

# British Arachnological Society



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## **SPIDER RECORDING SCHEME**

### NEWSLETTER NUMBER 36 March 2000

This is quite a bumper issue for the Spider Recording Scheme newsletter. Many thanks to those who have contributed articles, notes and information for this issue. Newsletter No. 37 will be published in July 2000. Please send contributions as soon as possible to Peter Harvey, SRS National Organiser, 32 Lodge Lane, Grays, Essex, RM16 2YP email: [grays@peterharvey.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:grays@peterharvey.freeserve.co.uk)

### **The provisional atlas, GEN14 (rare species) cards, and draft species accounts**

The December 31<sup>st</sup> deadline for the inclusion of records into the provisional atlas saw an enormous number of cards being sent in before the end of the year. Thank you very much to all the recorders and Area Organisers who has co-operated to enable this to happen - I realise the enormous amount of effort which goes into completing cards and making sure that all the available data has been sent in to national schemes like ours.

Data entry of spider cards at BRC will take longer than originally anticipated but progress is still on line for the publication of the provisional atlas in 2001. An essential part of this process will be the 'punching checking' of data entered at BRC and then validation of the data-set to weed out unreliable records and records in the wrong place, etc. Thank you to the members of the SRS Sub-Committee who have already been participating in this process, and thank you to all those Area Organisers who have volunteered to help. If anyone else can add their name to the list of volunteers we will all have a less burdensome job ahead! Please let me know.

There is very evidently a shortfall of Rare Species GEN14 cards which have been submitted to the scheme. These will be the last records to be computerised at BRC, so there is still time to submit them for inclusion in the atlas. Without a GEN14 card, unless recorders have written in these species on RA65 cards they cannot be mapped. Please, please complete GEN14 cards if you have not already done so. There are even important records of rare species which have published in the BAS Newsletter or Bulletin which have not been submitted to the scheme. If the literature provides adequate details then it *may be* possible for someone with the time to spare to get the data into the maps. Otherwise these important records will be missing, detracting from the value of the atlas.

### **Remember that if data has not been submitted then it cannot be mapped!!!**

Species accounts which need to be completed for the provisional atlas are a major task. A lot of progress has been made, for which I am very grateful to the remarkable number of arachnologists who have each taken on a set of species. There are now **over 100 draft accounts completed**, and it is important we get as much feedback on these as possible. Unfortunately limitations of space mean that I have only been able to include draft accounts for a few species in this newsletter. I hope to remedy this later in the year. There will be important observations which should be taken into consideration before the final drafts are submitted for the provisional atlas. There has already been some extremely valuable feedback on accounts included in previous newsletters.

**Feedback from recorders on the ecology, distribution and frequency of these species in different parts of Britain is requested.**

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## **FIELD MEETING TO HATFIELD MOORS ORGANISED FOR SATURDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> JULY 2000**

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Famed for red data invertebrates, notably *Bembidion humerale* & *Curimopsis nigrita*, as well as its nationally important population of breeding nightjars Lindholme lies roughly in the centre of Hatfield Moors, SSSI. It is privately owned and to their credit the family have kept the area of lowland raised mire, acid & calcareous grassland, and ancient oak woodland free from the ravages of peat extraction.

The fauna & flora of the Humberhead Peatlands, especially neighbouring Thorne Moors SSSI, has been extensively documented by Skidmore et al. Hatfield Moors however, because of limited access has not received as much attention by naturalists. Commercial peat exploitation continues on vast tracts that surround the refugia at Lindholme, which heightens the urgency to gather data. The arachnofauna especially has been sadly neglected which is why after the discovery of *Evarcha arcuata* last summer, a species new to Yorkshire, a determined effort is being made to produce a definitive list for Hatfield Moors.

The meeting organised for **Saturday 1st July 2000** is being hosted by the Doncaster Naturalists' Society. It is also being attended by members of the Yorkshire Naturalists' Union. After a day in the field members and visitors are invited to a buffet tea to be taken at the Robin Hood & Little John Public House in the nearby village of Hatfield Woodhouse at 4.30pm. BAS/SRS recorders will be meeting 10.30am at the Green Tree Public House SE683097.

Anyone requiring further information/directions is advised to contact Helen Kirk on 01724 712223 (evenings & weekends) or by e-mail: [kaptainkirk@talk21.com](mailto:kaptainkirk@talk21.com).

Helen will need to have a good idea of numbers for the buffet tea. If you intend to attend, please let her know in good time - Peter Harvey.

