

Spider Recording Scheme News

March 2011, No. 69

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My thanks to those who have contributed to this issue. S.R.S. News No. 70 will be published in July 2011. Please send contributions by the end of May at the latest to Peter Harvey, 32 Lodge Lane, GRAYS, Essex, RM16 2YP; e-mail: srs@britishspiders.org.uk or grays@peterharvey.freeserve.co.uk. The newsletter depends on your contributions!

Editorial

Thank you to all the contributors who have provided articles for this issue. Please keep up this good work and if you are not a regular contributor consider putting pen to paper (finger to keyboard!) for future issues.

The Spider Recording Scheme website provides the latest maps for all British spiders and their associated summary autecological information, and as you can read later in this newsletter this now includes harvestmen.

I am very grateful to everybody who continues to provide records to the recording scheme which help to keep the distribution maps up to date - can I make a special plea to those recorders and Area Organisers to send in records from counties where nothing has been received for some years.

I am very grateful to Dr Jonty Denton for identifying vice county errors for sites in his 'patch' and I have now developed national and regional coverage maps on the website which have thrown up many other vice county and grid reference errors, most of which have now been corrected. There are different kinds of diversity maps available to logged-on members and there is now also a feedback facility to report errors or problems with records. This means that these problems can be logged into a database and then dealt with.

every 10km square in the country. Logged-on members can also generate lists for each square, but please note that these data are for study and non-profit use only and under no circumstances whatsoever should they be used for ecological consultancy or commercial purposes - access to these data should be through local record centres or the societies which support county recorders.

The coverage and diversity maps are generated dynamically from the records database of nearly a million records, so they may take some time to appear. It would be possible to use map images which would load quickly, but these would then need regular updating. I have nearly completed the development of a page which will summarise the numbers of species recorded in each vice county, county and country and allow species lists for these to be generated.

Admin users can validate records for 'easily recognisable spiders' submitted by members of the public, so that where acceptable these records can be added to the dataset. Admin users can also upload files such as reports to the website. If the subject of these matches a taxon then these files will automatically become available to users through a link in the species account. Currently reports are available for the UKBAP spiders *Chubiona rosserae* and *Midia midas*, thanks to the help and permission of Buglife, Tony Russell-Smith and the Whitley Wildlife Conservation Trust.

The key aim of the website is to be an interactive and collaborative resource, so please register, upload images and contribute to the forum, species notes and add or edit information on sites of interest for spiders and other wildlife. Members of the BAS and the recording scheme can also interrogate the regional maps to access details of the records behind the tetrads and help identify and log errors - so please register, log-on and help!

The screenshot shows the 'Spider and Harvestman Recording Scheme website' interface. The title is 'Spider and Harvestman Recording Scheme website' with the subtitle 'the national recording schemes for spiders and harvestmen in Britain.' Below the title is a navigation menu with links: Home, Latest changes, Index, Species Index, Search, Help. There are also buttons for 'add new page', 'edit this page', 'view/cancel', 'picture upload', 'my stuff', and 'logout now'. The main content area is titled 'Regional Coverage' and contains a text box with a note: 'Please note that these maps are generated from a database of nearly 1 million records, and so you may have to wait a little time for the results, depending on demands on the website server.' Below this is a form to 'Select species and region:' with 'Arachnida: Araneae' selected in the species dropdown and 'Essex' selected in the region dropdown. A text box below the form explains: 'The regions used here are Watkinson vice-counties, subdivisions used in biological recording based on the historic counties of Britain. These remain unchanged by subsequent local government reorganizations, allowing historical and modern data to be more accurately compared.' A map of Essex is shown with a grid of points representing records. A legend below the map indicates: 'X pre 1980', '● 1980-1991', and '▲ 1992 on'. The copyright notice at the bottom of the map area is 'Copyright © 2011 SRS'. At the bottom of the screenshot, there is a link 'see also Regional diversity maps' and a footer: 'Maps produced by MapMata® using Digital Map Data Copyright © Collins Bartholomew 2011. Data overlay Copyright © British Arachnological Society / Spider Recording Scheme 2011. Reproduction for study and non-profit use permitted; all other rights reserved.'

The diversity maps include an option which counts the numbers of spiders (or harvestmen) recorded in each 10km square, enabling rapid feedback on under-recorded squares and helping recorders to target squares and achieve the late Clifford Smith's aim for the recording scheme to achieve a minimum of 100 species of spider in

Area Organiser changes

Colin Howes is stepping down from the honorary position of Spider Recorder for the Yorkshire Naturalists' Union and Richard Wilson has taken on this role. The SRS Area Organiser position for South-east and North-east Yorkshire (VC 61 and VC 62) has been vacant, and Richard will also be taking on this role. He is already AO for Mid-west and North-west Yorkshire, so Richard is now AO for VC61, 62, 64 and 65. Please send your records for these vice counties to Richard Wilson at 161 Burley Wood Crescent, LEEDS, West Yorkshire LS4 2QJ; email: riwspider@yahoo.co.uk

The status of spider recording in Watsonian Yorkshire

by Richard Wilson

Introduction

Since 2007, I have been actively recording spiders (Arachnida, Araneae) and to a lesser extent, harvestmen (Arachnida, Opiliones) within the Watsonian vice-counties (VC) of Yorkshire. My efforts have largely focussed within VCs 64 (mid-west Yorkshire) and 63 (south-west Yorkshire) given their relative close proximity to Leeds where I reside. Indeed, the River Aire, which bisects the city east-west, provides one of the more obvious VC boundaries within the UK. In November 2009, I took over the honorary position of Area Organiser for VCs 64 and 65 (north-west Yorkshire) and since November 2010, VCs 61 (south-east Yorkshire) and 62 (north-east Yorkshire), which were vacant. VC 63 is covered by Stan Dobson.

My recording has taken place across a number of different sites across the Yorkshire VCs, but mostly within VC 64. I have focussed my efforts at a few different sites each year, rather than more general recording over a wider area. This has enabled me to familiarise myself with the location through the different seasons and has established a baseline survey of the spider diversity at these sites. The majority of the sites so far have been Yorkshire Wildlife Trust nature reserves. However, one site is a privately managed nature reserve run by the local community in Leeds and readers of the *Newsletter* will be familiar with my ongoing study of the spider fauna associated with my my garden and house.

The purpose of this article is three-fold:

- to provide a brief introduction to the history of spider recording within Watsonian Yorkshire;
- to summarise the extent of recording across all Watsonian VCs based on the national Spider Recording Scheme (SRS) database to identify those areas (10 km grid squares) that are under, or poorly recorded; and
- to make a plea for records, however insignificant, and wherever they may arise, from other recorders resident in, or visitors to Watsonian Yorkshire.

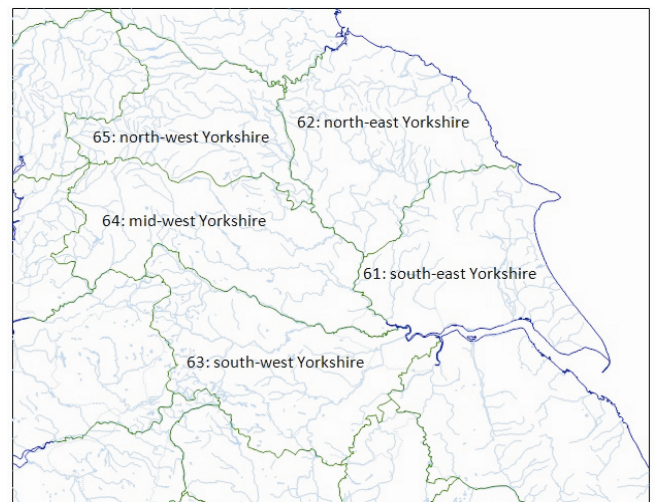
Yorkshire

Geographically, Yorkshire sits roughly half-way up mainland Britain and is blessed with a diversity of landscapes and habitats that few other counties/ regions can match. It covers an area of approximately 11,900 km², which represents just over 9 % of England (Office of National Statistics, 2010). Habitats range from the coast, which includes the chalk cliffs at Bempton, the sand/shingle spit (Spurn Point) emerging from the Humber Estuary and the extensive salt marshes and mudflats beyond. Continuing westwards, the landscape undulates gently crossing the Wolds of the East Riding in the south or rises to the North York Moors in the north, before descending in to the Vale of York. Thenceforth, the landscape rises once more as it rises above 500 m asl in the Pennines (Yorkshire Dales), peaking at 724 m at Ingleborough. The western extremity of Yorkshire is

marked by the Howgill Fells that separate the Dales from the Lake District further west. The northern boundary is traditionally demarcated by the River Tees as it flows through Teesdale. The south includes the now degraded peat bogs of Thorne and Hatfield Moors, once part of a much wider wetland system that is remembered in names such as Potteric Carr.

For the purposes of biological recording, Yorkshire is divided in to five Watsonian vice-counties; their boundaries are illustrated in Fig.1 below.

Figure 1: Location of Watsonian Vice-Counties in Yorkshire



History of Spider Recording in Yorkshire

A few references to ‘milestones’ in Yorkshire arachnology have been described in the paragraphs below to provide some contextual information on recording in the county.

The earliest written reference to spiders in Yorkshire was published more than 300 years ago. Lister (1678) made reference to 38 ‘species’ of spider in his treatise. As this was published before the Linnean system of classification, ‘species’ names don’t follow the familiar binomial system. For example, species number 27 (XXVII) is called “*Araneus flavus unicolor, alvo productiori acuminata*”, which my attempt at translation (with the aid of Google Translator) comes to “uniform yellow spider with the abdomen extended and pointed”. Without a professional translation, I am unable to correlate the ‘species’ with the modern accepted taxonomic name. However, Lister did give locations (*Locus*), and for five species, there is a reference to *Eboracum* (what we know today as York). However, there are no dates assigned to any ‘species’, nor more specific locations, or any indication as to whether Lister collected the specimens himself.

