

MARGARET FOUNTAINE

(1862 - 1940)

Subject: Butterflies

Field: Natural history **Nationality:** British

Entomologist
of the
Month



An illustration from Fountaine's sketchbooks; Natural History Museum



A portrait from Fountaine's diaries; Norwich Castle Museum

Margaret Fountaine was a butterfly collector, scientific illustrator and adventurer, whose passion for entomology led her around the world in the pursuit of new specimens to document and add to her collection. Many of her observations and discoveries were published in *The Entomologist*; her careful study, collection, and rearing of specimens led to wide recognition within the field. She was among the first women to be inducted into the Linnean Society in 1912, while attending the International Congress of Entomology in Oxford. Fountaine's knowledge of entomology is often shrouded by the posthumous publication of her personal diaries in the 1980s, which details over 50 years of her romantic endeavors and travels. Consequently, the value of her scientific contributions to the field of natural history is often overshadowed by her desire to escape gendered expectations of Victorian society and details of her private love life. Much of Fountaine's lifetime collection of over 22,000 butterfly specimens are now housed at the Norwich Castle Museum alongside her collection of diaries, while many of her original illustrations are stored at the British Museum of Natural History.

References:

- Waring, S. 2015. Margaret Fountaine: A lepidopterist remembered. *Notes Rec.* 69: 53 - 68
- Factsheet produced by Natalie Boyle, Penn State Center for Pollinator Research Program Coordinator

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