

**PROCEEDINGS**  
**OF THE**  
**TENTH SYMPOSIUM**  
**ON THE**  
**NATURAL HISTORY OF THE BAHAMAS**

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Gerace Research Center, Ltd.  
San Salvador, Bahamas  
2005

Cover photograph – “Little Ricky” - juvenile dolphin, San Salvador, Bahamas (courtesy of Sandra Voegeli, 2003)

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Printed in the Bahamas

ISBN 0-935909-76-1

## **ESTABLISHMENT OF THE BAHAMIAN NATIONAL ENTOMOLOGICAL COLLECTION**

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Before the spring of 2000, the Bahamas did not have an insect collection, although there was one private collection of butterflies belonging to Denis Knowles of Nassau, and a teaching collection at the College of the Bahamas, also in Nassau. Outside Nassau, there were two small collections. One, containing approximately 1700 specimens, had been donated by D. J. McDonald to the Rand Nature Centre at Freeport. The other, at the College of the Bahamas Gerace Research Center on San Salvador, contains about 2700 specimens collected by students and researchers who have worked at the center over the years.

In January 2000, with the cooperation of the Bahamian Department of Agriculture and the Bahamas National Trust, we began surveys of insects on the islands with the objective of starting a national collection. This represented the first attempt to survey insects on all the islands since the 1950s (Vaurie, 1953; Rabb and Hayden, 1957). The Department of Agriculture provided space at the headquarters of their Conservation Unit at the Botanical Garden in Nassau, and they also purchased Cornell Cabinets and drawers to house the collection.

Between late January and early May, we collected on ten of the islands (New Providence, Cat, Acklins, Gt. Inagua, Mayaguana, North and South Andros, Grand Bahama, Eleuthera and Long Island). Since the time we have done additional collecting on New Providence, Great Abaco, Great Exuma, Great Inagua, and San Salvador. Our collections were made primarily by hand netting, but were supplemented with sweeping and malaise trapping. To date we have collected approximately 4600 specimens in eleven insect orders. See Table 1 for the number of specimens collected by order on each of the islands.

Besides the insects we collected, additions to the collection have included approximately 280 butterfly specimens donated by Denis Knowles in the summer of 2000, 47 specimens collected by James Redmond on New Providence during the summer of 2000, and approximately 100 butterfly specimens were donated by Drs. Lee and Jacqueline Miller of the Allyn Museum of Entomology in June of 2003.

To date we have concentrated on the determinations of the groups on which we specialize Hymenoptera (NBE), Orthoptera (SGFS) and Odonata (DLS). We hope even-

tually to obtain funds to subsidize travel to the Bahamas for specialists willing to help with species determinations on other groups.

Another aspect of the project has involved visits to entomological collections in the United States for the purpose of documenting the presence of Bahamian specimens there. Eventually these records, along with our collection records, will go into a database available on the internet. So far we have made preliminary visits to the Allyn Museum of Entomology, the American Museum of Natural History, the Carnegie Museum of Natural History, Cornell University, the Florida State Collection of Arthropods, and the U.S. National Museum.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We thank Eric Carey, formerly of the Bahamian Department of Agriculture, for permits to make collections on the various islands. The staff members of the Department of Agriculture's Conservation Unit were most helpful during our frequent visits to Nassau to deposit specimens at their headquarters. Lynn Gape of the Bahamas National Trust assisted us with finding lodgings while in Nassau. We thank the following organizations and individuals who assisted us on the other islands: Rick and Kathy Oliver, formerly of the Rand Nature Centre on Grand Bahama; David Knowles, and Steve and Anita Knowles, Great Abaco; Juanita Monestine and Basil Minns, Great Exuma; Henry Nixon and Casper Burrows, Great Inagua; Luther Brown of the Bahamas Environmental Research Centre, and the staff of the Forfar Field Station, both on North Andros.

We owe much of our interest in Bahamian Research to the experiences we have had over the years at the Gerace Research Center, and we are most grateful to its founders, Don and Kathy Gerace, its former and cur-

rent employees, and its current director Vincent Voegeli for continuing support and assistance.

#### REFERENCES

- Rabb, G. B. and Ellis B. Hayden (1957) The VanVoast-American Museum of Natural History Bahama Islands Expedition and General Features of the Islands. *Amer Mus. Novitates* 1836: 1- 53.
- Vaurie, P. 1953. Insect Collecting in the Bimini Island Group. *Amer Mus. Novitates* 1565: 1- 23.

Table 1. Number of Individuals (by Order) collected for the Bahamian National Entomological Collection as of Spring, 2003

	NP	C	AC	GI	MY	NA	SA	GB	EL	LI	GE	GA	SS	Total
Odonata	29	29	31	80	20	27	10	27	95	39	25	17	8	437
Orthoptera		18	21	39	3	7	5	25	18	12	4	7	3	162
Hemiptera	34	33	62	62	56	6	42	7	32	9	42	13	89	469
Homoptera	51	11			1			2	1					66
Coleoptera	18	18	25	51	26	38	14	38	99	26	30	62	108	553
Neuroptera	1			5							2		3	11
Lepidoptera	47	93	233	92	33	36	44	103	66	58	36	35	28	876
Diptera	140	104	88	143	28	35	24	44	40	22	20	10	19	698
Hymenoptera	153	101	130	102	62	54	40	135	161	106	143	22	21	1209
Thysanura			2											2
Ephemeroptera			3											3
Island Totals	473	407	595	574	229	203	161	381	512	272	302	166	279	4486

**Island Abbreviations:**

NP: New Providence

C: Cat Island

AC: Acklins

GI: Great Inagua

MY: Mayaguana

NA: North Andros

SA: South Andros

GB: Grand Bahama

EL: Eleuthera

LI: Long Island

GE: Great Exuma

GA: Great Abaco

SS: San Salvador