The earliest known spider records attributed with any certainty to an individual are those of the Bradford based naturalist and surgeon, Richard Henry Meade (1814 – 1899). Meade was a consultant surgeon at Bradford Infirmary, moving to Yorkshire in 1840 (Anon., 1899). McLachlan (1900) reported that he made some observations on spiders and harvestmen in the 1850s, publishing during this decade before a complete cessation of work for 10 years. He is noted as capturing the

specimen that became the type specimen of *Tmeticus affinis* (originally described as *Neriene affinis*), collected at Hornsea Mere in 1854 (Blackwall, 1855). He published an article on the occurrence of spiders and their webs in Pelton Colliery, referring to 23 or 24 specimens of *Neriene errans* (now known as *Porrhomma errans*) that were sent to him by a Mr. Stainton (Meade, 1860). Meade continued to record spiders but also harvestmen during the 1850s and 1860s (Meade, 1855; Meade, 1861), and became an expert on Diptera (McLachlan, 1900). The last known record attributed to Meade is a single specimen of *Diaea dorsata*, captured in 1866.

The first collated published list of spiders for Yorkshire was included in the Victoria County History. Pickard-Cambridge stated that Meade never, as far as he was aware "...published any list of his numerous Yorkshire captures...". Pickard-Cambridge (1907) in his review of the species known to him in Yorkshire included 219 species considered to be reliably recorded in the county, and a further two species, *Neriene montana* and *Linyphia meadii*, which he considered doubtful. *Linyphia meadii* was originally described by John Blackwall based on male and female specimens collected under a stone at Low Moor, Bradford by Richard Henry Meade in May 1852 (Blackwall, 1853). The species was subsequently transferred to the genus *Bathyphantes*. However, it is now considered a nomen dubium by Platnick (2010). Pickard-Cambridge (1907) also included *P. errans* in his list of spiders in Yorkshire, assigning the initials 'RHM' against the record, presumably on the basis of the specimens' association with Meade. However, Pelton Colliery (NZ 253 517) is in County Durham, just outside Chester-le-Street and well within vice-county 66 (Durham). It would therefore seem that the record has been erroneously assigned to Yorkshire on the basis that Meade identified the specimen. The 219 species referred to form a basic taxonomic list with brief comments on distribution that are mostly associated with towns or cities where the recorders lived, the two principal contributors being Meade and William Falconer, who lived in Slaithwaite, near Huddersfield.

The next equally significant event in Yorkshire Arachnology arrived in the early 1980s with the publication of Clifford Smith's *An Atlas of Yorkshire Spiders* (Smith, 1982). This was the first attempt nationally, let alone within Yorkshire, of mapping all known spider records to hectads (10 km squares), a format that was followed some 20 years later with the national Atlas (Harvey, Nellist & Telfer, 2002). As at the end of 1981, a total of 390 species had been recorded in Watsonian Yorkshire, an increase of 171 species in the 74 years since the Victorian County History.

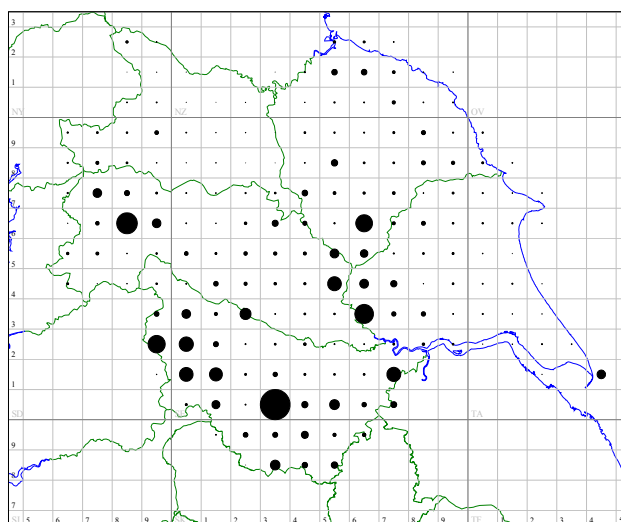
The final milestone occurred during the 20 year period when concerted survey work focussed on collating records for the national Atlas (Harvey, Nellist & Telfer, 2002). By the end of 2001, a further 11 species were added to the Watsonian Yorkshire list, bringing the total to 417 species. Thus by the turn of the century, the total species recorded had probably doubled since Meade was actively recording a 150 years previously.

Spider Recording (Post 2002 Atlas)

A further 6,196 records, comprising 305 species have been recorded in Watsonian Yorkshire between the Atlas being published in 2002 and the end of 2010, bringing the known species and their distribution up to date. In terms of coverage (i.e. number of hectads visited), despite its size, Watsonian Yorkshire has been comprehensive. Of the 205 hectads that either entirely or partially fall within Watsonian Yorkshire, 196 have had at least one spider species recorded. Thus 95.6 % coverage has been achieved, which is higher than the national average of 86 %, based on the national atlas (Harvey, Nellist & Telfer, 2002). Survey effort to cover all tetrads (2 km squares), whilst desirable, would probably be impractical. Despite *c.* 150 years of recording, no single hectad has yet to receive complete coverage of all its 25 tetrads, though SE 10 comes close (SE 10B and SE 10M being the only two tetrads lacking a record).

However, coverage has not been uniform. An idea of survey effort across Watsonian Yorkshire is illustrated in Figure 2, which plots the number of spider records ($n = 48,456$) in each hectad.

VC61 to 65 Spider Recording Scheme Record Density 10km



From this map, it is evident that there are approximately seven distinct sub-regions that have been subject to relatively intense study. These are:

- Spurn Point (TA 41);
- the Vale of York (SE 63 – SE 66, SE 54 and SE 55);
- Thorne & Hatfield Moors (SE 71);
- Barnsley and surrounding area (SE 30 – SE 50);
- Leeds (SE 23);
- Pennines west of Halifax and Huddersfield (SE 10 – SE12, SE 01 –SE 03 and SD 92); and
- the Malham area in the Yorkshire Dales (SD 86, SD 96, SD 77 and SD 87).

Under recorded areas are particularly evident throughout VC 65, central VC 64, north-west VC 62 and much of VC 61. The nine hectads that have not received coverage are listed in Table 1 with a settlement/ geographic feature to aid location.

Table 1: Hectads within Watsonian Yorkshire with no spider records

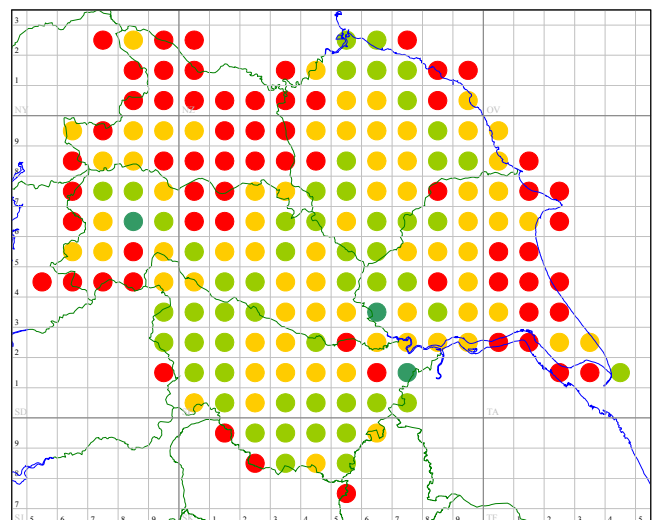
VC	Hectad	Settlement/ Geographic Feature
61	TA 25	A tiny area (< 0.1 ha) of terrestrial habitat at the foot of a shallow cliff, approximately 1 km south-east of the village of Atwick (near Hornsea). A public footpath runs through this tiny area so potential for spider records.
	TA 33	Countryside around the village of Tunstall, near Withernsea.
62	NZ 42	Urban and industrial area in north Middlesbrough, south and east of the River Tees.
	NZ 11	Countryside to the south of the River Tees in and around the villages of Hutton Magna (west) and Eppleby (east), south-west of Middlesbrough.
	NZ 12	Countryside to the south of the River Tees in and around the villages of Manfield, Cleasby and Stapleton, south-west of Middlesbrough.
	OV 00	A tiny area (< 0.4 ha) of inter-tidal habitat and a fraction of terrestrial habitat at the base of the cliff, c. 2 km south-east of Ravenscar. Area appears to be inaccessible by foot from the nearest public footpath so unlikely that any records could be obtained from this precarious location.
63	SE 81	An area of countryside to the north of the B1392 from Eastoft (west) to Luddington (east) and then north-east towards Fockerby.
	SD 90	Mixture of semi-rural and urban environments in the vicinity of Delph, Uppermill and Dobcross, c. 5 km east of Oldham.
65	SD 55	An isolated, though quite extensive area of upland (Hawthornthwaite Fell), approximately 4 km west of the nearest human settlement (Sykes) up an unmetalled track (public footpath).

This survey effort is also reflected in the spider diversity for each of the VCs. Since 1850, a total of 428 species have been recorded across all VCs. Table 2 lists the number of species for each VC. The total number of species recorded in Watsonian Yorkshire represents approximately two-thirds of the British list, currently at 645 species (Merrett & Murphy, 2000).

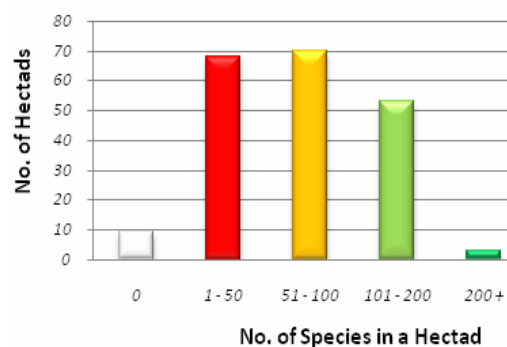
Figure 3 illustrates the number of species recorded within each hectad. This usefully illustrates those hectads (yellow and red circles) that currently support very few species and can be considered to be under recorded (see relative proportions in graph). The dominance of red circles (< 50 species) within the northern Yorkshire Dales (VC 65) and Holderness (VC 61) identify the geographic regions that would benefit most from further study. The high proportion of yellow circles (51 – 100 species) throughout Watsonian Yorkshire demonstrate the general under recording within the Region.

