 1.5mm wide. The ova should be kept in medium humidity, at room temperature and take 3-4

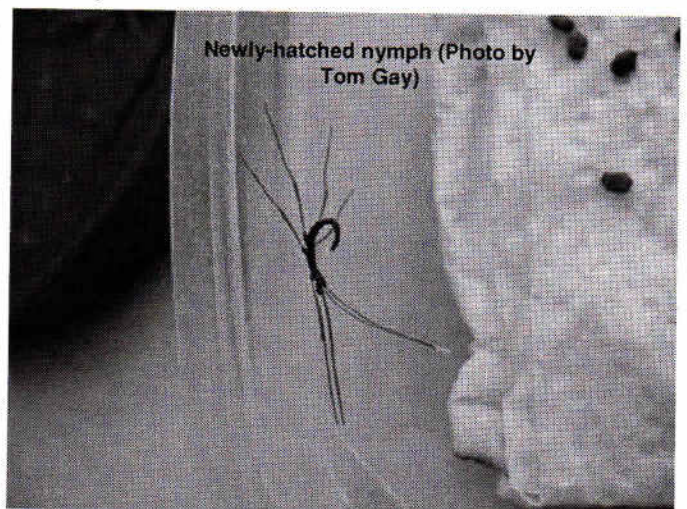


**Nymphs** The nymphs are quite pretty with long antennae and a striking dark, shiny body which is complimented by white antennae bases and tips and also white where each of their legs join the body.

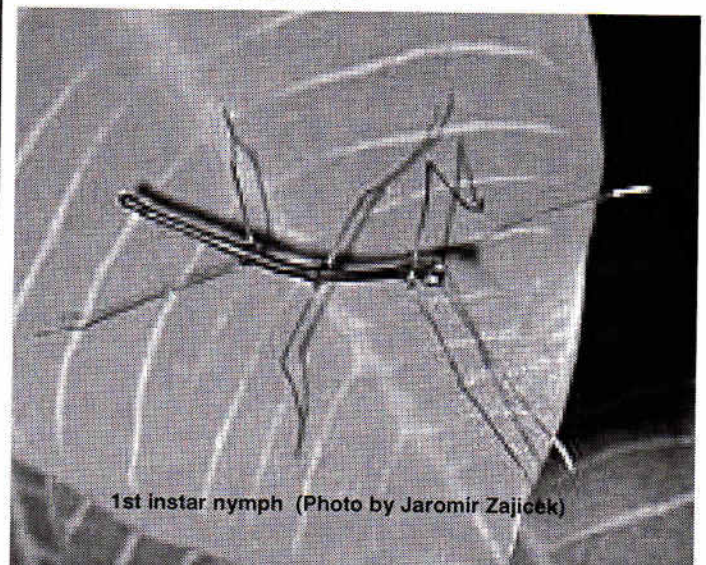
A nymph immediately hatched from the ovum (see picture above, right) has rather long and lanky looking legs, but within a few hours the body expands to a more proportioned size (see picture right). The insects are difficult to sex until around two sheds before to maturity, when the females become broader and more olive green in colour, whilst the males stay



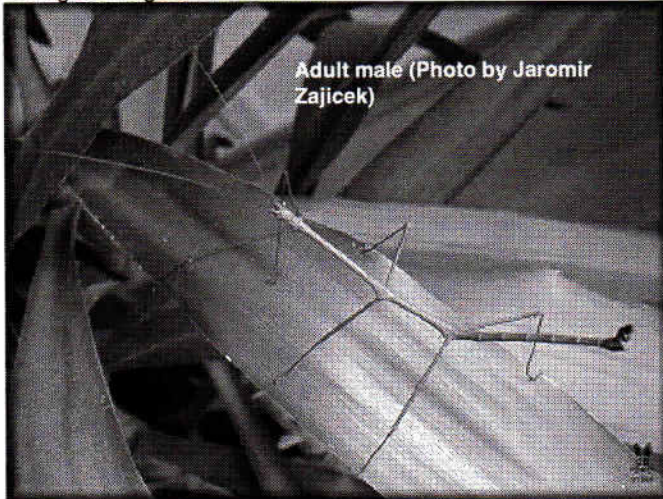
dark brown. The end of a male's abdomen is more pointed than the female and becomes slightly darker than the rest of his body.



