

5, APSLEY ROAD,  
OXFORD.

Saturday.

26 June 1965

JH

My dear Fisher,

I was so sorry not to see you at The Genetical Society last week. I was asked to do a rather urgent piece of work connected with the bus for a few days: and it seemed that, in the present circumstances, this ought to take precedence. So I wrote to both the Secretaries to say how sorry I was to withdraw at the last

minuti.

The Callimorpha dominula

Which my friend Bretherton and I have been breeding have started to emerge. You may remember something of the facts. The species (the Scarlet Tiger) is a gorgeous day-flying moth. There is an extreme variety bimaculata in which all but two of the cream-colored spots on the fore-wings are absent, and there is a great extension of black on the hind-

long. It is very striking, and  
surprisingly rare. It has only been  
found once or twice in a locality  
near Oxford. There is another form  
medionigra somewhat intermediate  
but much nearer dominata (which  
it may practically overlap) than  
bimaculata. Both medionigra and  
bimaculata are very variable. The  
normal dominata is not. I believed  
medionigra to be the heterozygote.  
The thing has been bred by  
Entomologists, but their data were

Quite imperfect; and no definite conclusion could be reached. Last year we got a pairing between two medionigra. We lost a lot of larvae. Since the species hibernates in the larval state, it is not easy to breed. However, we have now got 67 out, and there are more to come:-

<u>dominata</u>	16
<u>medionigra</u>	35
<u>bimaculata</u>	16
	<hr/>
	67

So the situation looks pretty clear!

Medionigra is the variety which I have told you of as spreading in nature in the Oxford locality. I think I mentioned the figures, but here they are again.

	<u>dominula</u>	<u>medionigra</u>	<u>bimaculata</u>
up to 1928	164	4	0
1939	184	37	2

The figures up to 1928 comprise all in collections from the locality I can find. As collectors

hunt for varieties, the error will be  
in the direction of making medwiga  
too common. The numbers in 1939  
are the work of myself and two  
friends, catching at random (and  
subsequently releasing) on one day.  
It is important to notice that we  
did this because of my general  
impression that medwiga is  
becoming commoner.

So, with this year's  
breeding result, it is clear that  
we are dealing with the spread

(if this is real, as it seems to be) of  
a single gene in nature. A  
situation which so much interests me.

I don't doubt one could  
select medionigra for ~~the~~ closer  
approach to dominula and bimaculata  
respectively. I shall keep a sharp  
watch to see if the speed continues,  
and if there is any tendency for  
medionigra to approach bimaculata  
in nature.

I have left my house  
for the bar and am moving

into Bradham College - so that  
(or the Zoology Department) will be  
my address at present. I am  
storing my furniture, and it all  
makes a dreadful nuisance and  
ever such a lot of work. However, there  
are numerous considerations which  
seem to make this wise-financial  
and otherwise.

Ever yours,

Henry Ford

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