Table 2. Number of Species Recorded in the Watsonian Vice-Counties of Yorkshire

Vice-County	No of Species (as at 31/12/2010)
(61) south-east Yorkshire	327
(62) north-east Yorkshire	354
(63) south-west Yorkshire	367
(64) mid-west Yorkshire	346
(65) north-west Yorkshire	214

Figure 3. Spider diversity within Watsonian Yorkshire

Red circles ≤ 50 spp., yellow circles 51-100 spp.
Pale green circles 101-200 spp. green circles 200+ spp.

Spider Diversity by Hectad (n = 205)

The number of hectads with more than 100 species recorded ($n = 56$) represent just over one-quarter of all hectads in Watsonian Yorkshire.

'Rare' Species

For the purpose of this report, the SRS database was analysed to see which species had not been recorded in any one Watsonian Yorkshire vice-county for at least 50 years, i.e. since 1960. The 50 year threshold was chosen as it seems a reasonably sufficient period, allowing for variations in recording effort over time, for a species to be considered to be rare owing to its scarcity. The 50 year threshold has also previously been adopted by the

Table 3. Species not recorded in Watsonian Vice-Counties for 50 years

Family	Species	VC 61	VC 62	VC 63	VC 64	VC 65	
Theridiidae	<i>Episinus angulatus</i> (Blackwall, 1836)				x		
	<i>Robertus arundineti</i> (O.P.-Cambridge, 1871)					x	
	<i>Robertus neglectus</i> (O.P.-Cambridge, 1871)	x		x			
Linyphiidae	<i>Ceratinella scabrosa</i> (O.P.-Cambridge, 1871)		x				
	Walckenaeria capito (Westring, 1861)				x		
	<i>Walckenaeria clavicornis</i> (Emerton, 1882)		x				
	<i>Etelecara omissa</i> O.P.-Cambridge, 1902	x					
	<i>Pelecopsis nemoralis</i> (Blackwall, 1841)		x				
	<i>Pelecopsis nemoralioides</i> (O.P.-Cambridge, 1884)	x	x				
	Thyreosthenius biovatus (O.P.-Cambridge, 1875)		x	x			
	<i>Diplocephalus protuberans</i> (O.P.-Cambridge, 1875)				x		
	Panamomops sulcifrons (Wider, 1834)	x	x		x		
	<i>Lessertia denticelis</i> (Simon, 1884)		x		x		
	<i>Typhochrestus digitatus</i> (O.P.-Cambridge, 1872)				x		
	<i>Erigone longipalpis</i> (Sundevall, 1830)					x	
	<i>Semljicola caliginosus</i> (Falconer, 1910)				x		
	<i>Drepanotylus uncatius</i> (O.P.-Cambridge, 1873)	x					
	<i>Leptothrix hardyi</i> (Blackwall, 1850)				x		
	<i>Halorates reprobis</i> (O.P.-Cambridge, 1879)	x					
	<i>Halorates distinctus</i> (Simon, 1884)				x		
	<i>Jacksonella falconeri</i> (Jackson, 1908)				x		
	<i>Porrhomma errans</i> (Blackwall, 1841)				x		
	<i>Meioneta innotabilis</i> (O.P.-Cambridge, 1863)			x		x	
	<i>Meioneta gulosa</i> (L.Koch, 1869)				x		
	<i>Microneta viaria</i> (Blackwall, 1841)						x
	<i>Maro minutus</i> O.P.-Cambridge, 1906				x		
	<i>Syedra gracilis</i> (Menge, 1869)			x			
	<i>Saaristoa firma</i> (O.P.-Cambridge, 1905)	x					
	<i>Bathyphantes setiger</i> F.O.P.-Cambridge, 1894	x					
	<i>Megalephyphantes nebulosus</i> (Sundevall, 1830)			x			
	Leptyphantes insignis O.P.-Cambridge, 1913					x	
	Araneidae	<i>Araneus marmoreus</i> var. <i>pyramidatus</i> Clerck, 1757				x	
		<i>Larinioides patagiatus</i> (Clerck, 1757)		x			
<i>Cercidia prominens</i> (Westring, 1851)					x		
Lycosidae	<i>Pardosa agricola</i> (Thorell, 1856)	x					
	<i>Xerolycosa miniata</i> (C.L.Koch, 1834)	x					
	<i>Alopecosa barbipes</i> (Sundevall, 1833)				x		
Tegenaridae	<i>Tegenaria silvestris</i> L.Koch, 1872			x			
Hahnidae	<i>Hahnia helveola</i> Simon, 1875	x					
Dictynidae	<i>Dictyna latens</i> (Fabricius, 1775)				x		
	Argenna subnigra (O.P.-Cambridge, 1861)	x					
Amaurobidae	<i>Coelotes terrestris</i> (Wider, 1834)	x		x			
Anyphaenidae	<i>Anyphaena accentuata</i> (Walckenaer, 1802)				x		
Liocranidae	Scotina celans (Blackwall, 1841)			x			
Clubionidae	<i>Clubiona norvegica</i> Strand, 1900		x				
	<i>Cheiracanthium erraticum</i> (Walckenaer, 1802)				x		
	Cheiracanthium virescens (Sundevall, 1833)		x				
Gnaphosidae	<i>Drassodes pubescens</i> (Thorell, 1856)	x					
	Haplodrassus silvestris (Blackwall, 1833)			x			
	<i>Zelotes latreillei</i> (Simon, 1878)				x		
	<i>Zelotes apricorum</i> (L.Koch, 1876)	x	x				
	Urozelotes rusticus (L.Koch, 1872)				x		
Philodromidae	Philodromus emarginatus (Schrank, 1803)		x				
Thomisidae	<i>Xysticus audax</i> (Schrank, 1803)		x				
	Xysticus kochi Thorell, 1872	x	x	x	x		
	<i>Xysticus sabulosus</i> (Hahn, 1832)	x					
	<i>Ozyptila atomaria</i> (Panzer, 1801)	x	x				
	<i>Ozyptila brevipes</i> (Hahn, 1826)				x		
	<i>Heliophanus cupreus</i> (Walckenaer, 1802)	x					
Salticidae	<i>Neon reticulatus</i> (Blackwall, 1853)					x	
Total	60	19	18	15	18	3	
Percentage of Vice-County List		5.8 %	5.1 %	4.1 %	5.2 %	1.4 %	
<i>Number of Species not Recorded since Smith (1982)</i>		33	59	29	59	40	
<i>Percentage of Vice-County List</i>		10.1 %	16.6 %	7.9 %	17.1 %	18.7 %	

International Union for Conservation of Nature as a means of declaring probable extinction (Fisher & Blomberg, 2010). As 'rarity' can be difficult to define precisely, being dependent on a number of variables (e.g. abundance, range size, genetic diversity or endemism) (Gaston, 1997), and as it can also be a function of the scale at which a species is mapped (Kunin, Hartley & Lennon, 2000), the 50 year threshold adopted for this article seems not unreasonable.

Table 3 lists those species not recorded in any one Watsonian Yorkshire vice-county since 1960. Those 11 species in bold have not been recorded in the whole of Watsonian Yorkshire since this date; 2.6% of the total species recorded.

The 11 species highlighted in Table 3 that have not been recorded since 1960 can be considered as Watsonian Yorkshire's rarest spiders. Determining whether they remain in the county would be a valuable exercise. Judging from the habitat descriptions given in Harvey, Nellist & Telfer (2002), it is possible to place most of them in two broad categories:

- infrequently surveyed habitat: *W. capito* (on high ground), *T. biovatus* (in ants nests) and *L. insignis* (possibly subterranean/ living in soil); and
- edge of range: *P. sulcifrons*, *A. subnigra*, *S. celans*, *C. virescens*, *H. silvestris*, *P. emarginatus* and *X. kochi*.

One species (*U. rusticus*) is considered to be a sporadic species that may not have gained a permanent foothold in the UK. The only Yorkshire record is from Leeds in 1954 and the last national record was from Merseyside in 1994 (Spider Recording Scheme, 2011).

Future Work

With just under 75% of hectads recording less than 100 species, there is clearly considerable opportunity to increase our knowledge of the true distribution of Watsonian Yorkshire's spiders. A focus in under recorded areas as described in this article will inevitably assist in this objective. Anyone living in, or close to certain areas within VCs 61, 62 and 65 will be able to contribute disproportionately, as many areas are poorly, or very poorly recorded. An alternative project could be to set out and re-locate those species listed in Table 3, especially those 11 species highlighted. It is hoped that this article will provide the encouragement to do so. Surely, there can be no better region in England to survey for spiders than that which contains the Yorkshire Dales, North York Moors, the hidden valleys of the Wolds, the dramatic coastline or some of the great industrial cities of the north!

Submission of Records

As the Area Organiser for VCs 61, 62, 64 and 65, I would welcome receipt of records, preferably by MapMate (identifier 'ab1') of any spiders (and indeed, harvestmen) collected. With prior arrangement, I would also be happy to receive a limited number of specimens. I would also like to know if there are a group of individuals interested in setting up an informal Yorkshire spider recording group, or just who is recording in the county, however sporadically. With this in mind, please note that I have set up a 'Yorkshire Spider' page on the Spider Recording website (<http://srs.britishspiders.org.uk/portal.php/p/Yorkshire%20Spiders>). Please keep an eye out for developments.