The males also gain a lump underneath the end of their abdomen as the reproductive organs develop. Nymphs take around 3 to 5 months to mature.

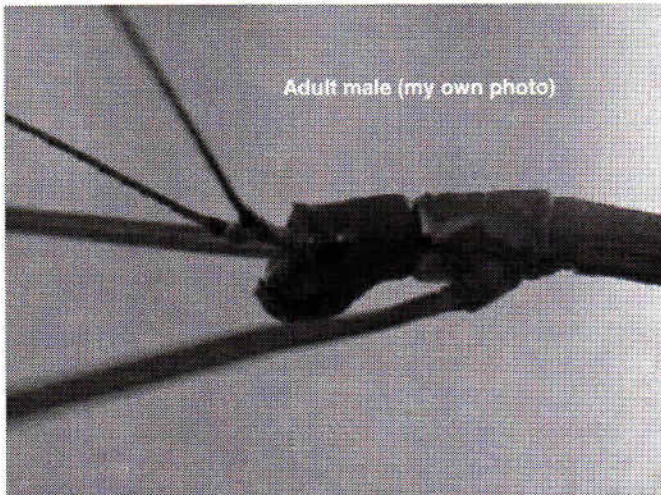


**Adults** The very shiny look donned by the nymphs is lessened in the adults, but they retain the white base and tips on their antennae (although the pale base is less noticeable in the males). The males are very slim with quite an attractive colouring – the body being varying shades of brown with green legs and brown knees!



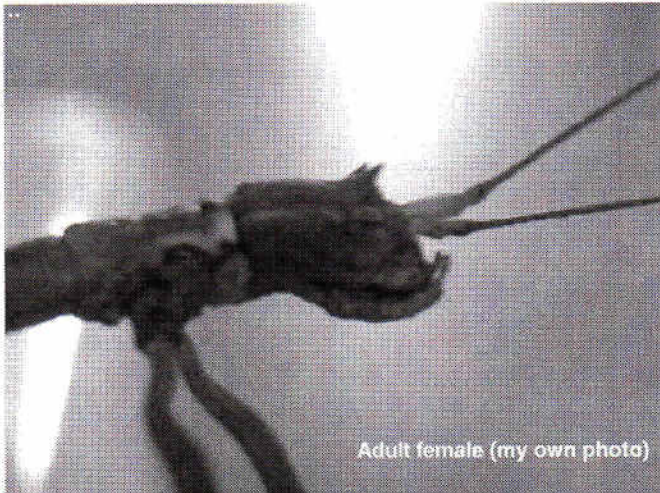
Adult male (Photo by Jaromir Zajicek)

Underneath each of the mid and rear legs is a tiny appendage, but otherwise the body is completely smooth. The abdomen widens at the base and terminates with small pincer-like cerci. The male's head is slender and delicate with two tiny bumps on top of the head, between the eyes.



Adult male (my own photo)

The adult females are usually olive green in colour but can vary in their shade of green. They are green all over but have light brown knees with a white band on the upper part of the leg just above the knee. In addition, the joints between each



Adult female (my own photo)

of the thoracic and abdominal segments are decorated with two or four dark brown spots on a pale green background. Each segment on the underside of the abdomen also has a dark brown spot. The females are mostly smooth but a small appendage under the upper leg can be seen just before the knee joint (most noticeable on the mid and rear legs) and the head carries two small spikes on the top, in between the eyes.



Adult pair climbing on my partner's daughter, Katie.



Adult female (Photo by Jaromir Zajicek)

The adults may 'jump' when startled and will often fall to the ground as a result – be careful not to have any hot drinks near by when handling them. However, this seems to be their only defence and they are generally very easy to handle, with a gentle nature. Females start to lay ova approximately three weeks after maturity.

