

DEAR SIR,—

In your last issue Dr. LeConte pronounces my record of the capture here of *Alaus gorgops* to be "probably erroneous," because he has not known any instance of that insect having been taken north of Texas and Western Louisiana, and that therefore my specimen *must* be *Alaus oculatus*.

*Alaus oculatus* is of such common occurrence here that I have long ceased to collect specimens, unless remarkable for beauty or for abnormal size, either large or small, and with over twenty years' acquaintance I ought to be tolerably familiar with its appearance and proportions. The specimen in dispute was found resting on a stump in Bleeker's Woods, about half a mile from our city limits, and was taken by me as an unusually fine and large example of *Alaus oculatus*, and placed as such among my seasonal captures; but on placing it in my cabinet I observed so marked and manifest a difference between it and the other specimens, that I thought it might be a distinct species. Finding from Crotch's List that there were only three species known, and possessing examples of two of them, I obtained a specimen of *A. gorgops* from Mr. E. P. Austin, of Boston, for the sake of comparison, which came to hand ticketed "Dallas, Texas." On placing this side by side with mine, I was unable to distinguish the slightest shade of difference except that mine is rather the larger and fresher specimen. In order to show the identity of these two examples, and their common difference from *A. oculatus*, I append their respective measurements as taken at the time, and carefully repeated and verified, as also the dimensions of my largest specimen of *A. oculatus*:

	Mr. Austin's sp'n.	My own.	<i>A. oculatus</i> .
Total length,	41 mm. (about $1\frac{2}{3}$ in.)	42 mm.	$42\frac{1}{2}$ mm.
Length of thorax,	12 mm. (sharp.)	12 mm. (full.)	$12\frac{1}{2}$ "
Breadth of thorax,	$11\frac{1}{2}$ mm.	12 mm.	11 "
Breadth of elytra,	$11\frac{1}{2}$ mm. (full.)	$12\frac{1}{2}$ "	$11\frac{1}{2}$ "

The ocular spots on the thorax are much larger and more circular in shape than those of *A. oculatus*, and the white marginal lines are much broader and more distinctly marked, in all which characters Mr. Austin's specimen and mine thoroughly agree. I am thus led to the conclusion that either my specimen is *Alaus gorgops*, or that Mr. Austin's is *not*.

I have in my collection examples of *A. oculatus* varying in length from  $42\frac{1}{2}$  mm. to 25 mm.

JAMES T. BELL.

Belleville, April 29th, 1881.