

# British Arachnological Society

NEWSLETTER NO 2

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## SPIDER RECORDING SCHEME

It is almost a year since the Spider Recording Scheme (SRS) was launched, and today there are 77 recorders on our register. New members since the list was printed in the first newsletter are:

Mr M B Davidson "Averans", Whiteford, Pitcaple, Inverurie, Aberdeenshire AB5 9EB  
Mrs D M Evans Bwthyn-y-Mor, Wern-y-Wylan, Llanddona, Anglesey, Gwynedd LL58 8TR  
Mr J Hooper Deal Chambers, 22 East Parade, Leeds LS1 5BZ  
Dr R G Loxton Department of Pure and Applied Biology, Baines Wing, University of Leeds, Leeds LS2 9JT  
Mr S J Moore 36 Chelwood Gardens, Kew, Richmond TW9 4RJ  
Dr C Topping Department of Agricultural and Environmental Science, The University, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 7RU  
Dr M B Usher Department of Biology, The University of York, Heslington, York YO1 5DD

The following recorders have new addresses:

Mr D Beaumont Flat 8, 9 Lorraine Road, Dowanhill, Glasgow G12 9NZ  
Dr S P Rushton Department of Agricultural and Environmental Science, The University, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 7RU

### COMPLETED SPIDER RECORD CARDS

On 15 March 1988 the total number of cards received by the national organizer was 1347, including over 200 from each of 4 vice-counties. However, most Area Organizers will be handing in cards that have been sent to them, either in person at the Annual General Meeting of the British Arachnological Society on 23 April, or by post to the national organizer about that time. A large increase in the number of completed cards can thus be expected in the near future.

Recorders are therefore asked to send in completed cards to their Area Organizers some time before 23 April if possible, so that there is time to check their content. In a similar way, it would be helpful if Area Organizers could hand in checked cards on 23 April or very soon afterwards.

Cards relating to vice-counties outside the area in which a recorder lives can be handed in to their local Area Organizers for sending to the national organizer who will check the contents. Such cards will be sent to Area Organizers on request, so that he/she can keep full records of data relating to his/her area. Cards relating to 42 vice-counties in England and Wales (out of a possible maximum of 72) have already been received by the national organizer.

As was mentioned in the Introduction to the scheme, records made in the past are important, too. They provide a context for modern recording, and allow an assessment of changes in the status of species. Recordors are therefore encouraged to submit their own earlier records, and to consider abstracting the data from museum collections or literature to which they may have access. It would be helpful if they could let the national organizer know of any plans for the latter, to avoid possible duplication of effort.

## THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE BRITISH ARACHNOLOGICAL SOCIETY

This will be held at 1.30 pm on Saturday 23 April 1988 in the Senior Common Room of Birkbeck College, The University of London, Malet Street, London WC1E 7HX. It will be followed by a *Conversazione*. All recorders of the SRS are most welcome to attend the latter, but it is hoped that if they are not already members of the BAS they will consider joining.

## THE SRS WEEKEND AT MONKS WOOD 20-22 MAY 1988

Most of the planned events of the weekend are scheduled for Saturday, and recorders who are able to attend for just the one day are very welcome. However, it is hoped that many will be staying on Friday and Saturday evenings, too; the informal, social side of such meetings is usually among the most enjoyable and productive parts.

Friday 20 May After dinner at 6.00 pm the evening will be largely unplanned. We hope to show a video of a TV programme shown on 'Calendar' (Yorkshire ITV) in autumn 1987, dealing with spider collecting techniques; this will be followed by informal discussion.

Saturday 21 May Breakfast for those spending the night at Monks Wood will be followed by coffee at 10.30 am. The first session will extend from 11.00 until 12.45. Lunch at 1.00, followed by an opportunity for field work in Monks Wood itself before tea at 4.00. There will be 2 further sessions; one between 4.30 and 6.00, and the other after dinner, and ending around 9.00. Dinner will be at 7.00.

Sunday 22 May After breakfast there will be field trips to Castor Hanglands and Woodwalton Fen. A packed lunch will be available if it is ordered in advance.

Friday and Sunday are optional, but it is hoped that all who come will try to attend all of the Saturday programme. The subjects for the 3 sessions are still to be finalized, but if you wish to have fuller details, please write to Clifford J Smith, 7 Malton Way, Clifton, York YO3 6SG, enclosing a stamped and addressed envelope after 25 April.

During the weekend, expert help with identification will be available, so if you have any 'problem' specimens, please bring them along.

We do not necessarily intend to hold a weekend meeting of this nature each year. This inaugural one will provide the opportunity to get to know others who are involved in the SRS, and to iron out any problems that may be experienced. Please fill in the enclosed green booking form, if you intend to come, and send to Brian Eversham as soon as possible. A copy of the form appears on the reverse of the yellow information sheet: please complete this and keep it as a record of your booking. No deposit is required, and payment will be made during the actual weekend. The closing date for bookings is 28 April 1988.

## PUBLICITY FOR THE SRS

Due to the initiative of one of our recorders, Mr James Wright, the SRS was mentioned on Radio 4's natural history programme in December, resulting in a number of enquiries reaching Monks Wood. Unfortunately, most of those who wrote to us were unable to identify most spiders and so did not follow up the matter, but at least one new recorder has been registered with the Scheme.

Welcome though publicity for the scheme and the Biological Records Centre is, it would be helpful if those involved could emphasize the fact that it is necessary to have some competence in identification before a person can usefully contribute to the SRS and to most other schemes.