#### Acknowledgments and Further Information

I would like to thank Jaromir Zajicek, Tom Gay and Louis Tranchet for giving me permission to use their fantastic photographs. Many thanks also to the following people who provided information to help me write this article: Tiffany from Sticktalk, Chris Pull, David Holland, Giovanni from Italy, Slafes from Belgium and Marco Feroletto from Italy.

As mentioned at the beginning of this article, information available on the internet is limited and I was able to find only four websites providing information about this species. There are some great photos on these sites and they are definitely worth a visit...

Jaromir Zajicek's site: <http://www.strasilky.cz/psg230.htm>

Tom Gay's site: <http://www.wandelendetakken.be/soortlijst/psg230.htm>

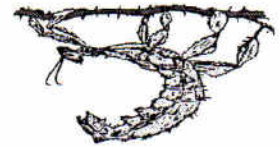
<http://lemondedesphasmes.free.fr/Pages/galeriephotos/galeriephotos/carausiusp.htm> featuring photos by Louis Tranchet and Gérard Joly

<http://fotomacroinsetti.altervista.org/carausius%20sp.htm>

Many thanks Natalie for this excellent article, and for the marvellous pictures. I know a lot of effort also went into meeting the Newsletter's deadline, and this is very much appreciated.

Bet you did not expect to see your smiling face picture from Sticktalk at the start...

# PSG SUMMER MEETING Saturday, 8<sup>th</sup> JULY 2006



PALAEONTOLOGY DEMONSTRATION ROOM, NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM, CROMWELL ROAD,  
LONDON, ENGLAND (FREE PUBLIC ENTRY\* members may also walk round the excellent museum if they wish)

## AGENDA

(Any item may be reviewed on the day. Please help us run on time)

- 11.30am - 12.30pm.** ARRIVALS & INFORMAL GATHERING:  
Members are encouraged to exchange ideas & experiences, and view the displays, and merchandise.  
Exhibits may put on display (*as soon as possible, please*)\*\*.  
Jungle Nymph competitors to register their entries (*by 12.30 please*)\*\*\*.  
**Committee Members:** Committee Meeting (bring agenda & minutes).
- 12.30pm - 1.15pm.** Illustrated Talk on "Respiration in Phasmids" by Chris Pull.
- 1.15pm - 2.15pm.** Lunch\*\*\*\* and viewing of exhibits, displays, and merchandise.
- 2.15pm - 2.30pm** Results of the Jungle Nymph competition\*\*\*.
- 2.30pm - 3.30pm** Question and Answer Panel, bring your questions to the experts.
- 3.30pm - 4.00pm** Livestock Exchange\*\*\*\*\*, and final viewing of displays, etc.
- 4.00pm - 4.30pm.** Further informal gathering, competitors and exhibitors collect their entries, leftover livestock\*\*\*\*\* should be taken back by the contributor (please check).

\*You are requested to bring this sheet with you for security reasons and to ensure access to the *meeting room* (bring in the whole Newsletter if you do not want to tear the page out.)

\*\*The subject of display at this meeting is the subfamily *Heteropteryginae*, which includes *Heteropteryx* and *Haaniella*, there are no rules for the display, just bring in your favourite specimens male, female, adults and/or nymphs, in a suitable container with food, labelled however you wish but to include your name, PSG No, and a few details about your specimen(s). The PSG and committee can accept no liability for damage/loss of entries. By entering the display, you agree that a picture of your entry may appear in the PSG Newsletter.

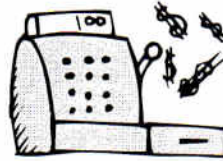
\*\*\*The competition could not be easier, just bring along your Jungle Nymphs (*Heteropteryx dilatata*) on the day, in a suitable container. Registration details etc will be fully explained in the meeting room. Please bring in in particular any of your specimen(s), so we can compare notes and have a good display, though of course the main purpose of the competition is to find the heaviest specimen, and the judge's decision is final. The PSG and committee can accept no liability for damage/loss of entries. By entering the competition, you agree that a picture of your entry may appear in the PSG Newsletter.

