

DONATION OF THE AUBURN E. BROWER COLLECTION TO THE  
SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

**Additional key words:** *Catocala*, Maine.

Acquisition of the Auburn E. Brower Collection of insects by the Smithsonian Institution has now been completed with the recent transfer of the last portion of the collection, consisting mostly of North American *Catocala* (Noctuidae). Since 1981, collections manager Gary Hevel, sometimes assisted by museum specialist William Rowe, has transported a total of 130,104 miscellaneous arthropods (including 10 spiders) in five separate trips from A. E. Brower's home in Augusta, Maine to Washington, D.C. The collection had been stored in a variety of containers that filled three separate rooms in Brower's home. The Brower Collection consists of a variety of arthropod orders (see Table 1), but is exceptional in its representation of Lepidoptera (115,282 specimens). The collection is clearly the most complete survey of the Lepidoptera ever assembled from the state of Maine.

Throughout his career, Brower's dominant interest in entomology was field biology. Brower early began his lifelong passion of fieldwork in the Ozarks region of Missouri. The results of these efforts formed the basis of some of his earliest entomological papers (Brower 1925, 1930). He received a B.S. degree in Education and an A.B. degree in Science from the Southwest Missouri State College in Springfield, Missouri in 1927. Following a short period of teaching (1927-1928), he continued his studies at Cornell University, receiving a Ph.D. degree in Entomology in 1932. His thesis was on the biology of North American *Catocala*, a genus that remained a special interest throughout his long career. The emphasis on *Catocala*, or "cats" as Auburn fondly referred to them, is particularly evident in his collection, with approximately 21,900 specimens of that genus represented.

Brower's work in Maine began with his employment as director of the Bar Harbor Field Laboratory in May 1931. Early in his career he also assisted in a few major insect surveys, notably with William Procter on the insect section of the Mt. Desert Region Survey and Donald Farquar with his list of the Lepidoptera of New England.

The largest survey project ever engaged by Brower began in April 1941 when he was charged with laboratory responsibilities of the Forest Insect Survey (Brower 1953). Assisted by several Forest Service personnel and numerous volunteers, Brower began to receive more than 2,000 lots each year from various parts of the state (Nash et al., 1971). In addition to the Forest Insect Survey, Brower began in 1943 to process collections from as many as 25 light traps each year. To assist collaborators in the field, Brower would provide collecting boxes with instructions for collecting and preserving specimens written inside the lid. After the material was processed in his laboratory, he would then identify

TABLE 1. Principal composition of Brower collection.

Araneae	10	Mecoptera	125
Coleoptera	5634	Neuroptera	3
Dermaptera	2	Odonata	118
Diptera	2252	Orthoptera	1656
Hemiptera	500	Plecoptera	862
Homoptera	307	Thysanoptera	110
Hymenoptera	3237	Trichoptera	6
Lepidoptera	115,282		
		Total	130,104

each specimen as best he could. Often this involved spending his vacations at the National Museum of Natural History and other museums (Brower 1983). Brower's efforts over more than 50 years to survey the insects for the state of Maine aptly culminated with the publication of *A List of the Lepidoptera of Maine* (Brower 1974, 1983, 1984). The collection records of 2,987 species are summarized in those reports.

Auburn Brower's lifelong fascination with entomology finally ended on 8 April 1994, when he passed away at the age of 93. He is survived by his devoted wife, Lurana, who ably assisted her husband over the years in the rearing, labelling, and general curation of their impressive collection of "cats" and related creatures. The Smithsonian Institution is grateful to the Brower family for this valuable donation. We are indebted to Auburn's son, Dr. John H. Brower, a research entomologist with the U.S. Grain Marketing Research Laboratory, Manhattan, Kansas, for much of the biographical information used in this report.

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