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### BED BUGS IN COLONIAL AMERICA

“Oyl of Turpentine, aetherial spirit of turpentine, best varnish for chairmakers, and the finest amber-coloured rosin, are made and sold by John Braser, living back of Trinity-Church burying ground, near the North-River, either large or small quantities . . . N.B. The spirit of turpentine applied to bedsteads and those places where bugs breed, and lodge, effectually destroys them, and prevents them from harbouring those places where it is applied; especially if they should be fresh drawn, and a few drops will effectually take out greasy spots from cloaths, or on floor.—Also the best Pot-Ash.”—*The New-York Mercury*, February 23, 1756.

### AN OLD USE FOR COCKROACHES

Dr. Samuel X. Radbill in his paper on “Child Hygiene Among the American Indians,” (*Texas Reports on Biology and Medicine*, Vol. 3, No. 4, p. 419-512, Winter, 1945) states that among the Nanticoke Indians, various methods were in use to avert or cure whooping cough. One of these involved the use of cockroaches. As many cockroaches were collected as there were children afflicted with the whooping cough. Each cockroach was named after a child and each child placed a roach in a bottle and kept it tightly corked. When the roach died, the sickness was believed to disappear. During this period the child's bowels were kept open so that the charm would not react and kill him.

A city dweller having whooping cough was advised to put a cockroach in a thimble, to tie it up in a cloth and wear it around the neck. This was supposed to stop the whooping.—Ed.

### 17-YEAR CICADA NOTES FOR 1945

By FRED M. SCHOTT

October 9 and 10, 1944. Clear and mild. Several heard calling. A freshly emerged female and the shell found near base of birch in the Tenafly Cliffs area, N. J. These were probably fore-runners of the large brood 2 of 1945.

April 10, 1945. Numerous pupæ found near surface in burrows under logs at Englewood Cliffs, N. J. The pupæ, when exposed, retire backward into the holes with some speed.

May 2 (1), 7 (2), 24 (1), adults emerged from terrarium in house, from a dozen pupæ taken on the foregoing date. All males. May 25. Clear and cool. Heard a single cicada at Alpine, N. J.

May 26. Cloudy, warm and humid. First swarm, largely males, in dry woods near the Morrow estate, Englewood, N. J. *Calosoma wilcoxi* also abroad in numbers. One of these beetles observed chewing away the anal portion of a male cicada, which was disturbed only to the extent of a slow, alternate raising of its front legs.

May 28. Cloudy, cool and windy. Thunderstorms at night. Many pupæ emerging between 6 and 7 P.M. on the western slope of the palisades at Cresskill, N. J. Thousands of adults already out of their “armor.” *Calosoma wilcoxi* and *frigidum* present and feeding on cicadas. Two pupæ taken home emerged at 8 P.M. Watched one emerge from its turret. It made one complete turn on reaching the surface, then headed straight for the trunk of a black oak, fifteen inches away. The pupæ, going up tree trunk, cover about seven inches per minute. Most of those observed stopped within fifteen feet, under leaves or lateral branches.

May 29. Clear and cool. Thousands of now matured cicadas at the stand visited yesterday evening to observe emerging pupæ. Evidently the night's rain and wind had deterred the insects not the least. The glint of the wings in the early morning sun, as many clung to seed pods of sumac, made a novel and very pretty

spectacle. The number of those that fail to entirely extricate themselves from the shells is considerable. A guess of five per cent is probably conservative.

May 30. Clear and cool. Numerous along the shore of Hessian Lake and a large swarm along the base of high ground north of Bear Mountain, N. Y. Here the smaller variety *cassini* was first observed, in small numbers.

June 1. A few at Alpine Cliffs, N. J. Moderately abundant at Coytesville, N. J. Sluggish and quiet due to the low temperature. Many cripples noted here. Possibly such weather conditions account for so many unable to extricate their bodies from the shell.

June 2, 3, 4 and 5. Period of subnormal temperatures, with winds and rain. Few cicadas seen or heard.

June 6. A few emerging in the early afternoon at Alpine, and at Fort Lee a large swarm had been and was emerging. Some pupæ found under logs.

June 11. Cloudy and humid. Many emerging and singing north of Popolopen Creek and in the Queensboro area back of Bear Mountain, N. Y.

June 14. Clear and warm. Countless thousands, male and female, dead on the ground at Crystal Lake near Hammononton, N. J. Others singing and ovipositing. Egg-laying about finished here. A few at Pennypot in the same sector. We were accosted by a native of this tumultuous burg with a question—in all seriousness—as to whether the W in the 17-year cicada's wing would change to P when the war is over. We suggested that Homo, having been and, in his present state, still being the "fightingest" of animals, there is no likelihood of any alphabetical change in *Magiicada's* wing pattern.

June 18. Very warm and humid. Very abundant in the Little Falls and Verona, N. J., areas. Singing loudly and occurring mostly high in trees. At Fort Lee they swarmed this day. Much egg-laying had been done. They were hanging in the low tree growth everywhere but ash sprouts appear to be a favorite resting place. Every one of these contained dozens of cicadas. Saw and heard here the first *cassini*, a few, singing the totally different song, a quickly repeated *tzik-tzik-tzik*.

June 19. Cloudy and humid. Large numbers near the N. Y.-N. J. state line, north of Alpine, N. J. Several groups of *cassini* heard. These remain higher up than the typical form.

June 22. Clear and warm. A large colony of *cassini* located off Route 29 at Boundbrook, N. J. Only a few of the larger ones present. Several hundred were singing in unison in the top of a grove of young oaks. The combined sound is entirely different from that of the larger cicada, being a high-pitched, shrill buzz with a rising and falling cadence. Neither does it bear the remotest resemblance to the *tzik, tzik* of individual *cassini*. It is very much like the August song of *Neocoenoccephalus robustus* without the rising and falling effect. *Cassini* also showed here a preference for ash. Many females were on this plant, and ovipositing, while nearby vegetation showed but few. They were not easy to catch, even with a net, being much more wary than their larger brethren.

June 27. At Fort Lee in diminishing numbers. Mostly females ovipositing.

July 1. A few still laying eggs. The ground is strewn with dead.

July 14. No living cicadas observed. The big show is over. The oaks, hung with brown tassels, resemble, from a distance fruiting *Ailanthus* trees. Another installment of one of Nature's most amazing serial stories is ended. After a few weeks in the light of day this extraordinary insect is impelled to undergo a talpidian existence lasting seventeen years! Maybe those that "died aborning" were the lucky ones.