

# Spider Recording Scheme News

## Spring 2015, No. 81

**Editor:** Peter Harvey; srs@britishspiders.org.uk

**SRS website:** <http://srs.britishspiders.org.uk>

My thanks to those who have contributed to this issue. S.R.S. News No. 82 will be published in Summer 2015. Please send contributions by the mid June 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

As always, thank you to the contributors who have provided articles for this issue and especially to Richard Wilson who has contacted Area Organisers for the Society on my behalf and drummed up an unusually large number of submissions. **Please help future issues by providing articles**, short or longer, on interesting discoveries and observations.

We live in interesting times, and remarkable spiders continue to be found, so it seems there has never been a better time to be an active arachnologist!

### Spider records

We now have 976,162 spider records in total in MapMate. About 415,345 have at least some site-based phase 2 habitat information. All these data are uploaded and summarised on the Spider and Harvestman Recording Scheme website. There is a backlog of data in non-standard format which awaits import into the recording scheme, but the hope is that this backlog can be cleared this spring.

An updated spider taxon database in line with the published 2014 checklist will soon be in use on the SRS website and in MapMate.

### Website visitors

Since the Spider Recording Scheme website went live in August 2010 until the website moved to a new server in early April 2014 we had 156,746 visits from 104,781 users, with 868,879 page views from 169 countries/territories. In the 11 months since the move to a new server, we have had to date 77,063 visits from 56,149 users, with 339,733 page views from 166 countries/territories.

### Area Organiser changes

Howard Williams has decided it is time to hang up his arachnological guns and he has relinquished his role as Area Organiser for Notts. (VC56). I would like to thank Howard for all the hard work he has done for the Society and SRS over the years. He says that at the moment the post is not onerous, so if there is any arachnologist out there who would like to take on the AO role, please make contact.

All Area Organiser details are available to logged-on members on the Spider and Harvestman Recording Scheme website.

### Spider identification course

**Venue** Green Centre, Wat Tyler Country Park, Pitsea Hall Lane, Pitsea, Basildon, Essex SS16 4UH, see <http://www.essexfieldclub.org.uk/portal/p/Courses>

Tutor: Tony Russell-Smith.

Places: 12

Book with Peter Harvey.

([grays@peterharvey.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:grays@peterharvey.freeserve.co.uk))

Fee: £10, but free to members of the **Essex Field Club** and **British Arachnological Society**.

Morning refreshments provided. Bring your own lunch or alternatively the Wat Tyler café will be open.

This one day course is aimed at naturalists starting the study of spiders and covers an introduction and fieldwork in the morning, followed by the identification of spiders to family level and an introduction to microscopic examination in the afternoon.

As members will know, Tony Russell-Smith has been studying spiders for over 40 years and is an ex-president of the British Arachnological Society. He has tutored several courses on spider identification and biology for the Field Studies Council.

### *Philodromus buxi* and *Anyphaena sabina*: two new species records for the UK

by Richard Wilson

#### Introduction

Since 2013, along with two colleagues (Andy Godfrey and Dr Mark Telfer), I have been identifying invertebrates collected on a split-level greenroof located on the Transport for London's (TfL) building, located on the Greenwich Peninsula (TQ 393 799; VC 16, West Kent, see Figs. 1 & 2). Material has been collected via pitfall traps set within the shallow substrate and Malaise traps as well as direct observation. In 2013, I visited the site myself but the majority of material has been collected by Liz Powell and Hannah Brett (Ecohab Consultancy) and passed on to us for identification.

#### TfL Greenroof

The TfL greenroof is split on two levels and occupies a combined area of c. 1,000 m<sup>2</sup>. The building upon which it sits is located on the Greenwich Peninsula, immediately

adjacent to the O2 Arena (Millennium Dome) and the River Thames. There is very limited greenspace within this location. The nearest semi-natural terrestrial vegetation to the south of the Thames is located c. 900 m south within the Greenwich Peninsula Ecology Park (TQ 400 792), and Bow Creek Peninsula Park (TQ 391 810; VC 18, South Essex), c. 1.2 km to the north. There are various brownfield sites apparent within a c. 1 km radius of the site (e.g. Leamouth Peninsula) as well as more formal greenspace (i.e. planted trees and borders).