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Some recent spider records from Watsonian Yorkshire (2007 – 2010)

by Richard Wilson

Introduction

In the four years covered by this article, I have been recording spiders from various locations within Watsonian Yorkshire, generally nature reserves managed by the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust (YWT) but also a community run nature reserve in west Leeds, my back garden and house, and various casual recording elsewhere. During this period, I've recorded 163 species, mostly within VC 63 (south-west Yorkshire) and VC 64 (mid-west Yorkshire). This article provides information on those species recorded that are considered to be notable for Watsonian Yorkshire and collected by me. To clarify, for the purposes of this article, notable species are those that are either new for Watsonian Yorkshire, or a constituent vice-county, unless otherwise stated. Other species that meet this criterion but not collected by me have either been reported elsewhere such as the record of *Theridion blackwalli* (Ostojá-Starzewski, 2010), or I would encourage the recorder to do so.

Reference throughout has been made to Clifford Smith's *An Atlas of of Yorkshire Spiders* (Smith, 1982) as well as the more recent national Atlas (Harvey, Nellist & Telfer, 2002).

Steatoda phalerata (Panzer, 1801)

A single male was collected in a pitfall trap located in a sparsely vegetated grassland community (formerly arable fields) at Potteric Carr Nature Reserve and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), near Doncaster, South Yorkshire (SK 6039 9976) in May 2009. This represented the first record for VC 63 and only the seventh ever record for Watsonian Yorkshire, all having been recorded since the mid-1980s as it was not recorded by Smith (1982). The grassland community is being managed for breeding lowland birds such as the lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*). However, it was advised that areas closer to the footpaths, where birds are less likely to breed, should be periodically scarified to maintain the mosaic of bare ground and sparse vegetation. Other species favouring such habitats such as *Drassyllus pusillus* were also recorded here.

Steatoda grossa (C.L.Koch, 1838)

Several globose females (two were collected for confirmation) were observed in a heated greenhouse (Tropical World) in Canal Gardens, Leeds, West Yorkshire (VC 64) (SE 327 384). This represented a new record for Watsonian Yorkshire. The species is generally considered to be synanthropic though individuals have been recorded outside in more southern areas (Harvey, Nellist and Telfer, 2002). The survey was undertaken inside the Tropical House where various artificial habitats representing deserts, tropical rain forest etc have been created as a tourist facility. A number of other species were recorded, which will be subject to a separate article.

Entelecara congenera (O.P.-Cambridge, 1879) (Status: Nb)

Two females of this small linyphiid was beaten from gorse (*Ulex europaeus*) at Rodley Nature Reserve, west

Leeds, West Yorkshire (SE 234 363) on the 30th May 2009. This was a new record for VC 64 but not for Watsonian Yorkshire; having been recorded at a site near Barnsley and at Kimberworth, near Rotherham, both VC 63 in 1994 and 1999 respectively. The gorse bushes were planted to act as screening from the adjacent sewage treatment works and occupy a relatively small area. They are the only specimens, to my knowledge, on the site. As females can be difficult to identify with confidence, the specimens were initially sent to Peter Harvey. He agreed with my determinations, but recommended that I send them to Dr Peter Merrett, who duly reconfirmed the identifications.

This species was subsequently recorded from Bishop Monkton Railway Cutting, near Ripon, North Yorkshire (SE 312 660) (VC 64) in May 2010 by beating the two gorse bushes present. The site is a former railway cutting surrounded by arable fields. The site is managed by the YWT for its calcareous flora; the scrub dominating the old cutting. There are, to my knowledge, only two straggly gorse bushes present within the site and were specifically beaten in May with the hope of recording this spider.

It is interesting to note that at both locations, the gorse bushes are growing in an isolated location, away from other habitats (e.g. heathland/ moorland), where an abundant resource may be present.

Tapinocyba praecox (O.P.-Cambridge, 1873)

This is a widespread species in the UK although there is no particular region where it could be said to favour. The lack of any records in VC 64 until individuals were recorded in grassland at Staveley YWT Reserve (SE 364 636) and Bishop Monkton Railway Cutting YWT Reserve (SE 312 660) in March 2010 is almost certainly down to under recording, especially in the early part of the year when this species is active. The individuals captured here were recorded in grassland communities; a species-rich wet grassland at Staveley and a magnesian limestone grassland community at Bishop Monkton, conforming to the known habitat for this species.

Cicurina cicur (Fabricius, 1793)

This dictynid is a scarce species outside the south-east of England where it is believed to favour calcareous strata (Harvey, Nellist and Telfer, 2002). There are several records associated with the Yorkshire Wolds but until a single male was captured in a pitfall trap in October 2010 in the woodland at Staveley YWT Reserve (SE 3667 6322), none had been recorded in VC 64. This is an autumn active species, which probably contributes to its scarcity as potentially less recording is undertaken at this time of the year. Its cryptic lifestyle, hidden amongst leaf-litter and other detritus in woodland and damp places further reduces its likelihood of being recorded.

Pirata latitans (Blackwall, 1841)

This wolf-spider was neither new to Watsonian Yorkshire, nor any vice-county at the time of capture. However, it is an extremely scarce species with the majority of records associated with Skipwith Common, near York (SE 65 37) in the late 1970s (Smith, 1982). Outside this National Nature Reserve, it is known from only eight other locations and of these, there are only three records in the last 65 years. Two males were captured in pitfall traps at Staveley YWT Reserve (SE 3643 6361) in the wet

species-rich grassland, representing the second record for VC 64; the first being recorded at Upper Dunsforth Carrs (SE 441 630), another YWT reserve.

***Tetragnatha pinicola* L. Koch, 1870 (Status: Nb)**

This spider is a scarce species in Watsonian Yorkshire, there being five confirmed records, all since 2000. A single female was swept from a woodland ride within Ox Close Wood, West Yorkshire (SE 369 464) in May 2010, an ancient woodland site and community nature reserve in the Wharfe Valley, a few kilometres north of Leeds. This represents the first record for VC 64. Nationally, this is a scarce species with the majority of records in the south-east, becoming extremely rare north of the Humber. This is a species of open woodland, favouring sunny glades/woodland rides. The specimen was swept from grassland vegetation in a woodland clearing which is being actively managed (coppiced) for charcoal production.

Summary

A total of seven notable species have been recorded within Watsonian Yorkshire by me in the last four years, the majority from YWT nature reserves, suggesting a rate of slightly under two species/ year. Further surveys are planned during the course of 2011 and it is hoped will include the continued investigation and attention on an *ad hoc* basis to explore an emerging thought of mine that *E. congenera* is associated with gorse. More general recording in areas less well surveyed, in particular north-west Yorkshire (VC 65) will also be undertaken. The results of these, and other surveys of interest will be reported in a future article.

Acknowledgements

I'd like to thank the various Reserve Officers and staff of Yorkshire Wildlife Trust for giving me permission to record on a number of their Reserves; East Keswick Wildlife Trust for giving me permission to survey Ox Close Wood, a local community run nature reserve to the north of Leeds; and Rodley Nature Reserve Trust for allowing me to collect in Rodley Nature Reserve. To Peter Harvey, for confirming specimens sent, occasionally correcting my determinations and providing helpful tips on identification. Finally, to my wife for supporting my 'spidering' excursions throughout Yorkshire, though it has to be said, combining a site visit at Staveley with the food at the Royal Oak pub in the village was normally sufficient compensation!

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Some spider and harvestmen records from Stirlingshire (VC86) and Clackmannan (VC87)

by Jonty Denton¹ & Scotty Dodd²

*= new VC record. All dates are from 2010. Records without author's initials in brackets were taken by both recorders.

STIRLINGSHIRE (VC86)

Theridiidae: **Anelosimus vittatus* (C.L.Koch) Plean Country Park (NS833865), on gorse, 21.v. (JD) and at Tor Wood Burn (NS833855) on 22.v. (SD).

Linyphiidae: **Meioneta saxatilis* (Blackwall) (1 male), Kincardine Bridge (NS9186) on open saltmarsh 21.v. (JD) with *Oedothorax fuscus* (Blackwall) & *Hypomma bituberculatum* (Wider).

Araneidae: *Larinoidea cornutus* (Clerck), Kincardine Bridge (NS9186) on open saltmarsh 21.v. females / immatures were abundant. Also at Dales Wood (NS820850) on 21.v. and Tor Wood Moss (NS824846) on 22.v.

**Hypsosinga pygmaea* (Sundevall) Tor Wood Moss (NS824846), SD swept an adult female on open *Calluna* moor 22.v.

**Cyclosa conica* (Pallas) Dales Wood (NS820850), adult female on 21.v. (SD)

Lycosidae: **Pardosa purbeckensis* (F.O.P.-Cambridge) abundant on open bare mud between plants on open saltmarsh near Kincardine Bridge (NS9186 & NS9286) 21.v.

Gnaphosidae: *Zelotes latreillei* (Simon) (1 female) Kincardine Bridge (NS9186) on open saltmarsh 21.v. (JD).

Opiliones: *Megabunus diadema* (Fabricius), Dales Wood (NS820850) adult male in birch dominated heathy woodland glade, 21.v. (JD).

CLACKMANNAN part of (VC87)

Araneidae: **Araniella opisthographa* (Kulczynski) Inch House Farm (NS933868) on 21.v. (SD).

Phalangiidae: **Dicranopalpus ramosus* (Simon), several adults beaten from bushes along old railway line at Longannet (NS9685), on 09.ix. (JD).

