

Transcription, January 2021:

Nature 19 (17 April 1879): 554 (Robert McLachlan).

[p. 554]

‘Did Flowers Exist During the Carboniferous Epoch?’

Mr. A. R. Wallace, in his review of Mr. Allen’s “The Colour Sense” (*Nature*, vol. xix. p. 501), has been misled in supposing the fossil insect from the Belgian coal-fields, named *Breyeria borinensis* may be a moth. It was originally described as the hind wing of an orthopterous insect, under the name *Pachytyloopsis borinensis* (*Comptes Rendus*, Soc. Ent. Belg. xviii. p. xli). Subsequently it was transferred to the lepidoptera on bad advice, and re-named *Breyeria borinensis* (same *Comptes Rendus*, p. lx.). Its original location was nearer the truth. I examined the fossil at Brussels in 1877, and have no doubt it belongs to the pseudo-neuroptera, family Ephemeridæ (*vide* my note to this effect in the same *Comptes Rendus* for 1877, xx. p. xxxvi.). The very dense transverse reticulation did not receive sufficient importance when M. de Borre was induced to refer it to the lepidoptera. Thus we remain without any zoological evidence that would tend to prove the existence of flowering plants in the carboniferous age.

R. McLachlan
Lewisham, April 4

The Alfred Russel Wallace Page, Charles H. Smith, 2021.