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## **The field meeting to Hatfield Moors Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> November**

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**Helen Kirk 01724 712223 (evenings & weekends) or e-mail: [kaptainkirk@talk21.com](mailto:kaptainkirk@talk21.com).**

In November 1999 members of the BAS visited Lindholme and despite the late date and cold weather the list for the day approached seventy species. Species of note included *Theridion simile*, *Cercidia prominens*, *Ceratinella scabrosa* and *Walckenaeria dyseroides*. Appreciation is extended to David Carr, Stan Dobson, Tom Faulds, Trevor Harris, Peter Harvey and Geoff Oxford who travelled considerable distances to join members of the DNS & the Thorne & Hatfield Conservation Forum in their quest for data. A full write up of the results of both meetings will be included in a later newsletter .

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## **The Recording Scheme Now**

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The recording scheme has not finished!!! All recording remains as important as ever and there is still much to do to improve coverage in many parts of the country. There is an on-going need to monitor changes in our spider fauna brought about by habitat loss, fragmentation to our countryside, climate change, etc. There are also certainly plenty of surprises, with a remarkable number of new species being discovered. Please keep on visiting places of interest and recording spiders!

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## **Problems with SPIREC.**

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**Stan Dobson, Moor Edge, Birch Vale, High Peak, Derbyshire SK22 1BX email: [stand@beeb.net](mailto:stand@beeb.net)**

Users of Spirec who change to a faster machine may find that it won't run and get error message 200. If they contact me I can send them a version that will run. I am grateful to Dr Alan Morton for supplying the means to overcome the problem, and to Francis Farr-Cox for suggesting that I contact Alan for help.

Please note my new e-mail address for sending material to me. The Museum address is still available.

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## Habitat preference and altitudinal distribution of *Lepthyphantes tenuis* and *L. zimmermanni* in North Wales

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Richard Gallon, 23A Roumania Crescent, Llandudno, North Wales LL30 1UP

I have recently purchased a distribution-mapping program, which has allowed me for the first time to plot all my spider records at tetrad level. The map produced for *Lepthyphantes tenuis* clearly indicated that I had not taken this common species in upland Snowdonia (Fig. 1); however, the map for *L. zimmermanni* showed that this species was recorded there (Fig. 2).

**Fig. 1: Distribution of *L. tenuis* in North Wales**

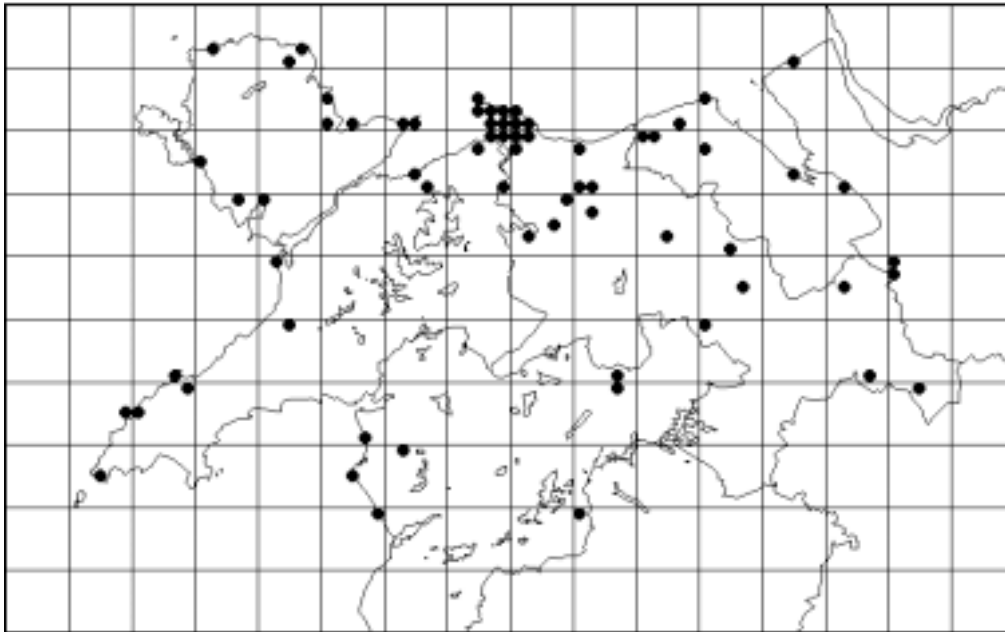


Figure 1: Map showing the tetrad distribution of *Lepthyphantes tenuis* in North Wales. Vice county boundaries, lakes and 600 m contours are also shown.

