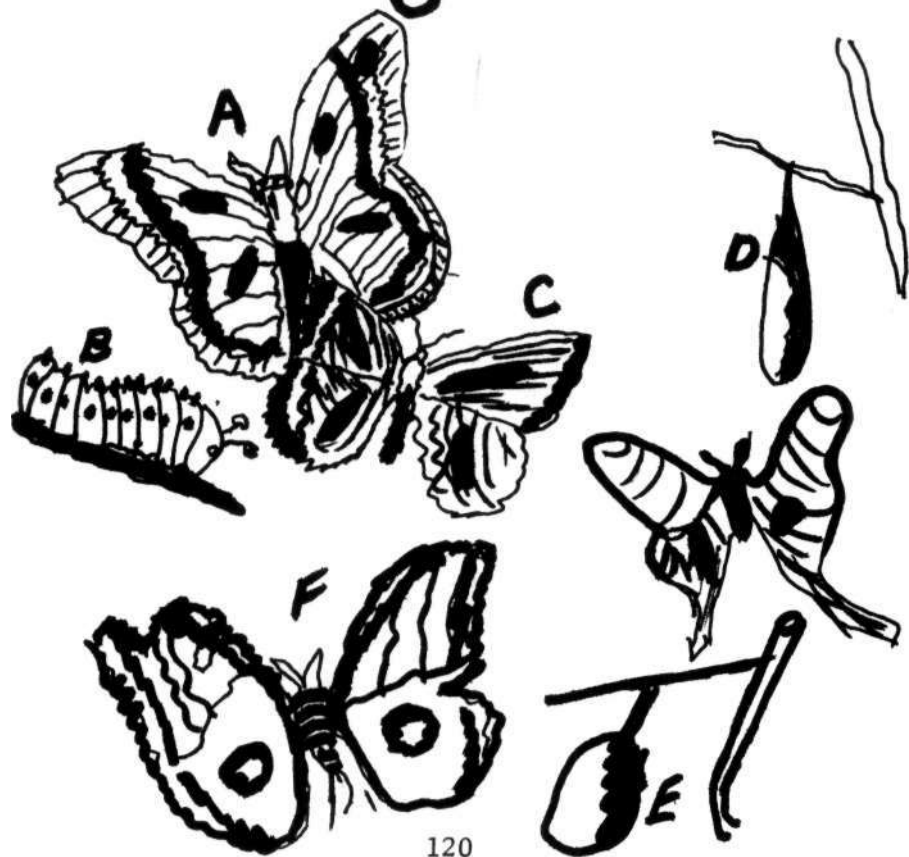


# INSECTS



## INSECTS!

Silk Moths -- As many other items in the insect families that offer some fascination to the boy to watch how they eat, how they grow, and what some of their habits are, so you can keep in capture caterpillars in a jar and watch them eat and spin cocoons. Realize that they must live on fresh air and add fresh leaves from the right type of a plant, which is their right diet each day. Usually, during the winter, cocoons are easy to find and if kept in a cold place until spring, then watch the development from cocoon to the moth.

As you will notice, moth "A" on the previous page is one of the most spectacular and interesting insects. The mother of this insect lays eggs, as a rule, most often on wild cherry or willow trees or shrubs. From the egg, hatches a caterpillar, which then feeds on the leaves. How often while hiking along a country road is it noticeable that large caterpillar insects hanging from wild cherry trees make it easy for the tree to stand bare of any foliage.

