

THE PLANT (*Portulaca oleracea* L.)

The species *Portulaca oleracea* L., is a common plant of India—its natural home. It occurs over Europe and North America, being especially abundant in gardens. Records show that purslane was carried westward from Asia to Europe, and for centuries it was used as a salad and pot herb. This plant was observed in Massachusetts as early as 1693. Since then its spread has been very rapid. This rapidity of spread is due in a large measure, one writer has said, to the carelessness of the early Pennsylvania Germans, who were very fond of it as a vegetable.

Purslane is a procumbent annual, with mostly alternate, oblong-cuneate leaves about one-half inch long. The flowers are yellow, sessile and axillary. The seeds are black.

Some authorities have called purslane a "Cosmopolitan Weed" because of its wide distribution. It is not uncommon here in the United States to find it in cultivated grounds around dwellings and also in waste places.

Purslane has some direct economic value. Knight (69) says that the juice from its leaves will relieve swelling and pain inflicted by the hairs from the body of the white-marked tussock-moth larva. It is also of value as food for hogs, a purpose to which quantities are devoted. The seeds are used in medicine.

SUMMARY AND LITERATURE

A careful and comprehensive search of the literature has failed to disclose any previous lists dealing specifically with insects feeding on purslane. However, there are many isolated records in various text books, taxonomical works, catalogues, and host-plant indices. It has been the problem of the writer to gather these, to supplement them with his own field observations and rearing records, and to organize and present the whole in a detailed and usable list. All told, eighty-three species, distributed in their Arthropodan orders, are recorded in this paper.

INDEX TO THE FLORIDA ENTOMOLOGIST

An index to volumes 1 to 19 inclusive of the Florida Entomologist is now in preparation. This index contains a table of contents arranged by volumes and an index of the insects by specific and varietal names. This index is to be sold at 75c a copy. Orders should be sent to J. W. Wilson, Business Manager, Lakeland, Florida. Subsequent volumes will have an index in the last number of each volume.