**Fig. 2: Distribution of *L. zimmermanni* in North Wales**

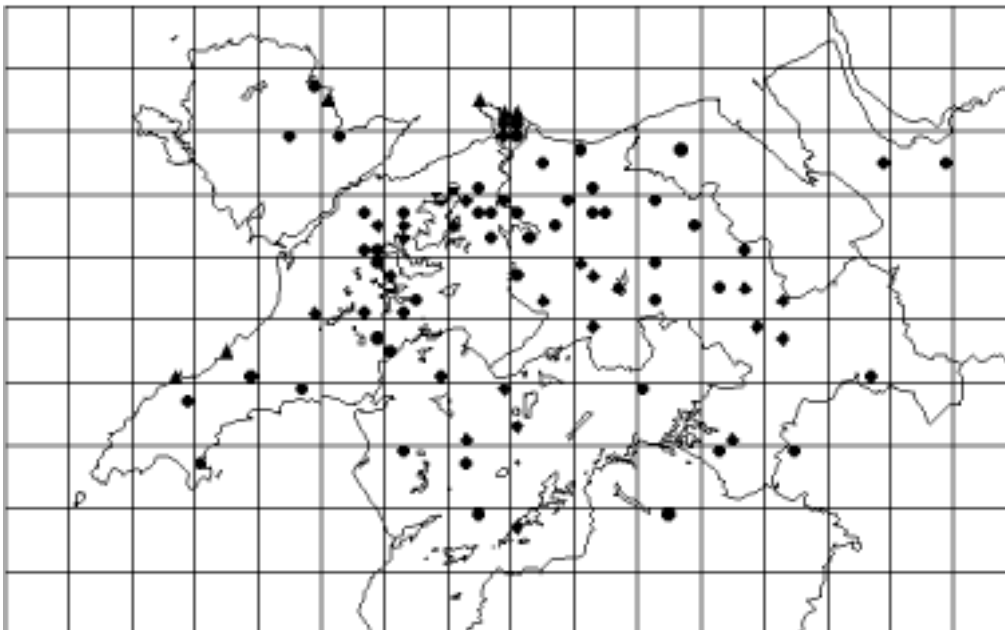
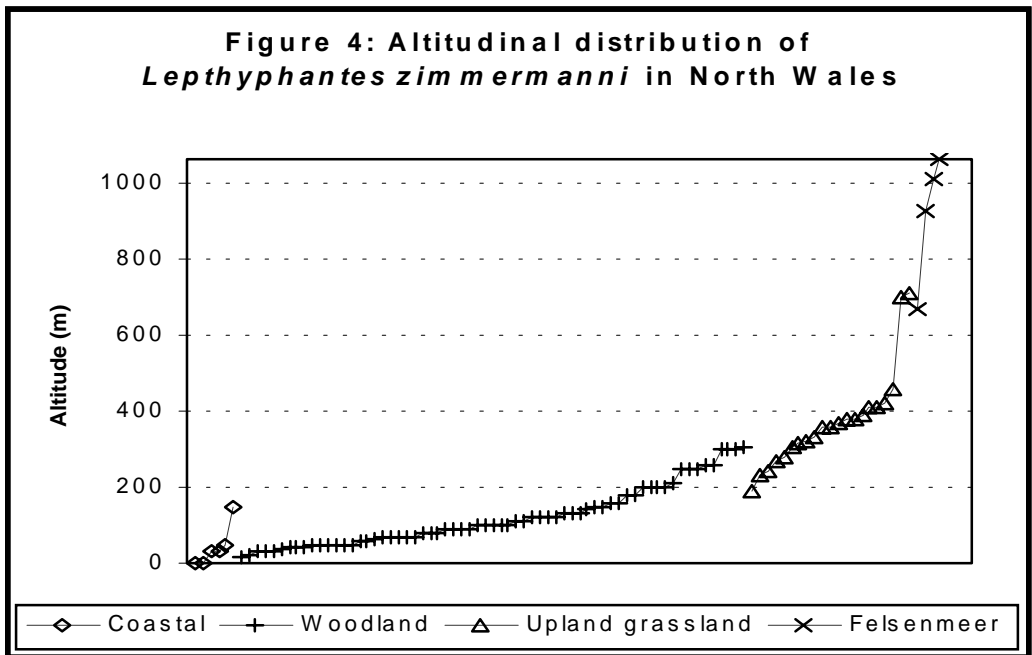
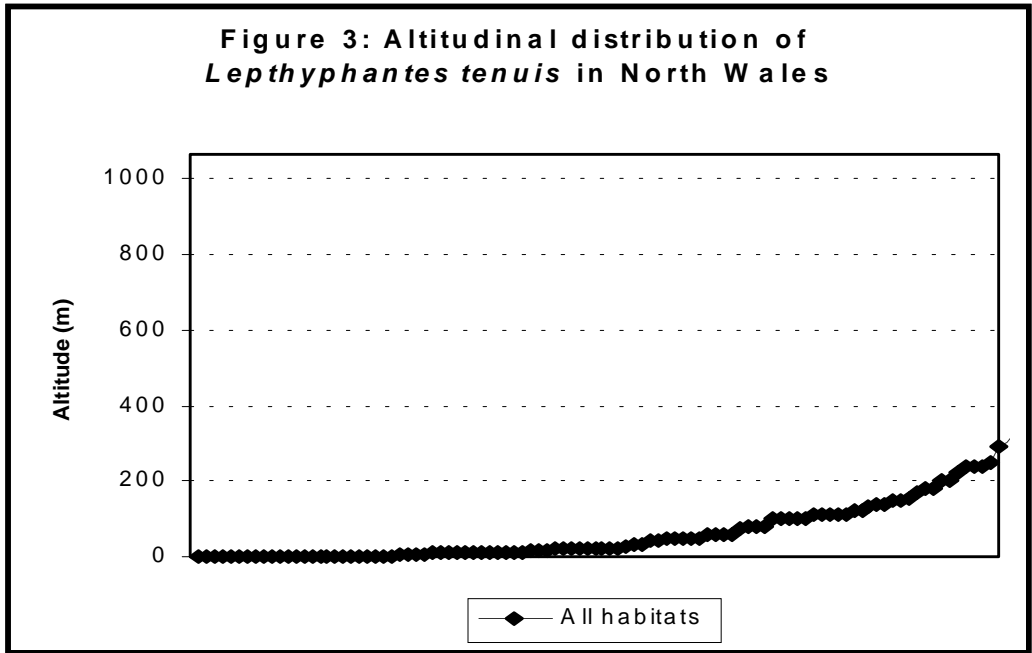


