

British Arachnological Society

NEWSLETTER NO.4

APRIL 1989



CLIFFORD J. SMITH
7, MALTON WAY
CLIFTON
YORK YO3 6SG
Tel: YORK (0904)25928

SPIDER RECORDING SCHEME

S.R.S. meeting : July 28 - 30th 1989

Steve Rushton has energetically organized this year's S.R.S. meeting. It is hoped that area organizers and recorders participating in the scheme will be able to attend. The annual meeting will be held at the Bank House Field Centre at Haydon Bridge in Northumberland over the week-end of 28th to 30th July 1989.

Bank House is a local education authority owned field centre in the South Tyne valley some 27 miles west of Newcastle upon Tyne. Full board with packed lunch will be provided; the cost of the week-end will be £27.00

The programme will be flexible, providing time for discussion of topics that recorders might like to raise, and there will be recording trips in south Northumberland. A special session will be concerned with the use of computers in spider recording. The field centre is right in the middle of some of the best scenery in the county, and offers several exciting arachnological sites within easy travelling distance. Space for this week-end is limited....so early booking is essential. Haydon Bridge is on the Newcastle to Carlisle railway line, for those who do not have their own cars: transport to the Centre from the station will be provided if required.

Please contact Steve Rushton, Dept of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, University of Newcastle, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 7RU, or telephone 091 2659744 (after 6 p.m.) for further details of the programme and to book.

Membership matters

Mrs Frances Murphy has resigned as **Area Organizer for Surrey**, and Mr Martin Askins has kindly agreed to take over. His address is : 47D Upper Court Road, EPSOM, Surrey KT19 8RE.

The following new recorders have been registered since Newsletter No 3:

- 96 Dr S P Hopkin, Dept of Animal & Microbial Sciences, AMS Building, University of Reading, Whiteknights, P O Box 228, READING RG6 2AJ.
- 97 Mr N Blackwell, 151 Wellington Road, Bilston, West Midlands WV14 6RN.
- 98 Mr G W Danahar, 37 Houndsden Road, Winchmore Hill, LONDON N21 1LU.
- 99 Mr W G Rixom, 44 Edward Avenue, Aldridge, Walsall, West Midlands WS9 8AX.
- 100 Mr J N Bates, 7 Trubshawe Street, Longport, Burslem, STOKE-ON-TRENT, Staffs.
- 101 Mr D McFerran, Dept of Zoology, Queens University, David Keir Building, Malone Road, BELFAST BT7 1NN Northern Ireland.
- 102 Mr A J White, 25 Shelsley Drive, Parklands, NORTHAMPTON NN3 1ET.

Completed S.R.S. cards

The number of completed RA65 cards continues to rise steadily. The total mentioned in the last newsletter (December 1988) was 2541. Three months later this has risen to 3657. There is now only one vice-county in England without a record card (Berkshire), and only six in Scotland... every Welsh vice-county has been covered! A few cards have been received from Northern Ireland and also from Eire; these records will not be wasted, but we will need the help of BRC to expand coverage in these areas.

It has been particularly pleasing to receive large numbers of completed cards from Peter Harvey, who continues his energetic coverage of Essex, from Edward Milner, who has begun recording the London area, from David Horsfield who has done so much in Scotland and Northampton, from Craig Slawson who has started working the Staffordshire area so vigorously, from Jim Stewart for his comprehensive Scottish coverage, and from many others.

The number of GEN14 (rarity) cards received is now well over 100. Please remember that these cards should be used for records of nationally or locally rare species, and may be used for any other records which you consider to be particularly notable. Following the note in Newsletter No 3, the first few GEN13 single-species cards have already been sent in; and I understand that more than one Area Organizer is using these cards to process existing county records.

Other news

David Beaumont is planning a course of spider recording on the island of Islay in September or October. Accommodation will be at a local field centre on the island. Anyone who is interested to join in should get in touch with David (Biology Dept., Paisley Technical College, High Street, PAISLEY PA1 2EB).

Isobel Baldwin has organized a field course in Galloway during August, but she has been so successful in advertising it that the course is fully booked up! So now we can look forward to comprehensive coverage in an area that has far too few records at present.

Sorry we have not been able to arrange a S.R.S. gathering in the south of England this year, but we'll try again next year. Meanwhile, there are BAS courses at field centres that may attract you.

Congratulations to Peter Harvey on the production of Provisional Maps for the Spiders of Essex, based on computer-generated maps with 10km grid... a major work that will stimulate other Area Organizers to produce something similar. I would be glad to hear of anything that is being attempted elsewhere.

Have you thought of checking which parts of your area are inadequately covered? It is a good plan to discover the diversity of habitat in your area, and also plan visits at different times of year. How about pitfall trapping? A 10km square in East Yorkshire that had no spider records up to 1987 was visited a number of times during 1988 and now has over 100 species on record - quite a good number considering that the area is intensively cultivated.

An annual report on the work of the Spider Recording Scheme will be presented to the AGM of the British Arachnological Society in Oxford on April 22nd. The BAS is also in the process of producing a Handbook, covering all aspects of arachnology in Britain; it will include a section on the recording scheme.

Members of the SRS who are not yet in the BAS might like to enquire about our parent society by writing to Dr M J Roberts, 200 Abbey Lane, SHEFFIELD S8 0BU.