\*\*\*\* Tea, coffee, squash, and biscuits will be available all day (from about 10 am), for a voluntary contribution, in the meeting room (courtesy of Judith). Food shops are available in the museum, offering good food at reasonable prices, but there may be queues. You are welcome to bring your own lunch, to eat in the meeting room or in the museum.

\*\*\*\*\*You are reminded to follow the rules as laid down concerning the Livestock Exchange: eg livestock should be given some foodstuff, and their container be clearly labelled with their name & PSG number; the food plant they are being fed on, and your name & PSG number. **Please don't forget to check before you leave that all of your livestock has been distributed and, if not, take them back with you.** Do not overcrowd the sticks, but also please use reasonably-sized containers (not too big), and do not spread the spare stock over too many different containers (especially common species). Please remain in your normal seats throughout the session – ie do not crowd round, or obscure, the livestock table during livestock distribution. Many thanks.

# PSG MERCHANDISE

Pens - 40p each + P&P  
 Stickers - 60p each + P&P  
 Car Window Stickers - 60p each + P&P  
 (P & P per order on all the above UK - 25p,  
 Overseas - 40p)



PENS  
40p

## T SHIRTS

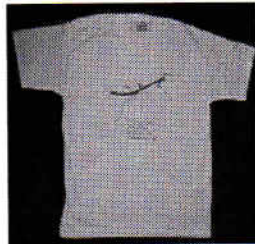
With the following designs -

*Oreophoetes peruana* PSG No 84  
*Aretaon asperrimus* PSG No 118  
*Phyllium bioculatum* PSG No 10

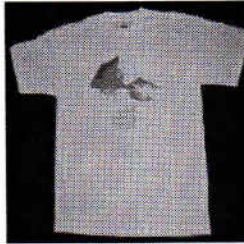
£6.50 each + P&P ( UK £1.00,  
 Overseas £1.50)



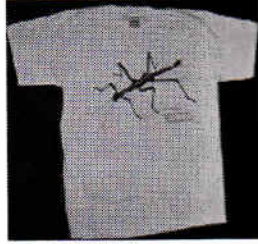
**STICKERS 60p**  
 The size of a CD.  
 Either sticky on front, for use in car windows,  
 or sticky on back for sticking onto things.



*Oreophoetes peruana*  
 PSG No 84 (£6.50)



*Phyllium bioculatum*  
 PSG No 10 (£6.50)



*Aretaon asperrimus*  
 PSG No 118 (£6.50)

*Many members wear a PSG T-shirt at our Summer and AGM/Winter Meetings. If you want a PSG T-shirt get one soon before we run out of our limited stocks. Only £6.50 - what a bargain!*

**Please send your order to:** We have no PSG Merchandise Co-ordinator at present, if you want to volunteer for the post, please contact the Chairman, Judith Marshall. (Temporarily, merchandise can be obtained from Judith. Cheques made payable to "The Phasmid Study Group"). All these above items will usually also be available at the Summer and the AGM/Winter Meetings, prices as above, but you save on the P&P. If you have ideas for additional merchandise we should be pleased to hear from you, please contact the Chairman.

### BOOKS ON STICK INSECTS.

The PSG Summer and Winter Meetings usually have numerous phasmid (and other) books for sale, often at specially reduced prices. You can buy them from the authors and even get them autographed. Phil Bragg, Paul Brock, and Ron Baxter are typical authors.

### BACK COPIES OF NEWSLETTERS FOR SALE.

Back copies of all Newsletters are now available at £2 each, or £1.50 each for copies before September 2001. Prices include postage in UK only. [Overseas members need to contact Paul Brock for details of the postage costs]. Copying will be done in batches within 2 to 3 months, so members may need to be patient. The culture list refers to which Newsletters cover which species.

**Members' Area of PSG WEBSITE ([www.stickinsect.org.uk](http://www.stickinsect.org.uk)):**  
 The following User Name and Password give access to the Members' Only area of the PSG Website. Among other privileges, it allows the viewing, and downloading, of this PSG Newsletter (and *Phasmid Studies* when available) in **full colour**.  
**(Case sensitive) USER NAME: PSGmembers PASSWORD: 22Ramulas** (Apologies for recent entry problems).