Figure 2: Map showing the tetrad distribution of *Lepthyphantes zimmermanni* in North Wales. = exposed coastal grassland; = woodland records; = upland grassland; semi-filled circles = felsenmeer.

In order to investigate this observation I decided to produce altitudinal distribution graphs for both species. For *L. tenuis* (102 records) I found that I had not collected any specimens above 330 m (Fig. 3); whilst *L. zimmermanni* (96 records) ranged from sea level to the summit of Snowdon (1065 m) (Fig. 4).



From habitat records it was clear that all *L. tenuis* specimens were from open, lowland grassland sites (including sand dunes). In contrast *L. zimmermanni* was found to inhabit several different habitats, namely exposed, coastal grassland with thick plant growth, woodland (coniferous & deciduous), upland grassland (moorland) and under felsenmeer rocks on mountaintops. From figure 4 it can be observed how these different habitats are utilised at different altitudes.

From these preliminary observations it appears that lowland grassland sites are exclusively inhabited by *L. tenuis*; only on exposed, coastal sites does *L. zimmermanni* inhabit lowland grassland. *Leptyphantès zimmermanni* inhabits woodland leaf-litter in the lowlands to the exclusion of *L. tenuis*. In upland grassland

and moorland *L. tenuis* gives way to *L. zimmermanni*. Exposed mountain summits are also utilised by *L. zimmermanni*, but here the species finds a niche beneath the broken rocks, which form the felsenmeer fields.

Supporting evidence for the above contentions is provided by Goodier's extensive mountain pitfall trapping carried out in the 60's and 70's. He did not take *L. tenuis* in his mountain traps, but he did record *L. zimmermanni* beneath summit rocks (Goodier 1967, 1970a, 1970b, 1970c).

It will be very interesting to see if such distributional observations are apparent for these two species in other parts of Northern Britain.

#### References

- Goodier, R. 1967. Welsh Mountain spiders. *Nature in Wales*, **10**:106-114.  
Goodier, R. 1970a. Notes on mountain spiders from Wales. 1: Spiders caught in pitfall traps on the Snowdon National Nature Reserve. *Bull. Brit. Arachnol. Soc.*, **1**: 85-87.  
Goodier, R. 1970b. Notes on mountain spiders from Wales. 2: Spiders caught in pitfall traps on the Cwm Idwal National Nature Reserve, Caernarvonshire. *Bull. Brit. Arachnol. Soc.*, **1**: 97-98.  
Goodier, R. 1970c. Notes on mountain spiders from Wales. 3: Spiders caught in pitfall traps on the Rhinog Mountains, Merionethshire. *Bull. Brit. Arachnol. Soc.*, **1**: 99-100.

