

British Arachnological Society

NEWSLETTER NO 3



DECEMBER 1988

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SPIDER RECORDING SCHEME

Since you received newsletter no 2 in March, many of us met at the SRS weekend meeting at Monks Wood in May. This occasion was such a success that we hope to arrange another meeting on similar lines during May or June 1989. Steve Rushton has already started to investigate the possibility of booking suitable accommodation in Northumberland, and there is no reason why we should not arrange something similar in the south of England if someone were to come forward to organize it. Full details will appear in the March 1989 newsletter. I look forward to the possibility of hearing from anyone who is prepared to organize a 'southern' meeting.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE SCHEME

We are sad to report the sudden death of Dr Doug Cowden in October. He was the energetic Area Organizer for Hereford, Worcester and Gloucester where he had initiated meetings of local SRS members, and he had sent in over 100 completed record cards for the area. We will miss his enthusiasm and active participation in the Scheme, and we must now look for a successor to take over as Area Organizer.

New members since newsletter no 2 are:

- 82 Dr R G Loxton, Department of Pure and Applied Biology, Baines Wing, University of Leeds, Leeds LS2 9JT
- 83 Mr S J Moore, 36 Chelwood Gardens, Kew, Richmond, Surrey TW9 4RJ
- 84 Mr M B Davidson, 'Averans', Whiteford, Pitcaple, Inverurie, Aberdeenshire AB5 9EB
- 85 Mrs D M Evans, Bwthyn-y-Mor, Wern-y-Wylan, Llanddona, Anglesey, Gwynedd LL58 8TR
- 86 Mr D T Richardson, 5 Calton Terrace, Skipton, North Yorkshire BD23 2AY
- 87 Mr D Cuthbertson, 50 Balsdean Road, Brighton, Sussex BN2 6PE
- 88 Mr G C Slawson, 20 Queens Road, Hartshill, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 7LT
- 89 Mr D Powell, (MAFF), ADAS Harpenden Laboratories, Hatching Green, Harpenden, Herts AL5 2BD
- 90 Mr D Carr, 40 The Marples, Harlow, Essex CM19 4QZ
- 91 Mrs S Copper, 60 Addison Street, Nottingham NG1 4HA
- 92 Mr P McCormick, 253 Denman Street Central, Radford, Notts
- 93 Mr E G Philp, Maidstone Museum and Art Gallery, St Faith's Street, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1LH
- 94 Miss S I Baldwin, 2 Howdenhall Park, Edinburgh EH16 6UU
- 95 Ms H Corrigan, Biology Department, Paisley College, High Street, Paisley PA1 2BE

Change of address since newsletter no 2:

Mr E E Emmett, Alasdair, Farnham Lane, Haslemere, Surrey GU27 1HD

Changes and additions to the list of Area Organizers since newsletter no 1 are:

Staffordshire: G Craig Slawson (address as above)

Lincolnshire: Mr Roy Kent, 'Stonehaven', Station Road, Sturton, Brigg, South
Humberside

South-west Scotland: Mr D Beaumont, Flat 8, 9 Lorraine Road, Dowanhill,
Glasgow G12 9NZ

South-east Scotland: Mr C Topping, Department of Agricultural Biology, The
University, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 7RU

COMPLETED SPIDER RECORD CARDS

The number of completed SRS cards that have been returned to me has doubled during the past 7 months, and I am most grateful to all the recorders and Area Organizers who have been so active. In particular I would like to thank Peter Harvey (Essex), Chris Felton (Cheshire and North Wales), Stan Dobson (Derby), Steve Rushton (Durham and Northumberland), John Parker (Cumbria, etc) and Jim Stewart (Central Scotland) for the hard work they are putting in to the areas they are responsible for.

It is noticeable that the number of completed cards from the southern half of England is comparatively small, and I like to think that the winter weather in that part of Britain is so good that fieldwork is equally attractive throughout the year, and there is correspondingly less time for completing cards during the cold, dark winter evenings! At present, most of the completed cards from southern England have been produced by recorders holidaying there, and they have sent the cards directly to me.

However, I hope that before long I will be receiving a steady stream of completed cards from all those areas that are under-represented at the present time. I hope too that recorders will deluge their Area Organizers with completed cards. I will be making a report on the progress of the Scheme at the next BAS Annual General Meeting, and it will be most encouraging to mention that the Scheme is being enthusiastically supported throughout Great Britain.

THE USE OF SINGLE-SPECIES CARDS

Single-species cards are obtainable from Brian Eversham at Monks Wood, but recorders should be clear as to the correct occasions on which to use this type of recording in preference to the site recording cards (RA65). As the name implies, each card deals with a single species from a variety of sites and times and is of particular use when dealing with a collection of specimens (museum or personal), or a set of records from many sites in an area such as a county or vice-county.

Two rather similar single-species cards are available. GEN7 has spaces for source (collection/literature reference), grid reference, vice-county, collector/recorder, determiner, locality and date; GEN13 deals with all the items on GEN7, but also includes a space for notes (habitat, etc).

To increase the reliability and usefulness of this method of record, please note the following points:

- a. include as much information as you have time for
- b. give full details of collectors/recorders if these are available
- c. indicate separate records from different sources clearly
- d. give full details of literature references and collection sources.

Before embarking on the abstraction of records of this kind, it is wise to check that this work has not already been undertaken by someone else. This is best done by writing to me. I will try to keep a record of all literature abstracting and work on museum collections being undertaken. I myself am abstracting species records from the Yorkshire Naturalists' Union spider records; in the first instance, I am limiting myself to those species that are rare (omitted from RA65), and uncommon (marked with an * on RA65). It is doubtful if I will ever get round to recording the common species in this way because some species such as Lepthyphantes tenuis have literally hundreds of site records in the county.

If you would like to have further clarification on any of these points, please write to me.

ORDER		GENUS & SPECIES				SUB-SPECIES		
ARANEAE		DICTYNA LATENS (Fabr.)				-		
0	7	0	8	0	0	4	0	2
COMPILER		SOURCE (Collection/Reference)						
C. Smith		Yorkshire Naturalists' Union Spider Records						
-	-	-	-	1	Fid	Mus	UK	
Grid Reference	V-C	Collector/Recorder	Determiner	Locality	Date			
SE 6.3	b1	W. Falmer		Skipwith Common	}	between 1890 and 1920		
NZ 7.1	b2			Staithe (Foot Row Beck)				
NZ 8.1	b2			Rumwick Bay				
SE 8.8	b2			Thornthorpe Dale				
"	b2			Levisham				
NZ 7.1	b2			Kitton Woods				
CD 9.6	b4			Linton Common		1993		
SK 5.8	b3	W.A. Ely	C. Smith	Lindrick Common		July 1981		
TA 1.7	b1	A. Ezard	"	Filey		May 1981		
SK 5.8	b3	W.A. Ely	"	Lindrick Quarry		June 1985		
"	b3	"	"	Ampton Stone Wood		May 1982		

P.T.O.

COMPUTER RECORDS

A small number of individual recorders are developing their own systems for home computer recording, and as time goes by more and more are likely to adopt this method of recording. At the moment, neither I nor the staff at Monks Wood are readily able to receive records in this form; but it is likely that something will be developed in the not-so-distant future. Computer buffs may like to be thinking through the problems, particularly relating to the vetting of records, and to the ease of interchange between recorders. Transfer to a central computer at Monks Wood will be tackled when the SRS data as a whole are about to be processed.