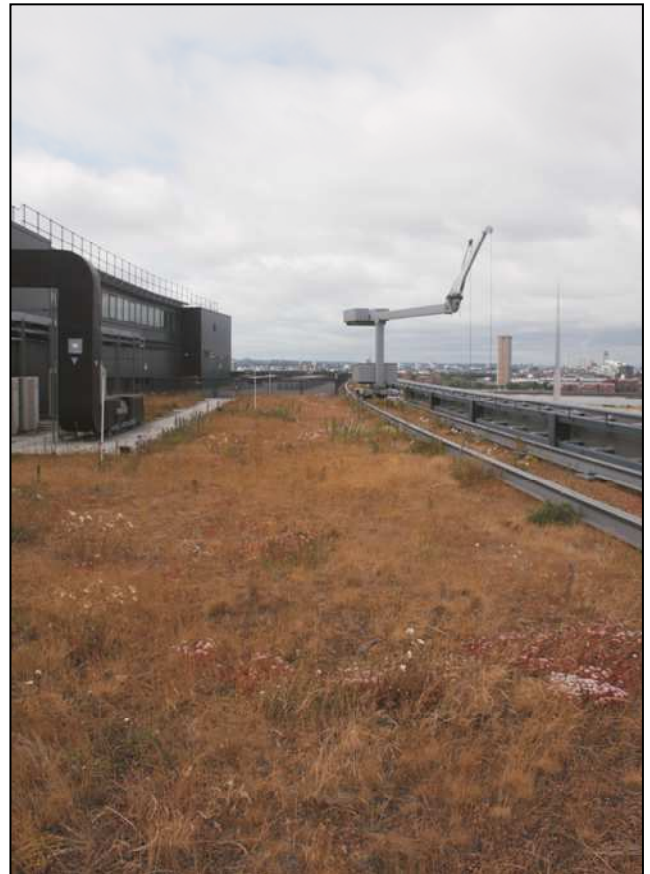
**Figure 1.** Greenwich Greenroof.  
Photograph © Richard Wilson

### Methods and Results

Between May and September 2013, and the same period in 2014, pitfall and Malaise traps were set and regularly re-charged to collect the various invertebrate groups targeted for identification. Whilst the Malaise trap was primarily set to collect Diptera and Hymenoptera, spiders were collected by this method, suggesting colonisation arising via ballooning. Two of these species were *Philodromus buxi* and *Anyphaena sabina*.

### *Philodromus buxi*

On two separate dates (24<sup>th</sup> June and 18<sup>th</sup> July 2014), two single males of this species were identified from material collected in the Malaise trap located on TFL's greenroof.



**Figure 2.** Greenwich Greenroof.  
Photograph © Richard Wilson

As both specimens occurred on separate dates, it seems reasonable to consider that they originated locally from an established population as opposed to being introduced or being blown in from mainland Europe. On mainland Europe, as with most *Philodromus* spp., the species lives on bushes and lower branches of trees. Apart from planted specimen trees within the hardstanding landscape surrounding the TFL building or isolated individuals within brownfield sites/ greenspace, the nearest semi-natural vegetation with trees/ shrubs would appear to be the previously mentioned ecological parks. *P. buxi* is known from France (e.g. Brittany) and elsewhere on mainland Europe, in sunny places (Nentwig *et al.*, 2015).

### *Anyphaena sabina*

A single male specimen of *A. sabina* was collected from a Malaise trap on the 24<sup>th</sup> June 2014. This constitutes the first male specimen taken in the UK. A single female was collected in a pitfall trap between mid-June and mid-July 2011 at Mile End Park, London (TQ 36 82; VC 21, Middlesex) by Edward Milner (Milner, 2012). Mile End Park is approximately 3.5 km north-west of the TFL greenroof. No information can be located regarding this species' typical habitat; it is assumed that it is normally an arboreal species like others in the genus.

