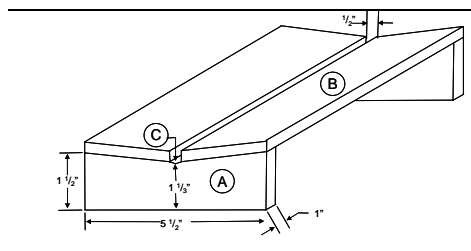


The Spreading Board

All butterflies and moths and some other insects are mounted with their wings spread. A spreading board should be used and is an important piece of equipment for the insect collector. Eventually, the collector may prefer different-sized spreading boards to accommodate both large and small insects, but one board is sufficient for the beginner. Adjustable spreading boards are available from entomological supply houses. Wooden spreading boards made at home.

Materials

- A. Two end blocks, $5\frac{1}{2} \times 1\frac{1}{2} \times 1$ inch³. One side of the end pieces should be cut to form a “V” with the center measurement approximately $1\frac{1}{3}$ inch high. An alternative is to plane the top pieces (B) to $\frac{3}{8}$ inch thick on the insides. This method is shown in 4-H 764.
- B. Two soft wood top pieces, $16 \times 2\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{2}$ inch³
- C. One flat strip of corrugated box paper, fiber or cork, $14 \times 1 \times \frac{1}{2}$ inch³



Construction

1. Place the corrugated paper (C) on top of the end blocks (A) in the center of the ‘V’.
2. Set pieces (B) on top of pieces (A) and (C).
3. Nail the two top pieces (B) to the end blocks leaving approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ inch in the center. The strip beneath the top pieces will cover the opening and provide soft material into which insect pins are inserted.

The top pieces are sloped to permit insect wings to dry in a slightly elevated position which allows for sagging that may occur after the specimen is removed from the board. Spreading boards with level top pieces are acceptable, but insects must remain upon such boards longer for complete drying.

A less expensive spreading board is made from Styrofoam. The dense blue insulation Styrofoam used in house construction works best. A groove to accommodate the body of the insect is carved into a single block of this material or pieces of Styrofoam are glued together to make a board similar in size and shape to the wooden one previously described.

Reference: 4-H 764, “How to Study, Collect, Preserve, and Identify Insects”, page 15.

