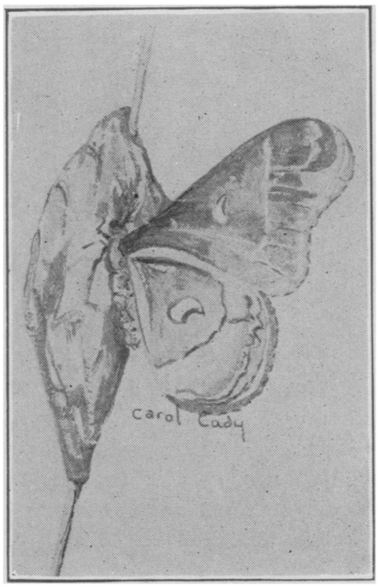
Unto The Fourth Generation

The ground in front of us was dotted with small, hard, round pellets. One of the girls in the group insisted that they were lumps from the branch-ends of a pignut tree overhead. After quite a discussion and argument over the whys and wherefores we decided to find out where they came from. By climbing around and skinning our shins we discovered three mammoth green caterpillars in a wild cherry tree instead of a pignut. Quite thrilled, we carefully carried them home, much to the disgust of everyone. In less than two weeks of feeding on more wild cherry the three larvae of the *Samia Cecropia* moth curled up and went to sleep in large silken cocoons for the winter. The following spring only one emerged—a large quivering female. We kept our prize in a box for a day until her wings were rigid and then put her out on a tree in front of the camp-house. We thought we were freeing the *Cecropia* moth, as in truth happened, for we never saw her again. However, about four weeks later one of the girls discovered a green "worm" in a viburnum not far from where the female had been released. Looking down at the shrub there was no evidence of more than just the one, but when we happened to stoop over and look up we counted a family of no less than twenty-eight half grown larvae of the *Samia Cecropia.* We have always felt justifiably certain that these were the second generation of the moth we had freed, because up to that time no *Cecropia* moths had been captured on our camp site. Further proof was offered when we found about thirty egg shells only a few inches from where the female was placed. These were raised and the cocoons taken to Montclair for the winter. In the spring of 1927 fifteen males and twelve females emerged. On May 25 a male and female mated, producing about one hundred eggs. About seventy of them hatched in June. We put the little black fellows in a breeding cage made of a lantern chimney and a flower pot, where they thrived on daily meals of their favorite food.

On June 20 they were destined to a ride on New York's stuffy subways and thence to Camp Edith Macy near Briarcliff Manor, N. Y. Their arrival caused quite some excitement and many exclamations of fat slimy



By Carol Cady

green worms! and who would be buggy enough to bring such things as those to camp! In spite of the temporary opposition, which gradually changed to awe and finally to a desire for possession of the worms, they grew to a size of three inches and almost ate a wild cherry tree out of house and home. By that time there remained twenty-seven members of the family, the deaths being caused mainly by drowning and failure to take off their old suits of clothes. On June 28 another brood of little black fellows, first cousins by actual relation, hatched. Everybody was greatly excited watching the larvae scratch and wriggle out of their shells.

On leaving Macy a few of the "bugs" were left behind, so that we only had sixteen larvae three inches long, and about ten of their young cousins. Three large ones died on the journey from Macy to Camp Madeleine Mulford, where the remaining thirteen were to continue their quest for more wild cherry.

It is now only July 19, the big fellows have one more molting before they will be ready to curl up for the winter of 1927. Next spring some of them will hatch and mate, thus carrying on their family traditions with us for four generations.

—By CARLEEN MALEY.

Science News-Letter, August 6, 1927

The material on this page is furnished by the Coordinating Council on Nature Activities.

All but four states collect a tax on gasoline sold within their borders and use it for street and road purposes.

August Nature Calendar

This "Nature Calendar" is prepared monthly for Camp Fire Girls by the Cleveland Museum of Natural History. It is written by Dorothy A. Treat, Assistant to Mr. Harold Madison, Curator of Education at the Museum.

Black-spored "inky-caps" and the "pink bottoms," *Agaricus campestris* of the fields, open the season of mushroom delicacies.

Purple elderberries, ripening along the roadsides, are much enjoyed by the robins who crunch them between their mandibles and find the red flesh and crimson juice very pleasant.

In August, a good place to see birds is in the marsh. Here, large flocks of them, particularly the "redwings" and bobolinks, are feeding on the ripening rice grass.

Yellows and lavenders dominate the fields and open spaces. Goldenrods and purple asters brighten the roadsides. Tall sunflowers and pinkish lavender Joe-Pye weeds line the river banks.

Two kinds of swellings called galls can be found on goldenrod stems. If opened with a knife, the spindle-shaped ones show a fat little moth caterpillar feeding within, the ball-shaped ones, the larva of a fly.

Now is the time to observe that indicator of good corn country, the pickle lettuce, and see why it is sometimes called compass plant. During hot dry days of late summer the leaves twist and point very nearly north and south.

Crimson Oswego tea and cardinal flowers are blooming in wet shady places, soon to be vacated by the scarlet tanagers who are donning their dull green coats and preparing to start south.

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The giant octopus sometimes measures 18 feet from tip to tip of its long arms.

Dry ice, made of frozen carbon dioxide gas, makes it possible to send ice cream by air.

The United States is the world's largest producer and consumer of prepared medicines.

Many of the fishes have greater power to change color than the changeable chameleon.

Glass windows were used in wealthy homes of Pompeii, the city destroyed by Vesuvius in 79 A. D.