

The insect belongs to the cut worm family and resembles somewhat, both in larval and adult form, some of our common pests, as the sweet potato caterpillar, *P. commelinae*, and the cotton boll cut worm, *P. ornithogalli*. When full grown the larva was about 2 inches long and of a brownish gray velvety color with a wide dark band down the dorsal surface and 3 narrow golden brown stripes along each side; ventral surface greenish brown.

It pupated July 31st in soil and the moth emerged August 17, 1922.

ARTHUR C. MASON.

THE PSOCID OF THE OAKS

FRANK STIRLING

Thruout the south-eastern United States, especially in Florida, the water oaks frequently take on a bright silvery-grey coloring which shows particularly on the larger limbs and trunks. Close observation shows this to be caused by a silky web which completely covers the surface. This web is of a bright, clear color and glistens in the sun and on bright moonlight nights, making an effect well worth noticing.

By removing a part of the web with a pen knife or sharp stick one may, by carefully observing, note countless numbers of a tiny insect. This little insect is known as a psocid (*Psocus* sp.) and is related to the book-lice. These psocids are useful rather than injurious, as they feed on fungus growths and lichens which grow on the trunks and larger limbs of the oaks. They apparently spin this fine, gauzy web for their protection against birds and other enemies which would otherwise destroy them.

This insect is reported as occurring in especial abundance on water oaks in the vicinity of Lakeland, Orlando, Sorrento, Dade City and Gainesville, Fla., along the Gulf Coast in the vicinity of New Orleans, La., and near Mobile, Ala. To those not informed the appearance of this grey, silvery covering is often viewed with alarm.

The webs, together with the insects, will disappear after a short time and the only effect upon the tree will be a cleaner and healthier appearance of the bark.