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### ***Neon robustus* Lohmander, 1945 recorded for the first time in North Wales (Caernarvonshire, VC. 49)**

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**Richard Gallon, 23A Roumania Crescent, Llandudno, North Wales LL30 1UP**

On the 19<sup>th</sup> April 1999 my father and I paid a short visit to the Great Orme to observe a sea bird colony on the cliff faces near the old lighthouse (SH755843, 50 m).

The Great Orme, for those unfamiliar with it, is a large Carboniferous limestone headland near Llandudno renowned for its calcicole flora. Over the years the Great Orme has also produced a number of interesting spiders including *Atypus affinis*, *Episinus truncatus*, *Ballus chalybeius* and *Micrargus laudatus*.

Once we had descended down the steep slope to a secure vantage point, I embarked on a session of 'grubbing about' amongst the clumps of grass. This collecting technique did not yield anything of interest, so I turned my attention to a large scree composed of weathered limestone. Working through this habitat I turned up a couple of Salticidae which had concealed themselves within silk-cells beneath the rocks. A third specimen was also taken which was not in a silk-cell. The jizz of these specimens was to all intents and purposes that of *Euophrys frontalis*.

Later that day, beneath the microscope, I discovered that two of the jumping spiders (those within silk-cells) were immature, but the larger one was a mature female. I tentatively identified the specimen as *Neon reticulatus*, but at the time remember thinking that it was a particularly large example of the species. The specimen was then stored away.

With the publication of a paper (Snazell *et al.* 1999. *Bull. Brit. Arachnol. Soc.* **11**: 251-254) outlining the differences between *N. reticulatus* and *N. robustus*, I decided to take a second look at my oversized *N. reticulatus*. With a total length of 3.19 mm and a carapace length of 1.33 mm, my specimen was clearly *N. robustus*. To verify the identification I forwarded the spider to Peter Merrett who kindly confirmed that it was *N. robustus*.

It is interesting to note that my specimens were found in a NNW facing scree slope within a sheltered valley as compared with the typical southerly aspect mentioned in the paper by Snazell *et al.*

The Great Orme is only one of a series of structurally similar limestone outcrops in North Wales and therefore it is likely that this spider will turn up at these sites in the future.

**Ian Dawson, RSPB Library, The Lodge, Sandy, Beds SG19 2DL**  
[ian.dawson@rspb.org.uk](mailto:ian.dawson@rspb.org.uk) (work) [ian.dawson@lineone.net](mailto:ian.dawson@lineone.net) (home)

W S Bristowe visited the island of Ramsey off the Pembrokeshire coast from June 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> 1933, and recorded 53 species of spider there, including the RDB3 *Clubiona genevensis*, of which he found “four females in white cells attached to lower surface of stones” (*Proc. Zool. Soc. London* 1934: 1-9.). Ramsey is now an RSPB reserve, and as part of a sabbatical project to collect both new and known data on spiders on RSPB reserves, my partner Debra Clayton and I visited Ramsey exactly 66 years later, from June 2nd to 5th (1999), with the main aim of rediscovering *C. genevensis*, apparently unrecorded there since Bristowe’s visit.

Our visit was highly successful, for in addition to our rediscovery in one small area of the island of a healthy population of *C. genevensis* (27 females or cells with eggs), we also found single females of *Lathys stigmatisata* (RDB3) and *Aelurillus v-insignitus*\* (Nb), both new to Wales, and 1 male and 2 females of the Notable B *Micrargus laudatus*\*, this last in the same habitat as *C. genevensis*. To cap this the recent paper in the *Bulletin* on the discovery of *Neon robustus* in Britain sent me hurrying to look again at 2 female *Neon* taken from a pile of loose rocks at the southern end of the island, as at the time I thought they looked very big and rather dark. Sure enough they turned out to be *N. robustus* – a third new Welsh species from the island!

In spite of decidedly unsettled weather during our visit our final total of 65 species exceeded Bristowe's by 12, though our lists share only 31 species in common. Pitfall-trapping over the summer by Dick Loxton (who also recorded *L. stigmatisata*) has now added a further 38 species to the island list, bringing the total to a very respectable 125 species.

