

Macropsis virescens var. *graminea* (Fab.). This was first taken by me at Haney on poplars in 1954. It is a European species now widely distributed in North America but is not expected to prove of any particular economic importance.

Idiocerus decimusquartus Schr. This name now takes precedence in the case of this leafhopper which was long known as *Idiocerus scurra*. It is another denizen of poplar trees and is known to have been present on the lower mainland since 1922, when I received a specimen collected at New Westminster. This is a European species, present in North America for a long time, which may have come to British Columbia in the egg stage in the first poplars brought here. Like several other species it has apparently not yet succeeded in crossing to Vancouver Island.

Allygus mixtus (Fab.). This large handsomely marked European leafhopper was first noticed on Vancouver Island in 1948, but probably it had arrived some years earlier since it was already well distributed over the southern districts. It is an active flier, so its spread could be quite rapid. It now occurs on the mainland, breeding on oak and other deciduous trees and on snowberry (*Symphoricarpos*). So far it has not proved injurious.

There are several other species which have been edging their way across the continent for years, but cannot be mentioned here. Others will, no doubt, continue to arrive; it is some comfort to know that, in the case of Hemiptera, many are harmless, and some are definitely beneficial.

An unusual flight of termites

Emergence of alate first reproductives of the most commonly occurring termite in the lower Fraser Valley, *Zootermopsis angusticollis* Hagen, may occur during almost any month of the year (Jacob, J. K. The Termites of British Columbia, their structure, bionomics and intestinal fauna. Unpublished Masters' Thesis, University of British Columbia, 1938). I have personally observed them from January to May and from August to November. For some years now I have watched the autumn flight along the north slope of the Point Grey Peninsula any time between the end of August, through September. These termites abound in old logs that lie half buried in sand or gravel in various stages of decay on both sides of Burrard inlet. They are in a surprisingly high percentage of older homes in the Kerrisdale-Kitsilano area and may occur almost anywhere in Vancouver where earth is in contact with the stucco or wooden siding of a house and rot sets in. Garages whose flooring rests on timbers directly in contact with the earth and buildings with damp, dead-air spaces below them, are particularly susceptible.

The autumn flight of termites along the Point Grey peninsula can be directly followed by the movements of large flocks of Bonaparte's gulls (*Larus philadelphia* Ord.) which pluck the termites out of the air. Professor Cowan told me that he has shot the birds during these manoeuvres and has

found them packed with termites. One-time residents of Gambier Island have assured me that they have frequently watched this behaviour amongst large gulls also, so it is probably general along our coasts wherever termites swarm. Normally, off Point Grey, this flight occurs from 300 to 500 feet above ground and extends inland from the sea beaches for possibly one quarter of a mile. But in the early evening of August 1, 1956, an unusually large number of these delicate, black-headed gulls hunted termites from the sea shore inland and overhead until they passed southwards out of sight. The line of diving, twisting gulls stretched east and west as far as one could see, at about the height of tall, old fir trees nearby, which would be between 150 and 200 feet. Five days later some residents of South Burnaby described to me this flight of gulls stating that it had come from the north and had passed southwards over the Fraser River and out over Lulu Island.

In past years, it would seem that the supply of winged termites gave out within a few hundred yards of the sea shore but the flight of termites on August 1, 1956, must have exceeded all previous ones to have supplied the birds with food for several miles.—G. J. Spencer, Dept. of Zoology, University of British Columbia.