

1-1-1902

Identification de quelques Megachiles

R. Buysson

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Buysson, R., "Identification de quelques Megachiles" (1902). *Bu*. Paper 70.
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Bysson, R. du . 1902. Modification de quelques Mégachiles.
Ann. de la Soc. Ent. de France, 71: 751-755.

Bysson begins the discussion with a general discussion of the nests of Megachiles. They place their nests in various places (cavities). The nests are always constructed of pieces of leaves - oval ones on the walls and discs (small) forming partitions between cells and bottom. They appear to choose leaves of certain plants - but are not exclusive. Ordinarily they make more nests with more cells than do the Osmia. At least with the following species he noted that in all cases, the last eggs to be laid gave birth to males. They gather honey principally from Carduaceae, Aliaceae, Leguminaceae and some Compositae.

M. centuncularis L. Makes its nest in the soil. A simple rather short gallery. One instance this was under a rock. Other times in more or less rotten wood. It prefers leaves of wild roses and cultivated roses with soft leaves. It also uses leaves of strawberries, raspberries, pears, Prunus spinosa L., grape, etc. The number of cells per nest is very variable. The egg is 3.25 mm. long and 1 mm. wide; it is soft, subhyaline, whitish, the axis almost straight. Larva.

M. pyrenaica Pérez. (p. 752). A close relative of the preceding and nests as it does. One nest he observed was built in a small piece of wood in the middle of a prairie. The gallery was dug (watched? dig it) lengthwise in the wood for a short distance, then it divided into two. One arm of the gallery was longer than the other. Cells in the two arms. Eggs & larvae as in the preceding species.

M. maritima Kirby. (p. 752). Digs straight simple galleries in "terres" or steep banks. Digs with her mandibles and pushes earth out with her legs - but the large, hard particles are picked up in the mandibles and carried a ways away by flight. The cells are few per gallery and made of leaves of pear trees, briars, buckthorn (Rhamnus), Crataegus oxyacantha L., and Robbinia pseudo-acacia. This Megachile strongly prefers the large Carduaceae. He raised some of these in glass tubes and can definitely state that the larvae rid themselves of excrement before the honey is completely eaten, although the larvae are quite large. Eggs & larvae as in M. lagopoda L.

M. lagopoda L. (pp. 752-753). inhabits mostly thickets. It nests in a hillock of heather or an earthen mound of an old Lasius flavus F. nest. This is a gallery, more or less irregular in direction which divides to the right and to the left beneath the ground where the cells are placed. the cells are made of leaves of oak. M. lagopoda is a species in which digging is highly perfected. Description of the larvae.

M. argentata F. (p. 753). Uses leaves of Robbinia pseudo-acacia), Potentilla, clovers and roses. Nest placed in soft wood of dry branches, dead trees, holes in calcareous rocks and sometimes in old Anthophora nests.

M. ericetorum Lep. (p. 753). Simple galleries in "terres", in sand hills, in soil and under stones. Ferton, Gh., reports one in a reed.

M. willughbyella Kirby. (p. 753). Nests in soft dead wood - uses old holes of xylophagous Coleoptera. Rarely in ground (one found in old Lasius flavus mound with oak leaves for cells).

M. byssoni Pérez. (753-754). Modifies its nest with the locality. It nests in stems of Cirsium palustre Scop. in the prairie and pastures and in Dahlia stems in gardens. She makes a round opening in an internode and enlarges the

Buysson, R. du. 1902 cont'd.

cavity, if necessary. In Dahlias she uses many more leaves to fill the large space. Most often, Buysson observed her building in hollow stems of onions. Here she cuts a round opening below the head and descends to the bottom of the inflated stem. She cuts leaves which are nearby. He watched ♀'s cut leaves of strawberries, raspberries, currants, grapes dahlias, Flomis, Altea because these were nearest their nests - only took a few seconds to cut a leaf. In onions the cells are placed in the middle of the inflation of the stem and numerous leaves are necessary to fill the cavity - 55 peices were counted around a single cell - series of 8 to 10 cells. The lower side of the leaf is always turned inward. Other times only one cell was placed below the inflation and then about four above the inflation. He thinks this is due to conservation of time because of the insect is rushed in its egg-laying. Also some use only the stem above the inflation.

The last eggs laid result in males. Two generations of males and females were observed - one in May-June another in August.

He then gives a series of locality records in France, Pyrenees and Italy.

M. circumcineta Kirby. (p.755). Not common - found building nest in wood of a long-dead tree. Cells of leaves of Robbinsia (pseudo-acacia).