### **Bird protection and spiders**

We also carried out fieldwork on seven other RSPB reserves last summer in Dorset, Devon, Bedfordshire and Highland Region. The success of our fieldwork greatly exceeded our expectations, the highlight being 2 males of a small erigonine from the Insh Marshes in the Spey valley, new to Britain, either *Wabasso replicatus* (or, if the Old and New World forms are treated as the same species, *Wabasso quaestio* which has priority: Peter Merrett is currently researching this). It is hoped that females may be found next summer, and a full account of the discovery will appear in the *BAS Bulletin* in due course.

In addition to this and our Ramsey finds, we also discovered the RDB2 *Heliophanus auratus* and *Ero aphana*\* new to Arne, Dorset, the former the first record away from Essex; confirmed the continued presence of four RDB2 species at Abernethy: *Haplodrassus soerenseni*, *Clubiona subsultans*, *Diplocephalus torva* and *Pelecopsis elongata*; and found a total of 22 Nationally Notable species of spider, including *Araneus alsine*\* from Corrimony reserve, below Glen Affric (the second Scottish and most northerly site) and *Araniella displicata*\* from the RSPB HQ at Sandy, Beds, also a new northernmost record.

We have gathered all the spider records held by wardens for RSPB reserves, but with rather few exceptions these records are surprisingly meagre or for some reserves non-existent. We would therefore be delighted to receive any records of spiders from RSPB reserves to add to our database. The RSPB is keen to build up knowledge of the invertebrate fauna of its reserves and any request to reserve wardens to collect spiders is likely to be welcomed in return for a list of species found with notes on location, habitat, numbers etc. It is clear that bird reserves are often good for spiders too and there must be many more exciting spiders awaiting discovery on RSPB reserves.

I would like to thank Dr Peter Merrett for identifying *Wabasso* and also confirming *H. auratus*, *L. stigmatisata* and *N. robustus*, and David Nellist for much help and encouragement and confirming the identification of several of the extralimital records (asterisked above); also, all the wardens whose reserves we visited for their help.

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### ***Neon robustus* Lohmander yet again!!**

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**Doug Marriott, 19, Winton Drive, Croxley Gn. WD3 3RF.**

During the first Orfordness survey 18-19 June 1994 I turned over a large baulk of timber lying on the extensive shingle foreshore and collected 3 male *Neons*. One of these was damaged and discarded but the other two were subsequently identified as *Neon reticulatus*. The size of them and the configuration of the palps made me somewhat dubious at the time but as there were no other *Neon* species in Roberts that fitted I believed that they must be large examples of *Neon reticulatus*. However, the publication in the latest Bulletin of the outlines of *Neon robustus* by Rowley Snazell and others, made me dig them out and look at them again. On inspection they seemed to be exactly the same as the *N. robustus* drawings in the Bulletin. For confirmation they were sent to Peter Merrett who kindly confirmed that the Orfordness specimens were indeed *Neon robustus*. I believe other people on the first survey took what were identified as *Neon reticulatus* and on the second survey, which I could not attend, females were recorded. Perhaps these should be examined again in the light of this re-identification.

My sincere thanks to Peter Merrett for confirming the identifications so swiftly.

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### ***Meta bourneti* (Simon) in Hampshire**

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**Ken Halstead, Mistletoe Cottage, Masseys Lane, East Boldre, Brockenhurst, Hampshire SO42 7WE**

I have to report on the unfortunate circumstances concerning a thriving colony of the spider found in a hollow lime tree near Burley in the New Forest.

On 22nd February I was shown a specimen by the Head Keeper of the Forestry Commission who had been called in by the owners of the tree as it was considered to be in a dangerous condition and containing bats. He thought that it might be *Meta menardi* but my instant reaction was that it was larger than the normal size of that spider and darker in colour. It was over 16 mm. in length and lacked annulations on the legs (which gave an appearance of the darker colour). On checking the epigyne it was obviously *Meta bourneti*.

What the owners' thought were bats the Keeper discovered were four to five large egg sacs suspended on the inside walls of the tree. Also present were about 20 spiders. About a third of the bottom five feet of the trunk was rotten and had partly collapsed when the owner leant on it.

Although I visited with the Keeper within two days of this colony being brought to my attention, the tree had been cut down, leaving only the five foot high stump of the lime. We spent two hours examining the stump and the 12" thick sliced portions but could only find one live female and alas no egg sacs.

The owners were rather contrite when they realised what they had done and would have only pollarded the tree to about 12 feet and said they would have capped it etc, to keep the unique microclimate intact. The inside was very wet and the spiders obviously thrived in the completely dark interior. Whether any have survived by crawling to the large stable block approximately 15 feet away remains to be seen and I intend to return for further examination.

