

**FORFICULA AURICULARIA L. (DERMAPTERA:  
FORFICULIDAE) IN MICHIGAN**

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Although *Forficula auricularia* Linnaeus, the European Earwig, has been known to occur in Ontario, Canada since prior to 1937 (Vickery and Kevan, 1967), invasion of Michigan by this species is of more recent date. A specimen in the University of Michigan Museum of Zoology was taken at Lansing in 1948 and, judging from specimens at hand, the species was fairly common there by 1964. In 1966, Thomas E. Moore, of the Museum of Zoology, took a number of specimens at Beulah in Benzie County and informed me that the earwig was rather abundant on common milkweed. Since that time there appears to have been an explosive build up of populations in the northwestern part of the state. *Auricularia* is reported as occurring in "great numbers" around Benzonia, Benzie County and in Charlevoix, Charlevoix County where they have been observed in numbers approaching "tens of thousands." I have also seen specimens from Missaukee County, Harbor Springs in Emmet County, Alpena in Alpena County, and Detroit, Wayne County. An undocumented report indicates that the species was observed in 1971 in large numbers at Big Rapids, Mecosta County.

*Forficula auricularia* in Michigan has been observed in houses, garages, in trailer courts, in a greenhouse, and in a restaurant. It is common out-of-doors and has been taken from holes and recesses in trees as well as feeding upon milkweed and various vegetable crops. The species is a well-known pest in parts of the United States where it can do much damage to vegetable, flower, and nursery crops.

The European Earwig has probably become established in Michigan in response to changing climatic conditions in the state. During the past three or four decades these changes have caused numerous animal species to expand their ranges into the state or to undergo rather striking increases in population size. Some of these, such as the European Mantid, *Mantis religiosa religiosa* (Linnaeus), have spread explosively across southern Michigan. The European Earwig is now known from scattered localities over the major portion of the Lower Peninsula. Indications in Benzie and Charlevoix Counties are that these scattered populations will spread and enlarge, and that the citizenry of the state will soon have to cope with yet another noxious insect.

I am indebted to John H. Newman and, particularly, to Richard J. Sauer, both of the Cooperative Extension Service, Entomology Department, Michigan State University, for documented specimens of the European Earwig. An appeal in *Insect Alerts* by Sauer for specimens of and information on this earwig has resulted in a very rapid increase in our knowledge of the distribution of *auricularia* in the State of Michigan.

LITERATURE CITED

- Vickery, V. R. and D. K. McE. Kevan. 1967. Records of the orthopteroid insects of Ontario. Proc. Entomol. Soc. Ontario 97:13-68.