



## Connecticut Entomological Society Minutes from the 581<sup>st</sup> Meeting 19 January 2024

Hybrid Zoom held at University of Connecticut,  
Biology & Physics Building

Members met for a pre-meeting social at the Biology & Physics Building approx. 6:30pm. Refreshments were served.

### **Business meeting:**

President Richard Cowles called the meeting to order at approximately 7:30pm.

### **New Business:**

- Treasurer Mike Montgomery reported that for this fiscal year, the Society presently has \$693.63 income and \$617.16 in expenses.
- The Treasurer urged currently unpaid members to pay their dues.

### **Announcements:**

- Kate Boye-Williams of the Watkinson Environmental Coalition announced the results of a vote for the new Connecticut state insect. The “Azure Blue Butterfly” and “Ebony Jewelwing” were picked as candidates to replace the Praying Mantis, which is not native to CT. High school students advocated changing the Connecticut State Insect from the exotic Praying Mantis to a native species. The “Azure Blue Butterfly” (1126 votes) was announced as the winner against the “Ebony Jewelwing” (763 votes). It was explained that, because the *Celastrina ladon* (Azure) complex is taxonomically confusing, the name “Azure Blue Butterfly,” referring to all members of the *ladon* complex, was chosen.

### **Exhibits:**

- Ray Simpson brought a box of pinned moths from the Carrabassett Valley of Maine.
- Mark Stukel brought pinned cicadas and their exuviae from New Zealand.

### **Attendees:**

Total members = 18 (6 via zoom)

Total guests = 3

Total attendees = 21

### **President Richard Cowles introduced the speaker.**

The evening presentation started at approx. 8 pm.

### **Evening Presentation:**

**Introduction to Delusional Infestation (DI). It takes a village to care for DI sufferers. Definition. history, and understanding.**

#### **Dr. Gale E. Ridge**

Dr. Gale Ridge began with a graph showing an increase in occurrences of delusional infestation since 1996, noting an increase during the 2008-09 recession. She described the difficulty of defining delusional infestation, mentioning that there have been 40 iterations to its name since 1890. Delusional Infestation is now defined as a psychiatric illness characterized by a patient holding a monothematic fixed belief of an infestation of their skin, body, or immediate environment, which is not supported by objective medical evidence. More specific research indicates that DI (Delusional Infestation) may be unique among similar disorders in that it seems to be correlated with lower grey matter volume in certain regions of the brain. Dr. Ridge then covered different forms of Delusional Infestation. In certain forms, one who suffers from DI may induce this disorder in others who are associated with them. She then described some of the earliest cases of DI observed, including one recorded by Sir Thomas Browne in the 17th century. Dr. Gale Ridge gave an overview on identification of DI in patients. Patients suffering from DI are described as being quick to deny madness, as being very vocal about their problem, and as having an initial denial of taking medications. High-functioning individuals, according to Dr. Ridge, often overuse words such as “bite” and “they.” Tactile hallucinations, resulting in the illusion of biting or crawling on the skin, are more common in shingles-affected skin. Constant itching in such patients may eventually cause serious injury. Dr. Ridge then described methods of treatment for DI. It is important to discourage patient searches on the Internet. Extremely low doses of anti-anxiety medication to relax patients and abate irritation are used. Dr. Gale Ridge concluded by describing the exemplary system already in place in Europe treating DI.

**Respectfully submitted, Secretary Lukas Keras**