I would strongly recommend that any apparent *Meta menardi* which lacks annulations on the legs, has its epigyne examined. As far as I know this spider has not been recorded in Hampshire and there appear to be no more than seven previous records.

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### ***Steatoda grossa* (C. L. Koch)**

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**Ken Halstead, Mistletoe Cottage, Masseys Lane, East Boldre, Brockenhurst, Hampshire SO42 7WE**

On 26th February I was called to a house in Lymington regarding a spider found in a garage, which turned out to be a large female *Steatoda grossa*.

I had not seen this spider before and I would enquire as to how many reports there are of this species in the New Forest and in Hampshire.

While cleaning out one of my sheds on 29th February I found a large female *S. bipunctata* and was impressed by the comparison of the flat shape of this spider to the plumpness of *S. grossa*. What is interesting are the comparatively similar markings on the abdomens which are prominently triangular in *S. grossa*.

In America this spider is believed to predate on black widow spiders.

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### ***Dictyna* species**

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**Jennifer Newton, Holly House, 94 Main Street, Hornby, Lancaster LA2 8JY**

Having read in all the books that *Dictyna latens* is uncommon generally, and rare in the north, it was with some surprise that I found it at a number of sites in North Lancashire (VC60). I now have 6 sites for *D latens* (7 tetrads, 5 hectads) 6 sites for *D arundinacea* and only one site for *D uncinata*, definitely the rarest of the three.

*D latens* appears on various low shrubs, juniper, gorse, heather, as well as tall herbs such as thistle, knapweed, wild carrot, hogweed. At two sites it is very abundant, males and females hidden in the dead heads of many of the composites and umbellifers. It can be quite hard to extricate, and I don't think it would be readily swept out, though I did beat a subadult male out of gorse in January. The sites are varied, all little disturbed now although one is a former limestone quarry, one a colonised artificial mound, of bare substrate 15 years ago (the dug-out foundations for Heysham Power Station). Three are on limestone, three on neutral soils. Two of the sites are marshy, but two are fairly dry. Several are near the coast, but one is a few miles inland. The highest altitude is about 120m.

I have also found *D latens* at two sites on the Galloway coast, in similar rank vegetation, also in reasonable quantity. *D arundinacea* I have found only on lowland mosses and upland heather moor, in reasonable quantity, mostly on heather but occasionally on rushes (and a few times on gorse in Cumbria and Galloway). *D uncinata* is present in much smaller quantity on the same Heysham Power Station site as *D latens*, in similar rank vegetation. I was surprised to find *D uncinata* in considerable numbers at Newbourne Springs and Flatford Mill at the BAS AGM last year, so I don't think it can be that I am not looking for it in the right places here. What is very interesting is that the Essex, Leicestershire, Wiltshire and even Yorkshire atlases all show *D uncinata* and *arundinacea* to be common and widespread with *D latens* rare. Is *D latens* a north-western species? Has anyone else experience of it?

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### **DRAFT SPECIES ACCOUNTS**

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It has been very difficult to choose which draft accounts to include in this issue of the newsletter - there is so much choice! However there are still 85 species without any author and many RDB and Notable species accounts which may need updating. I am still looking for volunteers.

With Jennifer Newton's article on her experiences of *Dictyna* species in N. Lancashire, I have decided to include the draft accounts for *Dictyna arundinacea*, *D. latens* and *D. uncinata* which I had already written, very much from my own experience of the species in Essex. I hope this will stimulate some feedback on what the situation is in different parts of Britain.

I have included John Partridge's draft for *Araneus quadratus* because it would be interesting to get some feedback on the suggestion in Crocker & Daws (1996) that the spider is either under-recorded or declining. Certainly in Essex, although widespread, the species is local rather than common.

Richard Gallon's observations and his article on *Lepthyphantes tenuis* and *L. zimmermanni* in North Wales have also prompted me to include Richard's draft for *L. zimmermanni* and an updated account for *L. tenuis*.



***Dictyna arundinacea* (Linnaeus, 1758)**

**Distribution**

The spider is widespread throughout northern Europe (Roberts 1995). It is widely distributed in Britain.

**Status**

A common species in many parts of Britain but Bristowe (1958) states it has seldom been found in Wales.

**Habitat and Ecology**

On low, especially dry or dead vegetation (Jones 1983). This is a common species found in rough grassland or herbage growing at the edges of fields, hedges and woodland rides where it spins its web in the tops of plants which supply a rigidity and suitable structural spaces. The old heads of various umbellifers, thistles and plants like *Hypericum* are favoured situations. On heathland the spider is very common on heather.

