

Wanted alive—but handle with care

PHYSIOLOGY laboratories in Britain, Germany and the United States are urgently seeking suppliers of the tropical giant water bugs of the genus *Lethocerus*, whose flight muscle is one of the most important preparations used in the study of the molecular mechanisms of contraction in insect flight muscle.

During a symposium held recently in Oxford, UK, the problem of obtaining living material from tropical countries and the lack of success in breeding these bugs in the laboratory were discussed. The laboratories shown in the table are all now in the market for the living insects; the table shows approximate requirements and acceptable species. They would be glad to hear from anyone who can provide these insects and would be willing to make contracts with reliable suppliers. Transit costs would be refunded and all prices are quoted in US dollars.

These giant bugs are aquatic but are easily collected when they fly to lights in damp weather—in the rainy season now approaching in many of the countries where they are found. Provided they are individually restrained in envelopes with an adequate air supply, up to 50 can be packed in a perforated tin and sent by air freight. These insects have a poisonous bite and should be handled with care.

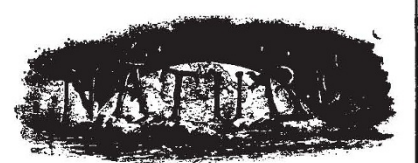
The proceedings of the symposium will be published by Elsevier-North Holland Biomedical Press later this year, entitled *Insect Flight Muscle*.

Address	Regular monthly requirement	Maximum requirement for irregular supply	Acceptable species
Professor J. W. S. Pringle, ARC Unit, Dept of Zoology, Oxford OX1 3PS, UK	20 at \$5 each	3,000 at \$0.5 each	A + B
Dr D. C. S. White, Dept of Biology, The University, York, UK	4 at \$5 each	120 at \$0.5 each	A + B + C
Professor J. C. Rüegg, Universität Heidelberg, II. Physiologisches Institut, 1m Neuenheimer Feld 326, 6900 Heidelberg, FRG	1 at \$10 each	2,000 at \$0.5 each	A
Dr K. C. Holmes, Max-Planck-Institut für Medizinische Forschung, 6900 Heidelberg, Jahnstrasse 29, FRG	2 at \$10 each	250 at \$2 each	A
Dr M. K. Reedy, Dept of Anatomy, Duke University Medical Center, Durham, North Carolina 27710, USA		Special arrangements	
Dr J. Squire, Biopolymer Group Dept of Metallurgy and Materials Science, Imperial College London SW7 2BP, UK		Special arrangements	
Dr G. Steiger, Los Angeles County Heart Lab., Center for Health Sciences, UCLA, California 90024, USA		Special arrangements	

A = *L. maximus* (Venezuela, Trinidad); *L. indicus* (India, Malaysia, Indonesia); *L. colossicus* (Mexico).
 B = *L. cordofanus* (Africa, South East Europe); *L. annulipes* (Guyana, West Indies); *L. insulanus* (Australasia); *L. griseus* (Florida, Mexico).
 C = *L. uhleri* (South-East United States).



Lethocerus: \$5,000 market



A hundred years ago

M. HENRY GIFFARD is constructing, near the Champ de Mars at Paris, a workshop for the preparation of sulphate of iron. The apparatus was tried for the first time last Friday, when the balloon *Eole* was inflated in an hour and a half, and was sent up with an aeronaut. The capacity of the balloon being 220 cubic metres, the rate of production is very satisfactory. It is expected that the sale of sulphate will cover almost all the expenses, so that numerous scientific ascents may be made in the ensuing summer. The monster captive balloon of 20,000 cubic metres will be inflated by the same process.

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