

# Alaska Entomological Society

## Newsletter #1, November 2006

Welcome to the inaugural first year of the Alaska Entomological Society! This first newsletter is really just a report of what your interim governing board has accomplished over the past several months since the first announcement and request for membership dues. Quite a bit has been accomplished in this first year I think, and hopefully we can count on your support into the future!

### **Establishment of the Society:**

A group of interested parties that had been kicking around the idea for years, finally pulled together an interim governing board and established the Society. A call for membership went out in order to finance the proposed website and establish an organizational bank account. An endowment fund in the name of the Society has been proposed by member Dr. F. Christian Thompson, and with approval at the first meeting as well as some more financial support from the membership, we should be able to attain the minimum starting amount for such an account. This is a great idea, and will benefit future students and special ventures in entomology in Alaska.

### **Constitution and By-Laws:**

The least exciting but very necessary Constitution and By-Laws of the Society have been written by the Board and await approval at the first meeting of the Society.

### **Logo:**

A very nice logo depicting the Alaska state insect (Four-Spotted Skimmer) over a graphic representation of the state was created by interim board member Dominique Collet. This logo will be presented to the membership for approval at the first meeting, or alternates presented and discussed.

### **Website:**

Probably the most visible accomplishment to the rest of the world is the website. At the website you can access membership applications, the Constitution and By-Laws, and the structural skeleton as it is. We hope to add links and more information as the membership dictates. See: <http://www.akentsoc.org>

### **Activities:**

While quite busy with the mere establishment of a new entity, some members of the governing board were instrumental in the proposal and somewhat informal creation of an Alaska Reference Collection System. Initially this came about because of the need to

better synchronize Forest Service, UAF Cooperative Extension, and Dept. of Natural Resources – Division of Forestry entomological collections and conventionalize the names of collections for the purposes of citation in publications; coordinate the many small reference collections in order to serve the needs of the Early Detection – Rapid Response, APHIS CAPS, and Western Plant Diagnostic Network programs; to facilitate specimen exchange between collections and field external requests for specimens; and finally to address specimen records/record entry in the form of the BigBug database. The plan is to eventually have an all-Alaska insect database located at the University of Alaska Museum as well as a formal arrangement among the various collections and the Museum collection in order to service specimen loan requests, database entry, and other higher functions in a more organized manner.

**Annual Meeting:**

The annual meeting of the Society will take place January 26-27, 2006 at the University of Alaska Museum. The meeting will begin the evening of Jan. 26 with informal trip slideshows and refreshments and all day on Jan. 27, including business items mentioned above as well as some talks and some time to view the insect collection at the Museum.

**Membership:**

Response to the creation of the Society has been great, and the inaugural membership stands at 22 as of the writing of this newsletter. The board has established Active/Family, Junior, and Sustaining membership categories. I would like to recognize the outstanding support we have received. I am sincerely sorry if I left anyone out, please let me know!

Sustaining Members (\$25)

Roger Burnside  
Susan Emmert  
Ed Holsten/Sandra Key  
James Kruse  
Sue Lincoln  
Kenelm Philip  
Cynthia Snyder

Advocate Members (\$50)

Dominique Collet

Donor Members (\$100)

David Guinn  
Richard ‘Skeeter’ Werner

Patron Members (\$250+)

F. Christian Thompson

### Upcoming Meetings of Interest:

- Dec. 10-13; Entomological Society of America Annual Meeting, Indianapolis, IN.
- Jan. 26-27; Alaska Entomological Society 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Gathering, University of Alaska Museum, Fairbanks, AK.
- Mar. 5-9; Western Forest Insects Work Conference, Boise, ID.
- May 30 – June 2; Climate Change Impacts on Boreal Forest Disturbance Regimes VI: International Conference on Disturbance Dynamics in Boreal Forests, Fairbanks, AK.

### Parting Thoughts:

I'd like to discuss the idea of a regular newsletter at the meeting. If you'd like to volunteer your time to compile the newsletter, write articles, contribute photographs, etc., please consider it and let me know!

### European Yellow Underwing in Alaska!

This noctuid moth was introduced in Nova Scotia in 1979 and has been rapidly spreading across the continent for the last couple decades. I remember it showed up in Wisconsin in about 1996. Its arrival in Alaska was inevitable I suppose. I expect it to be found in the Mat-Su valley in the next year, and will be quite numerous by 2010. I don't know what its final distribution will be, but probably throughout SE and SC Alaska, and may come up the Yukon and Tanana River valleys into Fairbanks as well.

It is largely an agricultural pest. The larvae are generalist feeders and have been recorded on grasses, dock and dandelions, and a wide range of wild and cultivated herbaceous plants. They also attack, tomato, potato, carrot, beet, lettuce, grape, and strawberry, and are pests on garden flowers. Below is the 2006 report on European Yellow Underwing in Alaska:

<i>Location</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Number</i>
Sitka, near ferry terminal, Halibut Rd.	by 10/16/2006	two individuals
Prince of Wales Isl (east side), Hollis	by 10/06/2006	six individuals
Prince of Wales Isl (west side), Klawock	by 10/06/2006	one individual
Thorne Bay 5541.276' N, 13231.815' W	by 9/22/2006	six individuals
Juneau	7/16/2006	multiple individuals
Haines	8/7/2006 (week of)	three individuals
Ketchikan (ferry terminal)	by 8/24/2006	at least four
Anchorage (Postmark Dr)	by 8/24/2006	one individual

The Ketchikan, Sitka, Thorne Bay, POW Island and Anchorage specimens were captured via sticky traps baited with the pheromones of other species. I speculate that the moths are mildly attracted to *Lymantria monocha* (rosey gypsy moth) pheromone. The traps had

been up for about 2-3 months, so exact capture date is unknown, but probably during mid-July through early September.

This thing is wasting no time moving north and west (par for the course). One year elapsed from detection to resident throughout SE Alaska and penetrating into south-central. Most of the data points this year simply fill in the range in the Southeast portion of Alaska, and it certainly was present there at least two years now.

**Photos at: <http://www.invasive.org/browse/subject.cfm?sub=9362>**