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butterflies but they have mandibles. In the moths and butterflies the mandibles were transmogrified. No one knows why or how-- only that it did happen--and there are some very very primitive moths which show an in? intermediary stage. Their pupae have jaws, which are used, actually, to bite their way out of their cocoon • but the moth itself when it hatches has a tubular mouth part. The jaws have transmogrified into two long tubes which then became fused--gave you a sucking tube. Then it was coiled up, like a watchspring. So they all suck their food, it's always liquid. And this is one of the characteristics of the moth and butter*fly. (Can we actually ask, what is the role of moths and butterflies on Cape Breton Is? land?) Do you want to talk economics or do you want to talk esthetics? (Well, first I'm interested in their role in the complex of living things.) Well, first, the caterpil? lars of moths and butterflies provide food for lots of other insects and for birds. As insects, they are evident to us because they are large and brightly coloured--but bulk- wise they are not so important as the flies and the wasps and so on. But as food for birds, for instance: one of the reasons there are so many migratory birds • you find that most migratory birds are insect feed? ers • all the Warblers for example. And they come up north because in the north in con? tradistinction from the tropics you have a big burst of insect life here in the summer? time. The kinds of insects are nowhere near as abundant • there are not as many different kinds • as there are further south. But there are greater numbers. This supplies insect food for birds at a period when they need it most • that is, a source of protein for feed? ing the young. Even birds that will get a- long on seeds • Sparrows and Finches • or will get along on fruit • like Robins--when they are raising their young they have to feed their young a certain amount of protein food or they won't grow. They can't just live on berries. So the northern forests in general furnish a breeding ground for a lot of birds that don't live here. Most of the Warblers spend the bulk of their time in the tropics. But they nest up here because they have a very rich source of protein food at just the time that they need it. You remove all the insect-feeding birds from Cape Breton and you don't have much left. Birds eat butter? flies and they eat moths in the daytime when they're sitting on the trees. Bats eat moths at night. Spring Blue Butterfly, *Erora laeta* Now here's the blue ones: *Erora laeta*. Early Hairstreak • one of the rarest of North Amer? ican butterflies. I've taken it at Lake Ain? slie. (Being rare, would you recommend peo? ple taking it, collecting it?) Well, we'd like to know a little more about it. They don't really know very much about it. The larva's reported to feed on beech buds in the early spring. I don't think it's rare. I just think it's hard to catch. And if you knew where and when to go, you'd find it, no problem. The thing is, it's very early in the spring when most people aren't out. And it's been said by entomologists that there'a no such thing as a rare insect • it's just Home of Gaelic College Summer School 2,3 & 5 Week Courses in Scottish Highland Dancing Bagpipe Music Gaelic Language The Annual Gaelic Mod Held During the First Full Week in August The Gaelic College, st. Anns, n. s. P.O.Box 9, Baddeck, N.S.