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The Colorado Scarab Survey – how lepidopterists can help

With about 35,000 species, scarab beetles (Coleoptera: Scarabaeoidea) are one of the major beetle superfamilies. Whereas some other states in the region, such as Nebraska or North Dakota, have monographic accounts of their scarab beetle fauna (Helgesen & Post 1967, Lago et al. 1979, Ratcliffe & Paulsen 2008), Colorado is more than a century behind. The last catalogue of Colorado beetles was published in 1902 (Wickham 1902). 196 species have been recorded for the State in the literature, but only 7.8 species on average were recorded per county. Two years ago, we have started a statewide collecting program of scarab beetles in Colorado, the Colorado Scarab Survey. Aim of the Survey is to produce a monograph of Colorado scarabs with keys, illustrations and distribution maps for all species and a regularly updated webpage. With the Survey still in its infancy, every single record, even of common scarab species, is valuable and appreciated. Lepidopterists are practicing one of the most efficient collecting methods for scarab beetles: light trapping. Since scarab beetles tend to fly earlier in the evening than moths, the light should be started at the beginning of dusk. Beetle collectors are generally less enduring at the light and stop the light trap about an hour after darkness, missing late flying species which are, therefore, often considered rare. Thus, lepidopterists are an invaluable resource for any beetle survey.

References
Program and Abstracts

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