

Metajapyx subterraneus (Packard) in Indiana
(Aptera; Japygidae)

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The members of the Insectan order Aptera are relatively rare in collections but are probably fairly common in most temperate regions. Numerous species have been described from the eastern United States, mostly from soil. Nevertheless, the writer was surprised to find the large *Metajapyx subterraneus* (Packard) in a number of places in southern Indiana since it does not seem to have been recorded from the state. The insect reaches a length of nearly an inch, is almost wholly creamy white in color, and blind. It is found under rocks, usually imbedded in the soil, and apparently spends its entire life in such situations. One reason for its apparent rarity may be that it closely resembles a large staphylinid beetle larvae and as such has probably been passed over many times by collectors. The japygids can readily be distinguished by the presence of the peculiar pincers.

The species was first taken abundantly in the canyon below the falls at McCormick's Creek State Park, Owen County, Indiana, in late March 1950, by Mr. Richard A. Hamilton and the writer. Later it was found by others in similar situations in the canyon of Stoute's Creek, just north of Bloomington, Monroe County, and near Bedford in Lawrence County. It probably occurs rather widely over Indiana, but may show some correlation with the old glacial boundary.

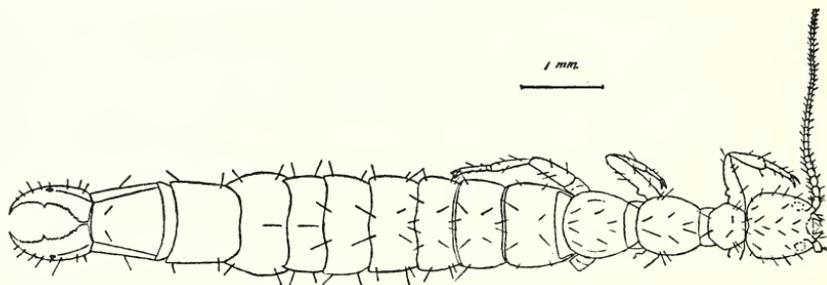


FIG. 1. Dorsal view of *Metajapyx subterraneus* (Packard).

The accompanying figure (Fig. 1) was drawn to scale from a specimen taken at McCormick's Creek State Park, March 28, 1950. It was kept alive for some time along with several others.

There is little agreement as to the order of insects to which the Japygidae belong. The older placement was with the Thysanura, but more recently they have been referred to Diplura, Dicellura, or Aptera. Essig (1947) argues that although the original Linnaean order Aptera has been reduced by the removal of many groups obviously misplaced

in it the order cannot be completely abandoned but must be retained for the Campodeidae, Japygidae, and Projapygidae.

The references (1, 2, 3, 4, 5) will aid in determination of specimens if other forms should come to hand.

Literature Cited

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