

brief spring emergence of adults, although this was not observed. More intensive research is needed to investigate the possibility of a prolonged winter to early summer diapause of larva or pupa, and a multi-brood emergence from late January/ early February to April.

The local occurrence of *O. ardea* is also similar to that of *O. knightorum*, but it is more sparsely distributed and across wider areas. The adults of both species generally keep to secluded scattered glades close to their host plants where they bask in sunshine and visit the flowers of nearby Lantana and herbaceous plants.

Some authors (e.g. Braby, 2000) have stated that *O. ardea* is locally common at times, however, on the Sunshine Coast, it is unusual to see more than five or six specimens together at any locality, despite the relative (though scattered) abundance of colonies of Basket Grass. Undoubtedly the skipper once occurred in larger areas throughout the Sunshine Coast before land clearing, sub-division and road building. Several populations appear threatened, however population links (corridors) and possibly a broader choice of food plants in the Mooloolah River and Painter/ Eudlo Creek systems may be sufficient to maintain genetic diversity in the Sunshine Coast region.

References

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OBITUARY

Murdoch De Baar (1945-2011)

It was with much sadness that we heard in early January of the passing of Murdoch. Murdoch's great passion was entomology and he was renowned as an authority on forest insects and Australian butterflies. Murdoch commenced his career in the mid 1960s as a forest technician for, what was then the Queensland Department of Forestry, which later was merged into Department of Primary Industries (now



DEEDI). In the early days Murdoch was indeed a 'true' field forestry officer, living on forestry stations, most of the stations in relatively remote areas, in what would be considered primitive facilities by today's standards. It was living in these remote areas and under these difficult field conditions that fostered his long-standing interest in entomology and provided him with a depth of entomological knowledge and experience, not just in forest entomology but in many other aspects of the discipline. Much of his knowledge was unavailable in text books; he was a real entomologist and naturalist. In the late 1970s Murdoch and the family were based in Brisbane and he continued as a Forest Technician for the department, based at Indooroopilly, until his retirement in 2006.

While much can be said of his contribution to forest entomology, his knowledge stretched into many other areas of this field, in particular the collection and study of Australian butterflies, moths and beetles, and to these branches of entomology, his contribution should not be understated. A review of the Australian entomology literature gives us at least 25 published papers for Murdoch, including a major generic revision of the Australian *Elodina* (Pieridae), a complex group of small white butterflies. Murdoch was not only a valuable source of information but he gave his information willingly. He had wonderful recall as he had extensive knowledge of the biogeography of the insect fauna of Queensland. He was a 'no nonsense' kind of bloke with little patience for the bureaucracy of the department in which he worked, and was quite outspoken on what seemed to him to be ever increasing departmental layers of management at the expense of science.



Photo Kerry De Baar

Who was the real Murdoch behind that smile? During the weeks since his passing I have had time to reflect and talk of Murdoch with colleagues. It is their words that I would like to reiterate, which I think comes close to describing who he was. When asked, "What comes to mind when you think of Murdoch?" the words came freely. They were clear and unambiguous. To quote: "always helpful", "courteous", "very amenable", "a true gentleman", "a jolly good bloke", "thoughtful", "softly spoken", "patient", "knows his stuff", "caring", "where did he get his energy from?", "a real character", "very knowledgeable", "ask Murdoch", "a generous man, keen to share and distribute information", "very supportive, a voice of reason". Perhaps his most endearing characteristic was his respect and thoughtfulness for his wife Glenda, for his family and for his friends.



Many years ago, during my early years of knowing Murdoch, he was initially a mentor figure for my blossoming interest in Australian butterflies. Later our relationship changed, as we became friends and colleagues. On a personal note, I will greatly miss him: we relied on each other to bounce ideas around; we spent many weeks collecting together on the islands of Torres Strait; we reviewed each other's manuscripts; we made plans for future collecting trips together (the latest, a trip to Murray Island in Torres Strait was planned to occur over the last two weeks of January); but most importantly we looked forward, after my retirement, to working together on some of the major taxonomic problems within the Crow butterfly group (*Euploea* spp). Unfortunately, now I will have to run solo on that one.

A short anecdote: The location: Dauan Island, in the north of Torres Strait, Queensland. The time: most nights after an exhausting day collecting in the tropics. Each night would go something like this: at around 8.30 Murdoch typically would have an early night, always stating that he was 'buggered' after an exhausting day. We then would all proceed to go to bed. The next morning we would all arise at around 7, and he would immediately start taking insects out of the freezer and



Dauan Island, Torres Strait, Jan. 2010 – collecting in monsoon rainforest – Photo Trevor Lambkin

processing them. In my curiosity I would ask, "Have you just come back from the jetty collecting insects that came to light?" To this he would casually say "No, I collected these through the night." I would later find out that most nights he collected at the jetty at around 11pm, 2am and at 4am and then proceeded to be out collecting all day.

The secret: amazing fitness and energy levels and a strong passion for natural history.

He will be greatly missed by his colleagues, professionally and personally, as all who knew him learnt much from him. We consider ourselves blessed to have known him and to have shared knowledge with him.

Trevor A. Lambkin, Brisbane, 9 Feb. 2011