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Spiders from Lincolnshire, 2008

by Annette Binding

One spider, *Enoplognatha latimana*, was recorded in 2008 which was new to the county. Colin Smith collected a single male at a mercury vapour light at Willingham Forest on 30th June. The spider is very similar in appearance to the much more common *Enoplognatha ovata* and can only be separated under the microscope. In the same batch of spiders collected at MV light on that day, there was a male *Enoplognatha ovata* and so I

expected the second *Enoplognatha* specimen to be *Enoplognatha ovata* and was therefore very surprised to discover that the second male was *Enoplognatha latimana*, a species I had only previously seen on Anglesey, North Wales. *Enoplognatha latimana* has the same three colour forms as *Enoplognatha ovata*. The spider caught by Colin was the commonest cream form. The other two forms have either one or two red stripes on the abdomen.

There were a number of species recorded in 2008 which had few previous county records or which had not been seen in the county for many years. Most of these were linyphiids and many of them were sent to me by Colin Smith. Colin found a female *Pelecopsis parallela* in dead reeds at Frodingham Grange on 30th January, the second county record for this species which was new to the county in 2004 when M. L. Denton collected one in a pitfall trap at Scunthorpe; it was determined by Bruce Hoyle and I received the record from the National Spider Database in 2008. Colin found two linyphiid spiders in moss at Crowle Moor NNR, *Ceratinella scabrosa* and *Gongylidiellum vivum*. It was the 3rd county record of *Ceratinella scabrosa* a species which had not been seen in Lincolnshire since 1960. There were eight previous records of *Gongylidiellum vivum* but this was the first record since 1971 and the first female recorded since 1951. Colin found another linyphiid, *Centromerus sylvaticus*, in moss at Great West Wood and at Great Scrubbs Wood on the same day 19th February. These were the first records of this species since 1973.

I collected a single specimen of the linyphiid *Erigone promiscua* from under a stone at Gibraltar Point NNR on 25th July, the 3rd county record of this species. Colin found *Troxochrus scabriculus* at Donna Nook on the 21st March and at Willwick Hill Plantation at Whitton on the 27th March. These were the fifth and sixth county records of this linyphiid which was last recorded in Lincolnshire by G W Whatmough in 1960.

Species other than linyphiids, which were recorded in 2008 included *Achaearanea simulans* (Theridiidae). Allan beat a single female from bushes at Watts Wood LWT Reserve on the 16th July. It was the fourth county record of this species which is currently listed as Notable B, although it will lose its status when the new review of British Spiders is published (Peter Harvey, pers. comm.).

Over the last few years Colin Smith has collected a large number of spiders at both mv light and actinic light traps and among those collected in this way in 2008 was *Episinus angulatus*. There were only four previous records. Colin collected males from three new sites, all caught at actinic light. These were Middle Rasen Plantation on the 24th June, Camshaw Plantation on the 10th July and Linwood Warren on the 22nd July. Another species collected by Colin in his actinic light trap was the linyphiid *Leptyphantus alacris*. A single male was found in the trap at Dog Kennel Wood, Willingham Forest on the 26th April. This was the eighth county record and the first since 1991.

Two of the more colourful crab spiders were recorded from new sites in 2008. The bright green *Diaea dorsata* (see Fig. 1) was found at Legsby Wood on the 5th May by Colin Smith. This spider has only been recorded from thirteen other locations in Lincolnshire. The large white *Misumena vatia* (see Fig. 2) was found at Callan's Lane

Wood on the 1st June by John Lamin. This species has been recorded at eleven other locations.



Figure 1. *Diaea dorsata*, female
©P.R. Harvey



Figure 2. *Misumena vatia*, female
© P.R. Harvey

On 6th November Allan and I found another spider with very few records when we visited the Sir Joseph Banks Conservatory at the Lawn Centre, Lincoln to look at the plants. There were a large number of spiders' webs and although at first we could find no spiders we soon realised that they were disguised as debris in the webs. Allan managed to collect a couple of specimens which I later identified as *Uloborus plumipes*, a species which has spread in heated garden centres and conservatories since the early 1990's when it was probably introduced in pot plants imported from the Netherlands. Spiders of the family Uloboridae are unique in having no poison glands so they have to rely on their skill at wrapping prey items in silk. I know of only five previous Lincolnshire records of *Uloborus plumipes*, four in the north of the county from Scunthorpe and Epworth and one from Gonerby near Grantham in South Lincolnshire. Since discovering the spiders at the Sir Joseph Banks Conservatory, we have looked for it at other garden centres but so far without success.

Colin Smith found a male of the gnaphosid *Zelotes electus* in moss at Donna Nook on the 21st March. It is a coastal species, found mainly on sand dunes. This was the

tenth county record for this spider which is known from only three locations in Lincolnshire.

In grass litter at Gibraltar Point NNR on 24th September Colin found *Clubiona subtilis* and *Thanatus striatus*. *Clubiona subtilis* is known from only three locations in Lincolnshire, Donna Nook, Gibraltar Point NNR and Crowle Moors NNR. It was last recorded in 2006 at Crowle Moors but it had not been recorded at Gibraltar Point since 1985. *Thanatus striatus* had also not been recorded at Gibraltar Point since 1985. It is known from only five locations and the last record was from Messingham, North Lincolnshire in 1988. As well as collecting many spiders himself, Colin Smith also encouraged one of his work colleagues Craig Hobson, to send me a spider which he found in his house in Lincoln on the 27th April, I identified it as a female *Amaurobius ferox* which although fairly widespread in the county has very few recent records, this record being only the fifth since 2001.

Allan and I both found specimens of *Tetragnatha nigrita* at Whisby Nature Park in 2008. This spider is known from only three other locations in Lincolnshire but Whisby Nature Park is the only recent site.



Figure 3. Unidentified spider from bananas
© Alan Binding

Finally, I found a female spider in bananas bought at a local supermarket on the 24th April. It was about the same size as a *Pisaura mirabilis* and had probably been imported from Columbia where the bananas came from. Allan managed to take a few photographs of it (see Fig. 3) before it suddenly just literally curled up and died. It is as yet unidentified and it may not be possible to identify it to species level.

I am grateful to all those people who have sent records and specimens to me especially Colin Smith. This article was originally published in the Lincolnshire Naturalist's Union Transactions, volume 27.

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Araneus quadratus Clerck (Araneidae), preying on Burnet Moths?

by Jonty Denton

In *World of Spiders* W.S. Bristowe, states that spiders find Burnet and cinnabar moths unpalatable and avoid them, even discarding them from their webs. At Horton Country Park, Surrey in August 2010, I saw a web made by a very large *A. quadratus* female which contained the bodies of at least 11 Six-spot Burnets *Zygaena filipendulae*, in a loose tangle close to the spider's lair. Had these been taken for food? Clearly the spider must have drawn them together, but for what purpose? They had become battered and faded, so one could argue they were serving as camouflage. It is possible that the spider caught a fresh female, who then drew in some would-be suitors to their fate.

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A proposed name for *Islandiana falsifica*

by Richard Bacon

SRS News No 68 in Newsl. Br. arachnol. Soc. 119 carries a letter from my old flat-mate, Mike Davidson, asking for a trivial name for *Islandiana falsifica*, a species he recently found near Prestatyn in Wales. Taking on board Mike's request, I submit the following:

- 1) Eyjafjallajokull taff
- 2) Taff Eyjafjallajokull

Having performed some research with the small colony of native Icelandic/Welsh speakers in New Zealand, I can confirm that option 2 (Taff Eyjafjallajokull) is culturally acceptable and quite easily pronounced after several glasses of finest New Zealand Riesling, or even Chardonnay.

I therefore propose that *Islandiana falsifica* is hereby known as Taff Eyjafjallajokull.

Levin, New Zealand

Lakenheath Fen, home to cranes, orioles, bitterns ... and *Carorita paludosa*

by Alan Thornhill

In 1995, when **Lakenheath Fen** in Suffolk was acquired by the RSPB, the nature reserve began the latest of the changes it has undergone over the centuries. Immediately prior to that it was mostly arable land, with carrots a local speciality. Also, there were, and still are, some small poplar woods, remnants of a more extensive plantation of Bryant and May, the match manufacturers. Now that it is being returned to something resembling its original state, it is primarily a wetland reserve with extensive reed or sedge beds and open pools, although there is a dry sandy area at the eastern end of the reserve. At the western end is the swamp-like **Botany Bay** (the origin of the name is unknown), which was never farmed and is an SSSI.

Thousands of visitors flock (sorry!) to the reserve each year to see rare birds. It is the only place in the country where golden orioles breed regularly, albeit in very small numbers now, and one of two sites where common cranes are making their UK comeback. A few visitors go to see invertebrates such as dragonflies, butterflies and bumblebees. Perhaps one day some will go to see the reserve's spiders as it is known to be home to many species. About 120 species have now been recorded there, and probably many more remain to be discovered.

Ian Dawson of the RSPB (and BAS member) has carried out several spider surveys on Lakenheath Fen from 1997 onwards and found some rare species, most notable amongst them being *Clubiona rosserae*. The reserve is one of only two places in the country where this species is known to live. Amongst other interesting species recorded from there are the linyphiids *Maro sublestus* and *Entelecera omissa*.

This year I was asked by Buglife to carry out water trapping on Botany Bay in September and October, to search for *C. rosserae* in particular (the only one found there was caught in a water trap) and survey invertebrates generally. The traps, set about 1m high, caught adult spiders of only six species, but none was *C. rosserae*. Traps in the wetter areas caught several *Donacochara speciosa*, a slightly odd-looking linyphiid with its broad, flattish cephalothorax, that is scarce in the UK.

I also surveyed spiders by beating the reeds and sedges, and shaking dead vegetation, in the area around the traps. These methods yielded many more species, principally because they could sample throughout the height profile of the reedbeds. Spider diversity seemed much greater nearer to the ground, due presumably to the abundance of springtails and other small invertebrates.

Several of the spiders caught by beating / shaking were new records for the reserve, mostly typical wetland species such as *Ozyptila brevipes* and *Floronia bucculenta*. Perhaps the most noteworthy find was *Carorita paludosa*, a small linyphiid that has been found at several places within the Norfolk Broads, but at very few other sites in the British Isles (one in Somerset, and two in Ireland), so this is a new record for Suffolk. My thanks to Ian Dawson for confirming the identification.