Adult late Spring to mid summer. In June the male seems to stay for a month or more in the female's web where they both live in a rough chamber with several openings (Bristowe 1958).

**Author of profile** P.R. Harvey

***Dictyna latens* (Fabricius, 1775)**

**Distribution**

The spider is widespread in Europe but rare or absent in the north (Roberts 1995). It is widely distributed in England but with rather few records in Wales and Scotland.

**Status**

Uncommon, rare in the north.

**Habitat and Ecology**

The spider occurs in heathland, rough grassland, old sand and gravel pits and well established unmanaged ruderal vegetation. It is especially frequent on heather, gorse and other scrub in heathy places.

Adult in summer, maturing a little later than *D. arundinacea* and *D. uncinata*.

**Author of profile** P.R. Harvey

***Dictyna uncinata* Thorell, 1856**

**Distribution**

Widespread throughout Europe (Roberts 1995). The spider is widely distributed in England but with rather few records in Wales and Scotland.

**Status**

A common species but apparently rare in the north.

**Habitat and Ecology**

A species that seems to be found higher in the vegetation than *D. arundinacea* where it makes its mesh web across the surface of the leaves of bushes and trees. It is commonly found in scrub, hedgerows and woodland where the spider can be beaten off bushes and the foliage of trees along the sides of rides and the edge of clearings. It has been found in gardens and has occasionally been noted on prostrate rockery plants spun up in the dead flower heads of the previous year (Crocker & Daws 1996).

Adult late Spring to mid summer, females sometimes persisting into the autumn.

**Author of profile** P.R. Harvey

***Araneus quadratus* Clerck 1757**

**Distribution**

The spider is widespread throughout northern Europe (Roberts 1995). It is widespread throughout Britain with records from most counties.

**Status**

Common, although Crocker (1996) suggests that it may be declining. This may be due to loss of suitable habitat.

### **Habitat**

The spider is found on vegetation which has sufficient height and strength to support the large orb web, such as undisturbed grassland, heather and gorse. There may be a preference for damper situations. The web is usually found stretched across the gap between plants, with a large tent-like retreat at one side, where the spider can be found if not in the centre of the web. This spider holds the British weight record, and is very variable in coloration. Adult females can be found in summer and autumn, adult males in summer.

**Author of profile.** W. J. Partridge using information from Bristowe (1958), Crocker & Daws (1996), Jones (1983), Locket & Millidge (1951) and Roberts (1985 & 1995).

### ***Lepthyphantes tenuis* (Blackwall, 1852)**

#### **Distribution**

The spider is widespread throughout northern Europe (Roberts 1995). It is widespread across Britain.

#### **Status**

Common and can be regarded as one of most ubiquitous spiders in many parts of Britain, remaining widespread in the north of Scotland.

#### **Habitat and Ecology**

The species is a frequent aeronaut which can be found in many different situations. It is regularly recorded indoors and in lowland England habitats include ruderal vegetation, gardens, grassland, arable fields, wetland, heathland and woodland, but is perhaps especially associated with grasslands. R. Gallon notes the species has a particular fondness for living in rabbit scrapes in the short turf of limestone grassland. In many of these situations it can be considered a 'pioneer' species which will quickly colonise new habitats and takes advantage of disturbed ground. In open lowland grassland *L. tenuis* is found to the exclusion of *L. zimmermanni* but in upland exposed grassland *L. zimmermanni* replaces *L. tenuis* completely (R. Gallon 2000).

Adults can be found throughout the year.

**Author of profile** P.R. Harvey using information from R. Gallon, C. Geddes, W.G. Rixom and H. Williams (pers. comms.).

### ***Lepthyphantes zimmermanni* Bertkau, 1890**

#### **Distribution**

Widespread throughout Britain and Ireland, northern Europe and Russia (Platnick 1997; Robert 1985).

#### **Status**

Common within its varied habitats. It is one of the most frequently encountered spiders in the Welsh mountains (Goodier 1967).

#### **Habitat and Ecology**

This spider occurs in a wide variety of habitats from sea level to the summits of high mountains. On exposed coastal sites (cliffs) this spider is found beneath overhanging low vegetation. In other lowland grasslands this species is replaced by *L. tenuis*. *Lepthyphantes zimmermanni* is frequently found amongst leaf litter and under logs in both deciduous and coniferous woodland. It replaces *L. tenuis* in upland (+330 m) grassland and moorland where it inhabits clumps of low vegetation (grass, sedges, rushes and moss). On high mountain summits it lives beneath felsenmeer rocks.

Both sexes are mature throughout the year.

**Author of profile** RC Gallon

#### **References**

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