# The Spring Meeting of Phasma *by Cameron DK*

**Introduction** The Phasmid Society of Europe, Phasma, was to hold its spring meeting on Sunday 23 April and it was to be held at the Nymphaea Aquatic Centre, Wolvertem in Belgium. My partner and I decided to go over with Ian Bushell and Janine Fletcher so that we were a respectable party of four persons. We drove over by car on the Saturday morning, via Eurotunnel, and then up to Veurne in Belgium, where we were to stay for a couple of days, returning on the Monday.

**The Phasma Meeting Venue** On the day of the meeting, our party of four went up to Wolvertem along with Ian Abercrombie and Phil Bragg, and our hosts, Kristien Raebey and Rob Simeons, drove us up. When we arrived at the meeting venue, there was a reception table where we checked our names off and were issued with a badge so that everyone could immediately get to know us by name. Anyone who was not a member could join up at this point so having immediate access to the meeting and its benefits.



Picture by Chris Pull

insect themselves. The two main groups that were featured were the Phasmids and the Orthoptera (grasshoppers and allies). The images were excellent and it enabled the attendees to really appreciate the detail of some of the species. It was explained that a good attempt had been made to get some of the insects into culture and in some cases this had been successful.

The pictures showing the journey coming back out of the forest were something that had to be seen; the road conditions were atrocious with heavy rain turning the mud tracks into a quagmire (none of the roads were covered in tarmac). Vehicles were shown stuck in several feet of mud surrounded by potholes of serious dimensions. Any one thinking that the journey was an easy one soon realised that collecting insects in the wild isn't as straightforward as it may seem. As the presentation was delivered in English, a common language to most of Phasma members, I was able to understand every word of it.

**Insect Exchange** One of the main highlights of the meeting was the Insect Exchange and it is run quite differently from the PSG. Throughout the day members bring in their insects and pass them over to the insect exchange desk where they are checked off against the full list of species currently in culture. This allows Phasma to be able to monitor the sorts of species that are most frequently cultured and what is currently in circulation. The desk was manned by Ernst (Phasma's livestock coordinator) and Ian Bushell. From

here they are passed over to the 'insect sorters', a team of people who separate out the species and place them into boxes that are labelled in numerical order by their PSG number. With all these insects now arranged in a systematic order, any member can see what species are available and even more importantly, can easily find if their desired insects are available.



Picture by Chris Pull

There were quite a few members in attendance, some familiar from the London based PSG meetings (Rob Krijns, Kim D'Hulster, Ernst Jansen, Ingold Fritsch) and others new. The PSG had a good number of members over from the UK – as well as our party, there were Moira Drennan and Chris Pull. The members weren't just Belgian, there were German, Dutch and I believe French too; it was a definitely a good assortment of nationalities.

**Presentation** The meeting's formal events kicked off with a presentation by Oskar Conle and Frank Hennemann titled 'A Scientific Expedition to the Amazonian Region of Peru'. This was a very comprehensive review with a detailed explanation of how the journey started from Lima to a site, if I recall, called Pucalpa. Included in the talk were various aspects that touched on the cultural history of Peru, the climatic conditions and the people, as well as the Natural History. It was the wildlife that was the main part and it was exceedingly comprehensive, including the insect trapping methods, a review of the plant species that existed in the area as well as some excellent photographs of the



Picture by Chris Pull

To be able to pick their chosen insects, all members receive a small form on which they write the 'wants'. These forms are handed to the insect exchange desk and once they are all in, the insects are then distributed. The great aspect to this is that the co-ordinators of the exchange can ensure that difficult to keep insects can be given to those members who have the most experience. Naturally there are always insects left over and most members usually wait whilst the remaining insects are distributed in a fashion like that used at the PSG meetings. I was fortunate enough to get an *Asceles* species from Thailand; a pretty winged species, as well as a couple of others.