### Summary

The first records of *P. buxi* over two separate dates suggest that there is an established population within the

vicinity of TfL's greenroof. Likewise, the record of the first male *A. sabina* suggests that the species is spreading from Mile End Park. Both species could reasonably be expected in suitable habitat within the Thames Gateway. Both species are understood by the author to prefer warm climates and the heat island effect in addition to the Thames Gateway's known invertebrate importance (Harvey, 2000) caused by natural climate patterns (i.e. low rainfall, warm temperatures) may well be benefiting both species.

In addition to the two species mentioned, *Erigone aletris* has also been taken. This is a species which is believed to be North American in origin but subsequently naturalised in Scotland and England. Its disjunct distribution suggests that it has entered via Leith (SRS, 2015). Kadas (2002) and Jones (2002) have recorded this species on greenroofs in central London (e.g. Canary Wharf) and it is considered to be spreading and a successful coloniser (SRS, 2015).

The TfL greenroof has yielded a number of other invertebrate species including a second British record of the rove beetle *Oligota muensteri* (Telfer, in press) and an Australian ladybird, *Rhyzobius forestieri*, which was first recorded in Britain some six weeks earlier (Telfer, submitted).

#### Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank Liz Powell (Ecohab Consultancy, Oxford) for commissioning the work, TfL authorities (via Liz Powell) for giving permission to publish the article and Peter Harvey for confirming the specimens and commentary on a first draft. The specimens of *A. sabina* and *P. buxi* have been retained; and given their national significance, are being kept within Peter Harvey's personal collection, which will eventually be passed on to a national museum.

#### References

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SRS. (2015) *Summary for Erigone aletris (Araneae)*.

Spider Recording Scheme website. <http://srs.britishspiders.org.uk/portal/p/Summary/s/Erigone+aletris>; last accessed on the 6<sup>th</sup> March 2015

Telfer, M.G. (in press) *Oligota muensteri* Bernhauer (Staphylinidae) in West Kent: the second British record. *The Coleopterist*.

Telfer, M.G. (submitted). *Rhyzobius forestieri* (Mulsant) (Coccinellidae) in West Kent. *The Coleopterist*.

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## *Oecobius navus* (Oecobiidae) in North Yorkshire

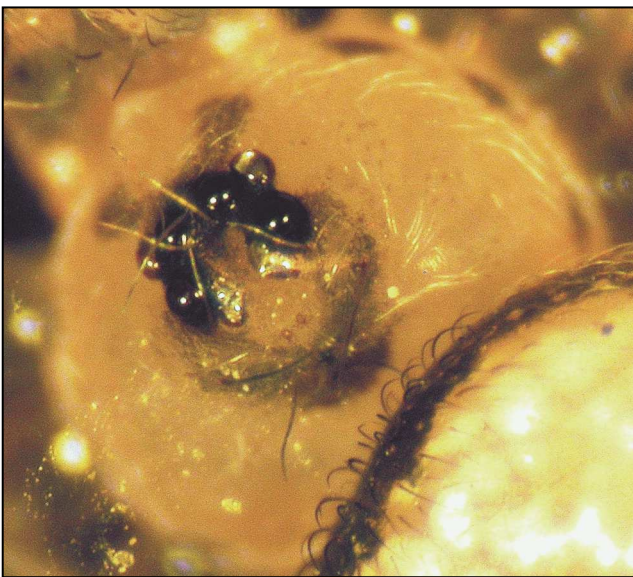
Geoff Oxford

We usually go looking for spiders, but occasionally they find us. On 27<sup>th</sup> January 2015 I was sitting in my office at the University of York (SE619505) when I became aware of a small, pale spider running at speed up and down my arm. Luckily a tube was at hand. Examination of the live spider in a holding device convinced me it was nothing I had seen before. The overall length was 2.5 mm and several curious features were immediately obvious. The cephalothorax was almost circular, pale and with interrupted black lines above each coxa insertion. At first glance there seemed to be just six eyes but with flat silver patches, apparently without lenses, where the posterior median eyes might be expected. Between the spinnerets was a prominent anal tubercle with a fringe of long hairs. The specimen had a rather indistinct cribellum and a calamistrum with a double row of bristles. The epigyne suggested the individual was mature. I was about to send the spider to Peter Harvey for an opinion when I happened to look in Roberts (1995) and there it was, *Oecobius navus* Blackwall 1859.

