1967

A Comparative Study of the Nesting Behavior of Two Species of Digger Wasps in Jackson Hole, Wyoming

Cleo C. Pierre

Student Conservation Program

Follow this and additional works at: http://repository.uwyo.edu/jhrs_reports

Recommended Citation

This Research Project Report is brought to you for free and open access by Wyoming Scholars Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Jackson Hole Research Station Annual Report by an authorized editor of Wyoming Scholars Repository. For more information, please contact scholcom@uwyo.edu.
characters and was the species most commonly encountered. The only pollinators found were bumblebees, *Bombus*, on *C. miniata* plants.

A Comparative Study of the Nesting Behavior of Two Species of Digger Wasps in Jackson Hole, Wyoming

Cleo C. Pierre

This study observes the nesting behavior of two species of digger wasps, *Philanthus pulcher* and *P. crabroniformis*, in the sandy banks of the Snake River at Jackson Hole, Wyoming during July and August of 1967. The noting of differences in two species sharing the same habitat was the primary result of this study. *P. pulcher* nests in July and early August, while *P. crabroniformis* begins her nesting as *P. pulcher* dies, thus enabling these two wasps to share the same habitat. Both species nest in firm, sandy *lca*m. *P. pulcher* digs her nests with her mouthparts, dispersing the soil with her abdomen, thus effectively hiding the entrance to her burrow. She does not however, make distinct orientation flights. *P. crabroniformis* was seen to dig her nest in the same manner as *P. pulcher* except that she does not disperse the dirt and thus her nests are quite conspicuous. When she leaves her nest, *P. crabroniformis* makes circular orientation flights. The prey of *P. pulcher* are large bees and wasps of various families, usually captured on the flowers of *Eriogonum* by approaching downwind. The prey of *P. crabroniformis* are always of the family Helictidae. *P. pulcher* flies straight back to her nest after capturing her prey and then makes a dash for her burrow, while *P. crabroniformis* makes short stops on the way back, probably to elude the parasitic *S. trilineata*, a fly which also pursues *P. pulcher*. The structures of the burrows of the two species were found also to differ significantly.