

OBSERVATIONS ON THE MATING BEHAVIOR OF THE GREEN JUNE BEETLE, *COTINUS NITIDA* (LINN.): On the hot, sunny morning of August 12, 1955, my attention was directed to a young cabbage palm. Advancing toward a sound similar to many tiny airplane motors, I saw the source of the noise—insects, not airplanes.

There were about a dozen green June beetles (*Cotinus nitida*) circling the palm and alighting now-and-then to rest. Occasionally one would dart off and describe a wide arc, about a foot above the ground. Numerous individuals were flying slowly about 3 or 4 inches above the freshly mowed lawn. Following a zig-zag course, a beetle would circle back and suddenly drop to the turf and disappear.

Upon investigation of the spot where a beetle had disappeared, I found not one, but two insects. They were mating, the male clasping the female by means of the front tarsi, which were hooked around the anterior edge of the pronotum. A mating pair could be handled without disturbing it, which is unusual for so wary an insect.

The females burrowed just under the turf, not into the soil, where the males located them, probably through an olfactory stimulus. Apparently, sight, sound or motion were not factors, as males were attracted to remnants of females killed by the mower. A few beetles dropped to examine a burrow no longer occupied.

The turf expanse was bordered on one side by a small wooded area which was heavily overgrown by muscadine grape vines, but no beetles were feeding either on this or on other grapes. A dense vine of *Ampelopsis arborea* had overgrown a small oak tree, and formed a center around which more than a hundred of these insects gravitated. Many of the beetles were resting or crawling excitedly over one another, but no mating was observed.

A similar "swarming" activity was noted the previous week, centered around a small pecan tree, and in the late summer of 1954 I watched this peculiar rotation around some persimmon trees.

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