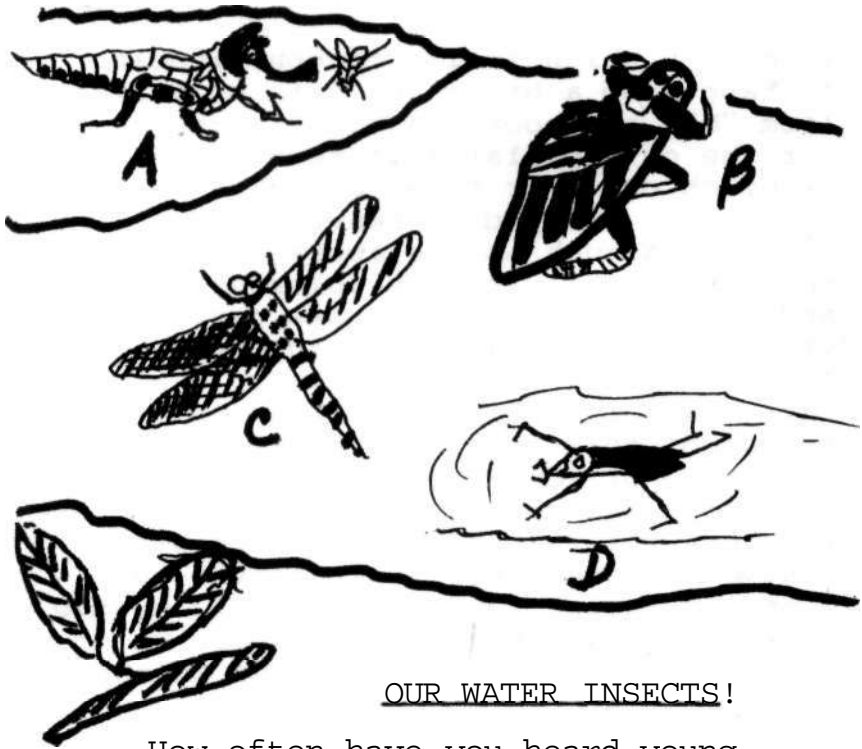
When the caterpillar, which is insect "B" on previous page, is fully grown, it then makes his home spinning a cocoon--usually to a branch or twig. It is recorded that this caterpillar within the cocoon sheds its skin and becomes a pupa. This remains in the cocoon until the spring, when it develops and flies as a moth.

As you will notice, insect "C" is also a moth and usually thrives on wild cherry and sassafras. As you will notice,

item "D", which is its cocoon, appears to hang from a branch or twig by a strap. Item "E", a cocoon, is usually the house for the caterpillar that feeds on maple or birch or other trees and this cocoon is usually wrapped in leaves.

Inasmuch as the average moth appears slightly on the colorful side, and you will notice they are usually attracted to the light during dark hours, they can be very destructive to our vegetation and tree life. During the preparation of this edition of this Handbook, the State of New Jersey is under a plague of a moth called the "Gypsy Moth". These in their entirety of volume, are stripping whole forests of their leaves and buds and their growth is so rapid by the eggs laid that State programs are being submitted to combat this plague of the "Gypsy Moth".

It might be wise to notice the difference between our common butterflies who, during the flower season, travel from one flower to the next, drinking its nectar. The average caterpillar for these butterflies, known as "monarchs", feed on milkweed and other related plants that grow usually in our fields and woods. You will also notice that its cocoon usually hangs under a leaf for protection. It is known that, during the winter, they travel to the south and then in the spring—like the birds—return back to the north. On their way, the monarchs lay their eggs, usually in the area where they feed on milkweed and other plants.



### OUR WATER INSECTS!

How often have you heard young children remark, "Watch for the darning needle bug--it will sew up your ears!" (See Insect "C") They are actually known as "Dragonflies". As much as they appear dangerous, they do catch mosquitoes and other small insects. When the Dragonfly is young, or known as a nymph, (see Item "A") it is a wonderful creature, who lives in the water and actually breaths as a fish. It can reach out, as you will notice, with a lower lip to grab small insects or small fish. The water is taken into the rear of its body and is expelled out with enough force to propel the nymph through the water.

Oftentimes as you stand and watch a still pond or a brook, you will notice that there is a small insect that can glide and skate across the water top. Its proper name, as Item "D", is known as the "Water Strider". You will notice it does not often float and yet it is so light that as this Strider passes over the water's surface, it does not break the thin surface or film of the water.

Notice now Insect "B", usually found around ponds and streams—more or less where there is rotted wood. We have learned that they may bite and the male bug carries the eggs on his back where they are placed by the female until they are hatched.