It will be interesting to see how many wetland spider species eventually colonise the areas reclaimed from arable land. Some, such as *Clubiona phragmitis* and *D.*

speciosa, can already be found there but others have so far only been found on Botany Bay.

The list of spiders found on the sandy area at the eastern end of the reserve is, as one would expect, much different to that from the wetter areas, with several species typically associated with heaths or open grassland, such as *Pardosa monticola*, *Arctosa perita*, *Talavera aequipes* and *Hahnia nava*. However, almost all of this area has been planted with poplar trees, to encourage golden orioles to breed. As the trees grow, the spider fauna will surely be affected. So, further monitoring of the spiders on this area would be useful, to obtain a fuller list of those present now before the trees become tall.

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Clubiona rosserae at Chippenham Fen

by Ian Dawson

During a field trip of the Huntingdonshire Fauna & Flora Society to Chippenham Fen NNR, Cambridgeshire, on 19th September 2010 with my wife Debra, we found a good selection of spiders, including such interesting species as *Hygrolycosa rubrofasciata*, *Trochosa spinipalpis*, *Marpissa radiata*, *M. muscosa*, *Araneus marmoreus* (including a single f. *marmoreus* among numerous f. *pyramidatus*), *Glyphesis servulus* and *Maso gallicus*. However, chief excitement was provided by a rather small *Clubiona* sieved from a fresh litter pile in SSSI Compartment 7 (formerly Compartment 8) at TL 650693, which proved under the microscope to be a female *C. rosserae*, for which Chippenham Fen is the type locality. The species was described by G. H. Locket in 1953 from two males and two females collected there on 23rd September 1951 (Locket & Millidge, 1953). It has subsequently been recorded from Chippenham on a number of occasions, but not since 6th October 1996 when Dave Carr collected a male (Carr, 1997).

There is only a single record for the UK away from this site: a female found in a water trap at Botany Bay, Lakenheath Fen RSPB reserve, Suffolk, in April 2000 (Dawson, 2003). In Europe it is known from only a few countries, including the Netherlands, Poland, Hungary and Romania, and appears to be rare everywhere.

Dedicated survey work between 2002 and 2005 to investigate the distribution and ecology of this species failed to re-find it at Chippenham Fen or at Lakenheath Fen, nor were any other localities found, despite targeted fieldwork at potential sites by BAS members and work by an ecologist under contract to Natural England (then English Nature).

The site of the September record is close to where three *C. rosserae* were found during JNCC invertebrate surveys in the early 1990s (two from pitfalls in 1991 and one from a water trap in 1995 at TL 65056936). It was pure chance that we chose that spot to sample on our September visit. Compartment 7 comprises mixed open fen vegetation, mainly sedge, of which a large swathe had been cut a little earlier in the autumn (see Fig. 1). Litter piles were stacked along the edge.



Figure 1. *Clubiona rosserae* habitat at Chippenham Fen © Ian Dawson

Most of the recent unsuccessful fieldwork has been undertaken in the summer months, and although adults have been found in ones and twos in most months between February and October, I wondered whether *C. rosserae* might be primarily an autumn-maturing spider, given the date on which it was first discovered (four individuals) and the date of the last Chippenham record in 1996.

Accordingly, I arranged a return visit on October 17th, along with Debra, Peter Harvey and Dave Carr. This proved highly successful and between us we found eight mature females and two males. A number of immatures of similar size and colour may also have been this species. These all came from the same compartment as the September find and either from relatively fresh litter piles (less than a month old), or from loose vegetation litter left lying at the edge of the cut area, and all from within a 100 m radius. Searches elsewhere on the fen drew a blank. All individuals collected by IKD were rather pale reddish-brown or yellowish and between 5 and 5.5 mm in length (females) or 4.0 mm (male). Several of the females showed a contrasting darker central abdominal cardiac stripe. While positive identification under a handlens may be doubtful, we were reasonably confident in the field that we had found both sexes. Once examined under the microscope and compared with known *C. stagnatilis*, there is no real possibility of confusion. In fact we found only a single *C. stagnatilis*, a female from loose litter at the edge of the cut area, collected along with two female *C. rosserae*, proving that the two species live together.

The accompanying photographs show six female *C. rosserae*, both alive and under the microscope, one male *C. rosserae*, and the female *C. stagnatilis*. In Fig. 2 the September *C. rosserae* is labelled A, the five October females B to F respectively. The male palps are distinct enough, but the most immediately obvious feature separating all the females examined of both species is the relative width to height of the pigmented area of the epigyne, which in the five females held by IKD is significantly greater than 2:1, whereas in several *C. stagnatilis* females examined it is at best equal to and usually less than 2:1. This is a function of the

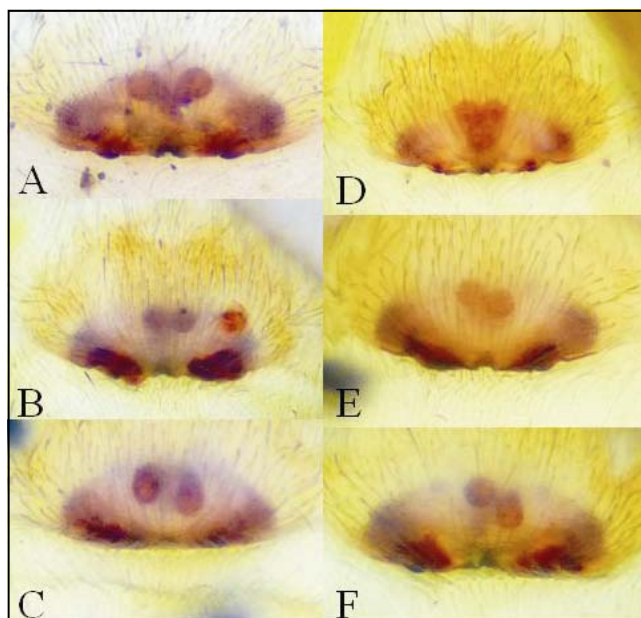


Figure 2. *Clubiona rosserae* epigynes
A: 19th Sept 2010, B-F: 17th Oct 2010
© Ian Dawson

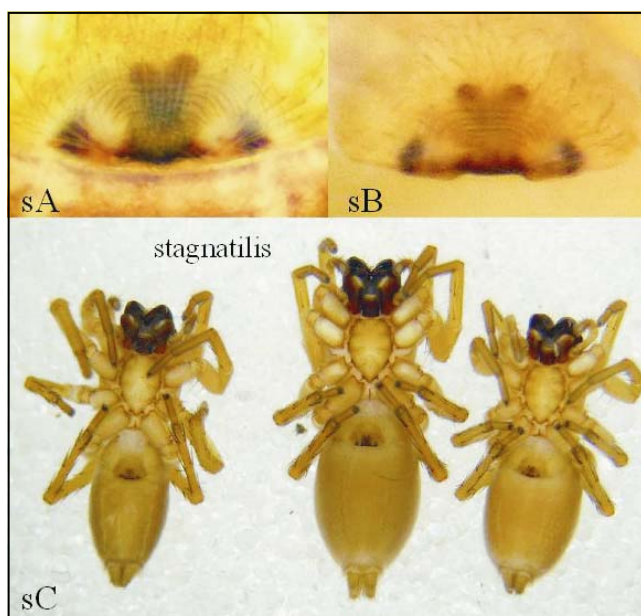


Figure 3. *Clubiona stagnatilis* epigynes
sA: Chippenham Fen 17th Oct 2010
sB: Wheatfen 25th May 2002
sC: Ynys Hir 4th May 2006
© Ian Dawson

spermathecae lying closer to the hind margin of the epigyne in *C. rosserae*. The shape of the hind margin also appears to be a useful additional guide with a small deep notch in the centre in *C. rosserae* (straighter in *C. stagnatilis*), and the spermathecae visible through the abdominal wall appear roughly circular (elongated in *C. stagnatilis*). The drawings by Roberts (1985, 1998) match all these characters.

All the *C. rosserae* were rather pale below so the darker contrasting epigyne was obvious, whereas the single *C. stagnatilis* from Chippenham was much darker red-brown both above and below and the epigyne was thus obscured in the live animal. However, the colour of *C. stagnatilis* is clearly variable and can be much paler as



Figure 4. Left: *Clubiona stagnatilis*. Right: *C. rosserae* (*C. rosserae* specimens B, C & D).
 Chippenham Fen 17th Oct 2010 © Ian Dawson

