

# ENTOMOLOGICAL NEWS

AND

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## Courtship of *Mayflies*

By R. M. MOORE, M. D.

We usually expect all courting to be done by the male sex so the following observation may be of interest as showing that some of the Ephemeroidea recognize leap year.

One warm damp evening in this June, just as I sat by my study table, close to an open window, my attention was attracted by the dropping onto the blotter of a female *Baetis propinquus* Walsh; in a moment she was followed by eight males. These alighted fairly near to the female and remained in about the same position as where they landed without showing any special excitement, occasionally waving their bodies from side to side and waving their anal setæ. The female on the contrary showed great excitement, waving her body and waving her setæ almost constantly. She seemed in this way to obtain some sense of direction, and by it to locate the position of the males. As soon as she settled where one was she would back up towards him, stopping a moment to wave her body from side to side and then continue her retrograde movement.

At no time did I see her move towards a male except by backing towards him. The males acted very ungallantly, as when she approached one near enough to touch him with her setæ, he would fly up in the air with a peculiar little hopping flight and land an inch or two away. When one rejected her advances she stood still for a moment and waved from side to side until she got the direction of another and backed towards him, only to have the same thing repeated. Once she flew out of the window alighting on the window-sill; immediately several of the males followed; she stayed on the sill but a minute or two, then flew onto the blotter again, bringing her train of admirers with her. I then captured her and her following. Once again during the evening a female flew into the window followed by four males; they remained for two or three minutes and then flew away. Although the window was open and the gas burning until after midnight, at no time did any of the males come in except they were preceded by a female.

The insects I sent to Mr. Nathan Banks who kindly determined the species for me.

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## The "Yellow-Fly" of the Dismal Swamp

BY NATHAN BANKS

Several times I have heard those who have travelled in the Dismal Swamp tell of the "yellow fly" which infests that region at certain times of the year. All accounts had put it down as one of the worst biting flies known to the traveller. Specimens, however, were never available, and until lately I supposed it was some local species of *Chrysops*. Recently a friend visited the region and was severely bitten; he obtained specimens, and these, on examination, prove to be *Diachlorus ferrugatus* Fabr., a Tabanid more closely allied to *Tabanus* than to *Chrysops*.

This species has been reported from Mexico, Florida and the Carolinas. The specimens sent me came from the Virginia portion of the swamp, and were taken about the 14th of