**Optional Extras At The Meeting** Some members had brought in free plants for others to take and there was an assortment including evergreen oak and Hypericum. The most interesting addition to the plants were a number of *Artemisia*, an ingredient of the potent alcoholic drink, absinthe, that has hallucinogenic properties – no wonder the Europeans are so relaxed about everything that they do! There was a bar within the room that sold, not only soft drinks but also beer, so that members could get refreshed throughout the day!

There were various insect on display most noticeable were various members of the *Pseudophasmatinae* and an impressive pair of *Phasma gigas*. Joachim Bressel gave the members an explanation of the various insects on display and it certainly seemed very well received.

**The Last Word** The whole day was very productive, not only did it allow the PSG members who went over, an opportunity to meet up with our Phasma counterparts, it also allowed some of us to come away with some new species to add to our collection. It was a wonderful day and we were all very fortunate that the weather was very much on our side with sunshine and warm temperatures.

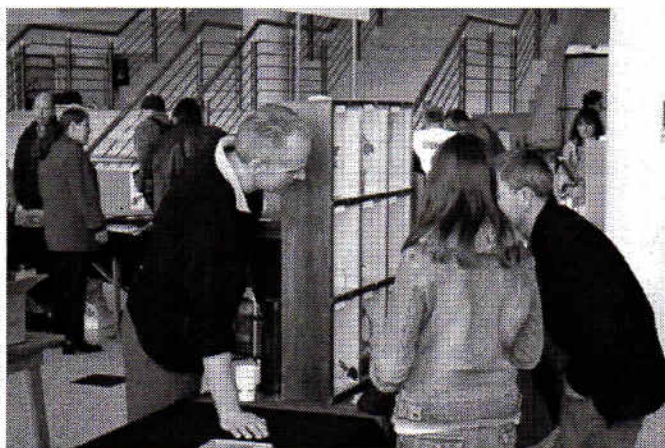
The whole trip was very enjoyable and a special thank you must be made to Kristien Rabaey, Rob Simeons and Cylla for their continuous support and help throughout the whole trip – arranging a place to stay, organising meals, and being excellent and entertaining hosts at all times, it is very much appreciated.

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## AES North Show, 8<sup>TH</sup> April 2006

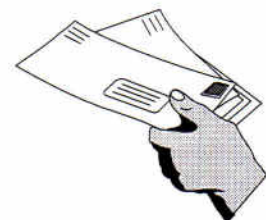
I did not attend this show, and was unable to get a report on it. If it was even only half as good as the AES Shows at Kempton Park then it would have been really great.

Many thanks to Phil Bragg for the photos, and to Phil, and Paul Jennings, for "flying the PSG flag" at the show.



### REQUEST FOR ARTICLES, ETC., FOR THE PSG NEWSLETTER

Please send me your articles, reviews on shows and meetings, wants & exchanges, drawings, photos, phasmod problems, answers to problems, crosswords, quizzes, puzzles, web site details, ideas or comments on the Newsletters, etc, etc. My details are in each Newsletter. Many thanks, *Editor*.



## SOME SPECTACULAR STICK INSECTS FROM NORTH QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA

By Paul D. Brock (No. 26)

I thought that members would like to see some pictures of phasmids taken in the wild in February 2006. Whilst the main aim of my trip to north Queensland involved documenting new species and obtaining eggs to distinguish between closely related species (results / photographs will be published later), it was a pleasure to see 'old friends' that I reared many years ago and the following notes concentrate on PSG culture species.

In the rainforest and dry Eucalyptus country, *Ctenomorphodes briareus* abounds and this is one species likely to be encountered in the daytime as well as at night. In fact, I saw it in eight of nine main localities surveyed and it probably was overlooked in the ninth location. They are versatile, feeding on *Acacia*, *Eucalyptus* and many other plants and are often found towards the top of saplings in the daytime, or almost anywhere at night, frequently as mating pairs (Fig. 1).



FIG1 *Ctenomorphodes briareus* mating pair on *Eucalyptus*

Whilst in some areas they are similar in size to PSG culture stocks i.e. females about 130mm, I found a massive 170mm specimen (Fig. 2).