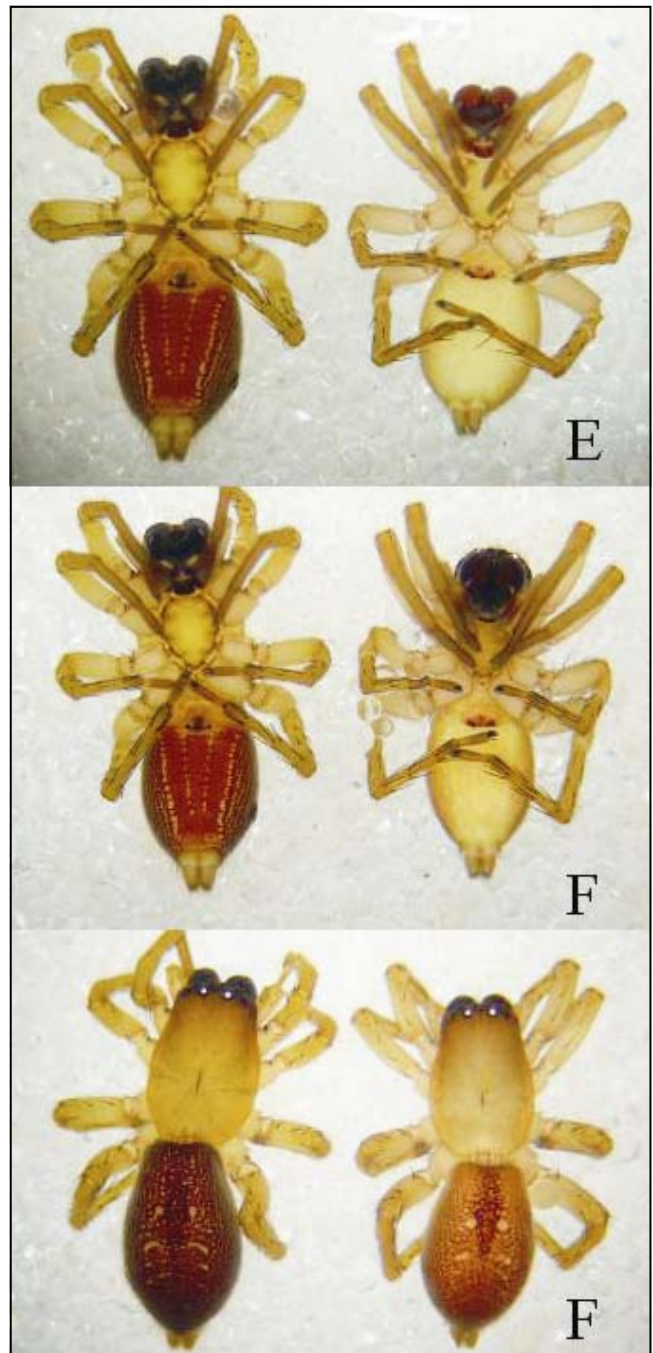


Figure 5. Left: *Clubiona stagnatilis*. Right: *C. rosserae* (*C. rosserae* specimens E & F).
 Chippenham Fen 17th Oct 2010 © Ian Dawson

shown by the photos of specimens (Fig. 3) from Ynys Hir, Cardiganshire and Wheatfen, Norfolk. *C. stagnatilis* would also appear normally to be a little larger, with the female collected together with the *rosserae* being 5.7 mm long.

However, as a cautionary footnote, I re-examined the Lakenheath *C. rosserae* female. This is both a darker and at 7.2 mm a much bigger spider than the Chippenham females. However, the proportions of the pigmented area of the epigyne match the above specimens, and when viewed ventrally show further confirmatory characters, notably the spermathecae which are less elongated and do not diverge as in *C. stagnatilis* (see Dawson, 2003). None of the Chippenham females was dissected.

The rediscovery prompted a press release from BugLife which generated a slot on BBC Look East and considerable wider media coverage on both radio and in



rosserae male, 17 Oct 2010

Figure 6: *Clubiona rosserae* male, Chippenham Fen 17th Oct 2010 © Ian Dawson

the national press. It was the lead story on the BBC website on 22nd November, and generated news coverage from as far away as Romania and Canada!

Thanks are due to Mike Taylor, the Natural England Reserves Manager for Breckland, both for permission to visit, and for his considerable help on site during both our visits.

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More on *Enoplognatha latimana*

by Howard Williams

In the July 2008 issue of The Newsletter Stan Dobson suggested we should take a closer look at a spider often dismissed as *Enoplognatha ovata*, as some may well prove to be *Enoplognatha latimana*.

This is certainly true as my experience in Nottinghamshire has shown. Stan Dobson also thought that Bill Ely of S.W. Yorks, who had found *Enoplognatha latimana* in the Rotherham area, would need to go as far as the Norfolk Breckland to find the nearest other records of this spider. That was almost true in 2008 when he wrote his article, but is not so any longer. It has been recorded at 3 sites in Nottinghamshire since 2005: by me in the central area of the county at CenterParcs Sherwood in August 2005 and at Rainworth Heath near Mansfield in July 2008 and August 2009; and by A Binding at Clumber Park in July 2009 in the north of the county. Moreover, she also recorded it for a site in Lincolnshire in June 2008, thus creating a 3-counties link from Rotherham in S.W. Yorks through Nottinghamshire into Lincolnshire. This little East Midlands grouping is distinct on the updated BAS maps, as the great majority of *Enoplognatha latimana* records are concentrated in south-east and southern England. Nottinghamshire's other neighbouring counties of Leicestershire and Derbyshire so far seem to have no records of this species.

The Nottinghamshire records are of 10 females and 3 males. At CenterParcs Sherwood and Rainworth Heath the spiders were found by sweeping and grubbing in or under heather; in a mix of heather and bracken; and by beating low-hanging branches above the heather. They were found on both dry and wet heath areas. Heaths, especially heathery ones, would therefore seem to be attractive to the species; but nationally it appears able to adapt itself to a variety of situations like its relative, *Enoplognatha ovata*. While being much less common, *Enoplognatha latimana* may nevertheless prove to be equally widespread. I feel sure it is often overlooked, assumed to be *Enoplognatha ovata*.

Before leaving this subject, the matter of colour forms arises. Of the 12 spiders I collected at the central Nottinghamshire sites, only one had the dorsal red stripes on either side of the abdomen called in Locket and Millidge Clerck's *redimitum* (they were actually referring to *Theridion ovatum* now *Enoplognatha ovata*). Roberts states that *Enoplognatha latimana* is 'usually without red markings' and my samples, though very limited, seem to confirm that. Though the colour variants are without specific value, it would be interesting to know if, generally, the proportion of around one in twelve may be about right for this feature in this species.

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Midia midas in Epping Forest - an update

by Tony Russell-Smith¹, Mick Massie², David Nellist³ & Imogen Wilde⁴

Background

Midia midas is one of Britain's rarest spiders. It is listed as nationally endangered and is identified as a Priority Species for conservation action under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP). In the UK, it has been recorded from just five localities, Sherwood Forest, Notts. (Crocker, 1979), Donington Park, Leics. (Crocker & Daws, 1996), Epping Forest, Essex (Russell-Smith, 2002), Hainault Forest (Essex) and Windsor Forest (Berks), where it is always associated with ancient trees, either in forest or ancient wood pasture settings.

In an earlier article (Russell-Smith, 2002), the results of a survey during 1980 for *Midia midas* and other spiders in ancient pollards in Epping Forest were described. At that time, the species was found in bird nests, squirrel dreys and accumulations of litter in 12 trees out of 55 examined (21%) between May and July. A total of four male and fourteen female specimens were collected. Here, we document the occurrence of *Midia* in Epping Forest since 1980 and discuss different survey techniques for this species in the light of future surveys.

The next occasion when *Midia* was encountered in Epping was not until June 1996, when a single female was collected in Long Running (TQ43299605) by David Carr. Subsequently, Peter Harvey collected another female from a squirrel's drey in a pollarded Hornbeam in Little Monk Wood (TQ42097813) in July 2002. Although the species appeared to be of sporadic occurrence in the Forest, this was very likely due to the fact that so few arachnologists collect from its specialised habitat in ancient trees.

Studies in 2003

During 2003, Imogen Wilde and colleagues from the Epping Forest management team (City of London) undertook a survey of saproxylic invertebrates in ancient pollard oaks in several areas of the forest. As a part of this, pitfall traps were placed in rot-holes and snags in the crowns of pollards located in the Barn Hoppitt, Bury Wood/Long Hills and Lord's Wood areas of the forest. The traps were operated from mid-May to the end of July and emptied every 3 weeks. Although the Coleoptera and Diptera from these traps had been sorted and identified, it was only earlier this year that the spiders from the traps were examined and identified. A total of eight specimens of *Midia* were found in the traps, collected from five trees out of the 32 in which traps were placed (16%). It was taken from a single tree in the Barn Hoppitt area and four from the Bury Wood area but was apparently absent from the slightly more isolated Lord's Bushes area.

A new survey in 2010

Plans were drawn up by the BAS, in collaboration with the City of London conservators and Buglife, for a new survey of *Midia* in Epping in 2009. Initially, it was hoped to use the same technique for surveying as was used in the 1980 survey. However, exploratory work early in 2009 in the central area of the forest showed that both bird nests and squirrel dreys had apparently declined markedly and were in fact difficult to find in sufficient numbers. It was

thus decided that the main survey technique would be the use of “artificial nests”, constructed from fine twiggy material and leaf litter in nylon mesh bags, which would then be placed in cavities and rot holes in suitable pollards spread as widely across the forest as possible. Nests would then be collected at regular monthly intervals between June and October and all invertebrates sorted from them and identified.



Figure 1. *Midia midas*, female in its web viewed ventrally © Jurgen Lissner.

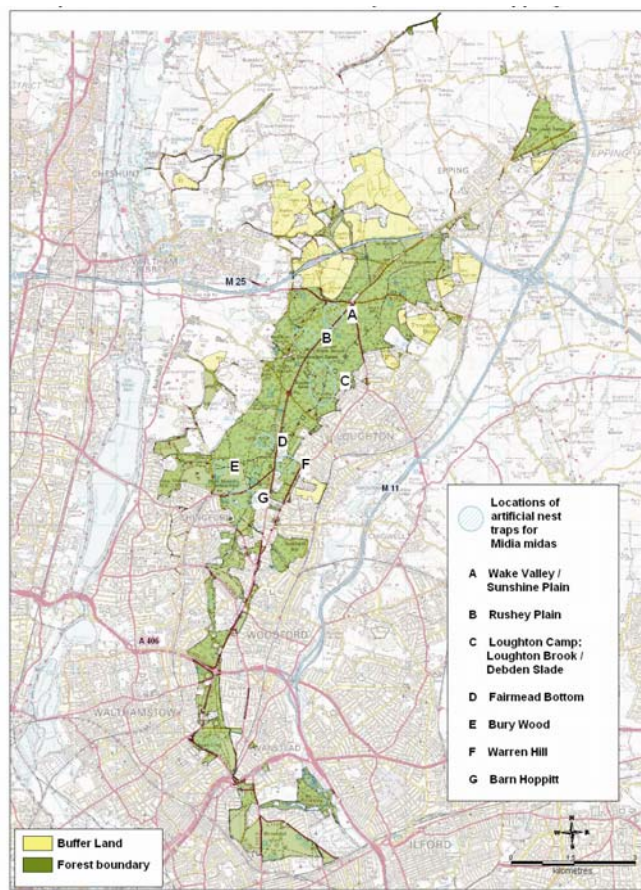
This survey was conducted during summer 2010 with generous funding from the Whitley Wildlife Trust and logistical support from Buglife. A total of 150 artificial nests were constructed, using a mixture of fine birch twigs and beech litter. In May, 50 traps were placed in hornbeam pollards, 50 in beech pollards and 50 in oak pollards. The traps were located in eight areas in the central forest, Fairmead Bottom, Warren Hill, Loughton Brook/Depden Slade, Loughton Camp, Barn Hoppitt, Bury Wood, Wake Valley/Sunshine Plain and Rushey Plain (Map 1). The location of each tree was recorded using a hand-held GPS sensitive to $\pm 3\text{m}$ and, where available, the CoL tag numbers affixed to many of the ancient pollards.