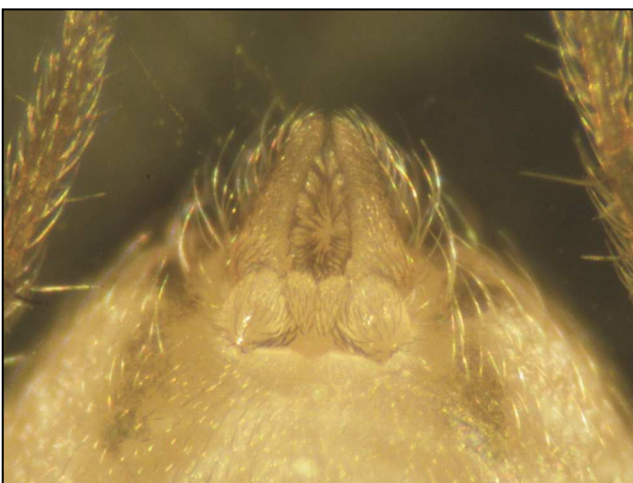


**Figure 1.** *Oecobius navus* dorsal view. The total length of the spider is 2.5 mm. Photograph © Geoff Oxford

This small, cribellate species, first described from Madeira, is now regarded as cosmopolitan, having been reported from South Africa, Australia and New Zealand, South, Central and North America, and South-East Asia. Closer to home, *Oecobius navus* occurs throughout western Europe and seems to have relatively recently established populations in central Europe (Kielhorn, 2008) and southern Finland (Fritzén, 2013). In warmer parts it is found under stones in oak woods and on heathlands, where it appears to specialise on ants, but is apparently confined to buildings north of the Alps ([http://www.araneae.unibe.ch/data/809/Oecobius\\_navus](http://www.araneae.unibe.ch/data/809/Oecobius_navus)). It builds a circular, white sheet-web (see Roberts, 1995: 63) about 30 mm in diameter in the corners of rooms.



**Figure 2.** *Oecobius navus* carapace showing the flat, silver posterior median eyes. The anterior lateral eyes are also silver, the rest are black. Photograph © Geoff Oxford



**Figure 3.** *Oecobius navus*—ventral view of abdomen showing, between the posterior spinnerets, the anal tubercle fringed with long hairs. Photograph © Geoff Oxford

In Britain, *Oecobius navus* was first recorded by Pickard-Cambridge (1909) from material sent to him from the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, where a single adult female

was ‘caught on a bundle of imported cork probably from Spain or N. Africa’. Ritchie (1978) provides subsequent information, although he misidentified the species as *O. annulipes*, apparently a common misunderstanding then (Roberts, 1995). The second record was of a male found by L.A. Carr in a greenhouse in Lichfield in the first quarter of the 1900s and identified by A.R. Jackson. In the early 1970s several specimens were collected from within the entomology department at the Natural History Museum (NHM), London, leading Ritchie (1978) to conclude that ‘a sizable colony is in existence’. The old entomology block was demolished eight years ago (Stuart Hine, pers. comm.). Jan Beccaloni and Stuart Hine of the NHM currently have no records of this species: none has appeared on the sticky traps placed around the Museum as part of their integrated pest management system. The latest British checklist of Merrett, Russell-Smith & Harvey (2014) includes *Oecobius navus* in the Channel Islands but not on the British mainland.

It seems highly likely that the York specimen represents a one-off import, although how it arrived in my office is anyone’s guess. The three colleagues who share the room with me have not received recent post from abroad.

