The occurrence of *Actias luna* (L.) in Louisiana

by

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Ferguson 1972, discusses the luna moth, *Actias luna* (Linnaeus) (Fig. 1), in five pages of text covering most aspects of this well known and beautiful pale green species. He reviews the validity of names for nine forms and synonyms from Nova Scotia to Texas, and reducing them all to a single species due to population variation and lack of consistent and definitive distinguishable characters.

Ferguson 1972, discusses the one brood in the northern states and two broods in middle states and three broods in southern states. In Louisiana, *luna* was first reported by von Reizenstein, 1863 and appears to occur abundantly across the state based on my records (Fig. 2). Based on dates of capture (Fig. 3), there appear to be five annual broods in Louisiana, first brood peaking end of March and at 36-day intervals. The second brood is minimally populated, as often found in other lepidoptera species in Louisiana.

With each successive brood, the wing shape broadens and richness of green coloration fades to a very pale light green in the last brood. The purple border of the outer wing edges is usually evident only in the first brood.

**Fig. 1.** *Actias luna* male, spring brood.

**Fig. 2.** Parishes in which *Actias luna* have been captured.

**Fig. 3.** *Actias luna* taken at sec.24T6SR12E, 4.2 mi.NE Abita Springs, Louisiana. n = 1757

**Literature Cited**