On each of five successive monthly sampling occasions from June to October, trees were relocated and 30 trap nests were collected, 10 from each of the three tree species. The artificial nests were carefully transferred to sealed polythene bags in the field for return to the laboratory.

The contents of each artificial nest was transferred to a large white tray in the laboratory and all arachnids larger than ca 1.5 mm length carefully collected with pooters and transferred to pre-labelled tubes of 70% ethanol for subsequent identification.

Females of *Midia* are immediately recognisable, even with a hand lens, by the massive projecting scape of the epigyne on the underside of the abdomen (Fig. 1). In the 2010 survey, two female specimens of *Midia* were collected on 9th June, both from Fairmead Bottom. The artificial nests from which they were collected were located in adjacent pollarded oaks. Interestingly, neither of these oaks appeared to be of particularly great age, certainly by comparison with those at Barn Hoppitt which

Map 1. Locations of *Midia midas* study sites within Epping Forest



were of much greater girth and height. This agrees well with the findings from the earlier survey in Epping Forest in 1980 where the majority of the specimens collected were from relatively small hornbeam and oak pollards. Sadly, subsequent monthly collections produced no further specimens of *Midia*.

Conclusions and future studies

At first sight, it might be suggested that *Midia* has shown a considerable decline in Epping Forest over the past 30 years. However, it is important to remember that each survey used different sampling techniques, the efficiency of none of which has been assessed. In particular, artificial nests may be problematic because either their construction or the way they were deployed in trees may have rendered them unattractive to *Midia*. Since the artificial trap nests only revealed *Midia* in 1.4% of those recovered, they hardly justified the labour of constructing, deploying and sorting them.

Despite the fact that the UK has one of the largest populations of ancient trees in Europe, our knowledge of the status of *Midia* is hopelessly inadequate. Before any measures for its conservation can be put in place, it is essential to have a proper understanding of its distribution and status. Because conservation of endangered spiders depends in part on ensuring survival of many separate populations, future work will concentrate on finding new populations of the spider in sites with large numbers of ancient trees. It is hoped that at these sites sufficient natural bird nests and squirrel dreys can be located to

obviate the need for trapping devices. However, in sites similar to Epping, where nests and squirrel dreys are relatively uncommon, it may be necessary to use pitfall traps placed in suitable sites in ancient trees. Some care is needed in using this technique because there is a risk of trapping out this scarce species in individual trees. Traps will need to be checked at regular intervals and removed from individual trees as soon as *Midia* is detected. In addition to these methods, a third technique worth using where there are hollow or fallen trees is sieving of rotten wood. This has been used successfully by Jurgen Lissner in Denmark where he has collected this species on several occasions at Frijsenborg Forest about 20 km north-west of Århus.

The BAS is planning a much wider survey for *Midia*, involving sites in at least six counties across southern Britain. The aim will be to survey ancient trees in areas with a known history of continuous management as forest or tree pasture. We are seeking funding for a two year project to cover the travel costs and provide consumable equipment for surveyors involved in the project. If there are any BAS members who would be interested in joining the survey work, they can contact Tony Russell-Smith by e-mail at mrussellsmith@btinternet.com or by post at the address below.

Acknowledgements.

We would like to thank Jurgen Lissner for allowing us to reproduce his excellent photograph of *Midia*.

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***Tetragnatha striata* (L.Koch, 1862): new to Cumbria**

by Dave Holloway

Whilst living in Cumbria prior to relocating to Scotland I was fortunate to have the opportunity to collect spiders at Siddick Pond Nature Reserve near Workington. The reserve is coastal and has brackish ponds with about 19 acres of reed bed.



Figure 1. Siddick Pond Nature Reserve © Phil Gravell.

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On 15th September 2009 I collected some spiders by sweeping low along a ride that had been cut into the reedbed to create a site for bird ringing using mist nets. I noted the straw yellow appearance of some *Tetragnatha* spiders as I tubed them. Later microscopic examination confirmed two female *Tetragnatha striata*. In addition to the usual identification books I found information regarding eye pattern useful (Dobson, 2004). This is currently the only known site for *Tetragnatha striata* in Cumbria (VC70 and VC69).

Tetragnatha striata is provisionally in the LEAST CONCERN national conservation status category (Dawson *et al.* 2008). It was previously categorised as Nationally Scarce (Notable B) - difficulties in accessing its habitat may have led to past under recording as it is usually found in reed beds in standing water (Harvey *et al.*, 2002). The species is probably under little threat at Siddick where the reed bed is an ongoing integral feature of the habitat. It probably benefits from cutting rides for bird ringing as this creates an edge effect. The reserve is also managed to maintain reed bed edges to encourage bird species like Bittern and Reed Warbler.

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HARVESTMEN NEWS

An Opiliones Recording Scheme update - a call to armature and legs

by Peter Nicholson, National Organiser ORS

Happy New Year to you and let's hope for an active recording year for us all. The first piece of good news is that the SRS/ORS website is now ready for your records to be uploaded. All the records held by the BRC at CEH (Wallingford), plus some additional records are now in place and the distribution maps of all our British harvestmen are now able to be seen. This again is down to the hard work of Peter Harvey, how does he find the time? Many thanks Peter.

All the website needs now is populating with information and photos. Thanks are due to Paul Richards for starting the ball rolling with many harvestman pictures. My main aim is to get the species text in place and any additional photos needed. There are plans to have regional pages and other relevant topics. Please let me know what you would like to see, all suggestions welcome.

In the next few weeks MapMate users should get an update to their harvestmen taxa list. There is one amendment, *Rilaena triangularis* (Herbst 1799) reverts to *Platybunus triangularis* (Herbst 1799) and the addition of two species, *Leiobunum tisciae* Avram 1968 and *Platybunus pinetorum* (C.L. Koch 1839). Neither species is to be found in Hillyard (2005). Now confirmed records for these species can be added to MapMate and can be uploaded to the website. Those recorders who read the last SRS news (No.68 November 2010 in BAS Newsletter N0.119) will be aware of the article highlighting *P. pinetorum* found by Paul Richards. This species may be an introduction and at present is only known from one site.

Leiobunum tisciae has a protracted history; the first British reference was listed by Martens (1978). The location is thought to have been between Leek and Stoke-on-Trent, but as it could not be confirmed it was not recognised as being on the British list (Hillyard, 2005), also mentioned in J.H.P. Sankey's Provisional Atlas 1988.

Recently this species has been found in Scotland and confirmed by Axel Schönhofer and Prof. Martens. These initial finds in Scotland have been covered in articles by Mike Davidson in the SRS News, including in the *Scottish harvestman update* in this issue.

There is a certain amount of taxonomic confusion arising concerning *Leiobunum tisciae* and *Leiobunum rupestre*. Even though both these species are apparently easily separated, *Leiobunum tisciae* is not recognized in Central Europe whereas *Leiobunum rupestre* is. The problem of getting a description which we can use for identification purposes is confounded by the fact that there is another species, *Nelima apenninica*, which may be conspecific with *Leiobunum tisciae*. The result of all this is that there is a considerable amount of taxonomic work to be done to resolve these issues.

I am assured by Dr. Axel Schönhofer that *L. tisciae*, which is similar in outer appearance to *L. rupestre*, is the only one of the two species which inhabits the coast of Germany and Scandinavia, as well as in Great Britain. Anybody who finds a *Leiobunum* or *Nelima* species which looks similar to the picture of *Leiobunum tisciae* in the recently published FSC *Guide to Harvestmen of the British*

Isles by Paul Richards or on our SRS website should send it to myself, Paul or Mike Davidson for confirmation.

¹Dr. Axel Schönhofer Department of Biology, San Diego States University.

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Scottish Harvestman Update

by Mike Davidson

A very successful workshop was held in Perth (no, sadly, not Australia) in October 2010, utilising the excellent facilities of Perth Museum and including a field trip to the local cemetery. Despite a number of drop-outs, before the event, there were still people on the waiting list who could not be accommodated! Of course *Dicranopalus ramosus* was found and, during the day, participants saw live or pickled specimens of most of the British species. The opportunity was taken to test (hot from the press) Paul Richards' excellent FSC field guide. This was well received, with several copies sold.

Such is the demand for ID training, a further harvestman course is being held in Inverness in February 2011 (we might skip the field work). I am told there is already a waiting list.

Leiobunum tisciae was still around Aberdeen during 2010. I also found a dried corpse in the community centre toilets at Boat of Garten in June, extending its known distribution to Speyside. In September, another specimen was found by Ian Evans (ver. Paul Richards) in the public toilets at Durness. Having got all that way north, perhaps it will now head south. See Paul's guide for I.D. information as it is likely to key out as *Nelima*.

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