#### Acknowledgements

Jan Beccaloni and Stuart Hine kindly answered my queries about the NHM records and Richard Wilson provided help with locating the Pickard-Cambridge reference. I thank Peter Harvey for confirming my identification and Mike Roberts for discussion.

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## Leicestershire and Rutland (VC 55) update

by Jon Daws

At present there isn't a county recorder or even an active arachnologist living within the county, the author having moved house over two and a half years ago. The only recording that is happening at present is via the wildlife photography / recording website "Naturespot" which has several members that photograph spiders as well as other invertebrates. One member also collects and forwards his spider specimens to the author for identification. This website has been responsible for the recording of at least three new species to the counties list including *Opilio canestrinii*, *Ero aphana* and *Nigma walckenaeri*.

The spider fauna has been well documented in the two volumes of "The spiders of Leicestershire and Rutland" by John Crocker and Jon Daws, published in 1996 and 2001. Since the last publication in 2001 several new county records have been discovered, *Nigma puella*, *Araniella inconspicua*, *Holocnemus pluchei* and *Steatoda nobilis*, with accounts of these and other interesting observations being published in the spider recording scheme newsletter (SRS News nos. 40, 47, 50, 51, 57, 60, 62).

All of the county spider records up to 2000 have been submitted to the spider recording scheme. Since 2000 the author has produced several thousand new records which he intends to put on computer in the near future, with Naturespot also having hundreds of arachnological records to view.

### Harvestmen

"The harvestmen of Leicestershire and Rutland" written by Jon Daws in 1994, can be viewed on the Naturespot website. Since its publication hundreds of new records have been produced by him, but none of these records have been computerised or sent to the spider recording scheme as yet. Naturespot also has photos / records of harvestmen that can be viewed on their website.

Jon Daws would like to offer any help and support he can to his successor as county recorder. Please email [jon.daws1962@icloud.com](mailto:jon.daws1962@icloud.com).

## A short review of spiders in Lincolnshire

by Annette Binding

Lincolnshire covers two main Vice Counties, VC53 South Lincs. and VC54 North Lincs. plus a small section of Vice County 63 South West Yorkshire which covers Crowle Waste (Moor), which is in Lincolnshire. The two main vice counties are roughly the same size but VC54 is more populated. VC 54 includes all the warrens around Scunthorpe as well as the Lincolnshire Limewoods and most of the coast. All these sites are well visited, although not always well recorded for spiders. VC53 is more sparsely populated and includes the South Kesteven

Woodlands and the fenland districts south of Boston and Spalding. VC53 is much less visited than VC54.

Spider recording in Lincolnshire has been more or less continuous from the 1950s to the present day. I took over as County Recorder in 1998. Lincolnshire is the second largest county in England and it is impossible to cover it alone but I have been fortunate to have been supported by some very enthusiastic people who over the years have sent me records and brought me specimens. They have found many species of note, something which would not have been possible without them. Since the rise of the digital camera I also now regularly receive photographs of spiders via email and I identify as many as possible. I try to encourage people to take an interest in spiders and I am assisted in this by Imogen Wilde (BAS Regional Co-ordinator and Mentor - East Midlands Region). She has taken on the role of organising meetings, newsletters and internet contacts.

Despite all the work that has been put in, there are still some parts of the county with very few records as a quick look at the county map in the East Midlands Spider Group Newsletter reveals. Much of the under recorded area is in the south of the county where there are a group of 10km squares which stand out for having virtually no records. The lack of records in this part of the county is the same even for butterflies, a group which has been heavily recorded across the county over the past 25 years with annual records for Lincolnshire exceeding 15,000. Some years ago we visited this under recorded part of the county to look for butterflies and other invertebrates certain that we could find some species to fill the gap but were only able to find a handful of species. This part of the county is intensively farmed and we found very few places to stop and look for invertebrates of any kind. On our visit we were concentrating on butterflies so another visit dedicated to spiders should turn up something.

In a recent email from the British Arachnological Society it was suggested that it might prove interesting to research the records to show those species with no post 1980 records. I have now done that for my VCs and the results are as follows.