FIG2 *Ctenomorphodes briareus* 170mm female

Mites are often present on specimens (Fig. 3). In captivity specimens are often smaller because substitute foodplants are used. It is good practice to introduce new genes to culture stocks, wherever possible. However, in the wild, I noticed a wide range of variation in body form and size in *briareus*.

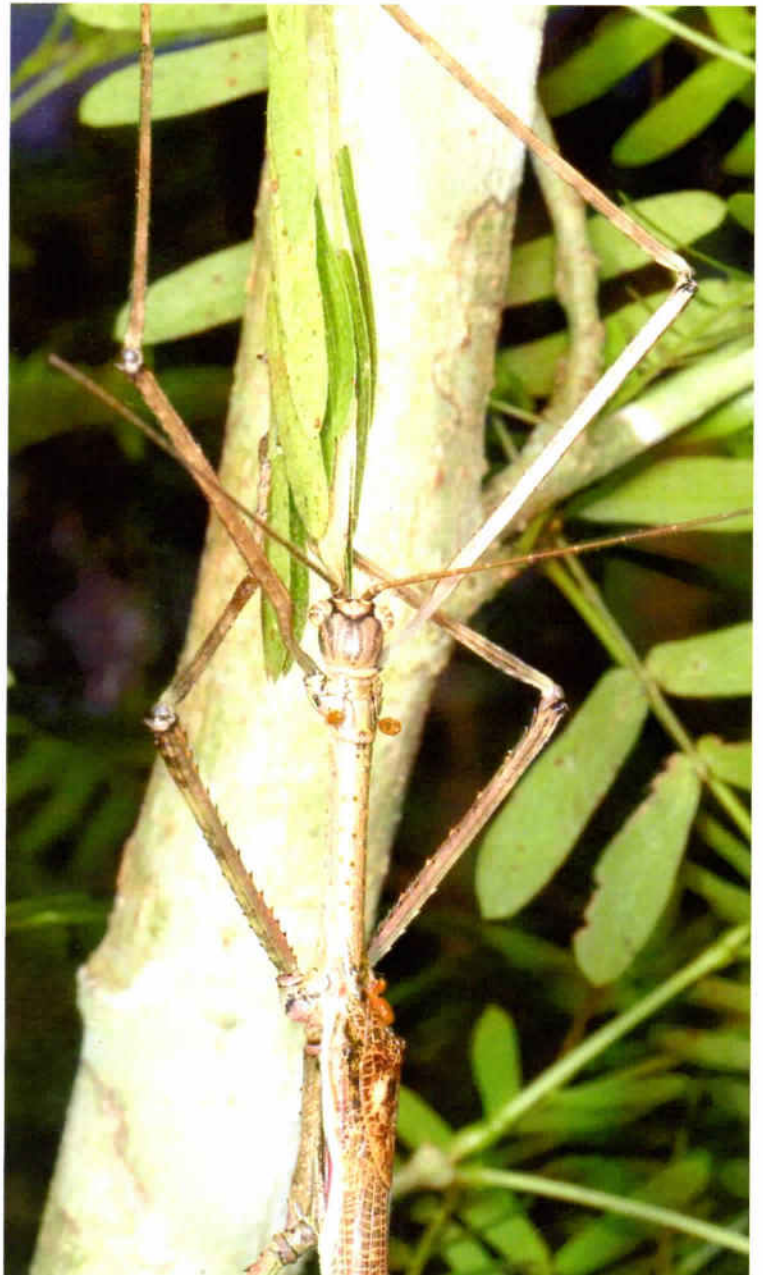


FIG3 *Ctenomorphodes briareus* male, complete with mites!

*Eurycnema goliath* is more frequently encountered in south-east Queensland, but has occasionally been reported from north Queensland. During an evening with a full moon, right by the beach, not particularly aggressive 190mm females of *E. goliath*\* were collected at head height on *Acacia* (Fig. 4), also a male. Another day, a pair was collected at a height of c. 35ft. (\*One assumes this population would not fare well against predators, as they largely lack the aggressive defensive behaviour often seen in this species.)

