



Utah Bug Club



Phyciodes pulchella camillus
(field crescent)

Family: Nymphalidae

Discussion: The field crescent has two broods in the lower canyons of the Wasatch Front and up to three broods in the valley floor where it flies in alfalfa fields or wet meadows in association with its larval hostplant *Aster ascendens* (pacific aster). It also grows where the butterfly flies in the mountains in association with riparian canyons. Its leaves are larger and more succulent when growing in moister habitats; making them ideal for lab rearing.

Suitable Lab Host: Many species of the genus *Aster* serve as suitable lab host. It is recommended to use the native host-- *Aster ascendens* (pacific aster).

Effective strategy to obtain immatures: Obtain ova from live female(s).

Method of oviposition: Place live female(s) in portable cage – see Figure 1. Expose cage to filtered sunlight for a few hours a day and look for egg masses. Like many species within the family of Nymphalidae, females are sometimes not ready to oviposit immediately after capture. Keep females fed regularly and in the dark to rest when not seeking ova.

Method of rearing: Use the open terrarium method. Place first instar larvae on large, succulent leaves that are on plant in bottled water. Larvae are gregarious and will feed together until older. Expose larvae to 24 hours of light at all instars. This will encourage them to avoid any hibernation and continue feeding through to pupa; and then adult.
Caution: Females oviposit in masse and larval consumption will grow exponentially as they get older. Plan on obtaining lab hostplant in growing quantity if you plan to raise a larger number of larvae.

Method of overwintering: Half-way grown larvae hibernate. Diapause can be avoided in the lab by exposing larvae to 24 hours of artificial light.



Figure 1: Females setup in portable cage with cuttings of healthy *Aster ascendens*.



Figure 2: *Phyciodes pulchella* female



Figure 3: *Phyciodes pulchella camillus* adult series. Both rows consist of males on the left; females on the right; dorsal above; ventral below.