345 species of spider have been recorded in Lincolnshire as a whole, 335 species in VC54 and 248 in VC53, plus 6 species in VC63. Of the 335 species in VC54, 44 have no post 1980 records and there are 52 species with no post 1980 records in VC53. Among the species with no post 1980 records, there are a few which have not been seen for over 100 years and it is possible that they are now extinct in the county. The lists include 1 Notable species in VC53 and 5 Notable species in VC54. Lincolnshire has only one species on the Species of Principal Importance (SoPi) list, *Philodromus fallax* Nb, which has been recorded from three sites on the coast between 1899 and 1984.

Researching these figures has shown that despite Lincolnshire being rather under recorded, there are more species with post 1980 records than without and it is possible that some of the species on the list will be rediscovered in future years.

**VC 53 South Lincolnshire**  
**Species with no post 1980 records**

**VC 54 North Lincolnshire**  
**Species with no post 1980 records**

| Species                                      | Last recorded | Species  | Last recorded |
|--|---------------|--|---------------|
| <i>Agelena labyrinthica</i>                  | 1965          | <i>Agalenatea redii</i>                          | 1965          |
| <i>Bathyphantes approximatus</i>             | 1960          | <i>Agyneta subtilis</i>                          | 1976          |
| <i>Bathyphantes nigrinus</i>                 | 1965          | <i>Araeoncus humilis</i>                         | 1975          |
| <i>Bathyphantes parvulus</i>                 | 1960          | <i>Araneus marmoreus</i> var. <i>pyramidatus</i> | 1976          |
| <i>Bolyphantes alticeps</i>                  | 1961          | <i>Baryphyma trifrons</i>                        | 1960          |
| <i>Centromerita bicolor</i>                  | 1966          | <i>Bolyphantes alticeps</i>                      | 1969          |
| <i>Centromerita concinna</i>                 | 1970          | <i>Bolyphantes luteolus</i>                      | 1968          |
| <i>Centromerus dilutus</i>                   | 1973          | <i>Centromerita concinna</i>                     | 1971          |
| <i>Centromerus sylvaticus</i>                | 1973          | <i>Centromerus arcanus</i>                       | 1970          |
| <i>Ceratinella brevipes</i>                  | 1973          | <i>Centromerus dilutus</i>                       | 1969          |
| <i>Ceratinella scabrosa</i>                  | 1953          | <i>Centromerus prudens</i>                       | 1976          |
| <i>Cnephalocotes obscurus</i>                | 1954          | <i>Ceratinella scabrosa</i>                      | 1960          |
| <i>Dicymbium tibiale</i>                     | 1974          | <i>Cryphoeca silvicola</i>                       | 1969          |
| <i>Diplocephalus picinus</i>                 | 1960          | <i>Dicymbium nigrum/brevisetosum</i>             | 1951          |
| <i>Dysdera erythrina</i>                     | 1960          | <i>Erigone arctica</i>                           | 1979          |
| <i>Ero cambridgei</i>                        | 1967          | <i>Hahnia nava</i>                               | 1969          |
| <i>Gonatium rubellum</i>                     | 1965          | <i>Halorates reprobus</i>                        | 1977          |
| <i>Gongylidiellum vivum</i>                  | 1971          | <i>Haplodrassus silvestris</i> Nb                | 1898          |
| <i>Haplodrassus signifer</i>                 | 1960          | <i>Hygrolycosa rubrofasciata</i> Na              | 1970          |
| <i>Labulla thoracica</i>                     | 1960          | <i>Marpissa muscosa</i> Nb                       | 1900          |
| <i>Leptorhoptrum robustum</i>                | 1960          | <i>Meioneta innotabilis</i>                      | 1969          |
| <i>Lophomma punctatum</i>                    | 1960          | <i>Meioneta saxatilis</i> sens. str.             | 1972          |
| <i>Macrargus rufus</i>                       | 1960          | <i>Meioneta saxatilis/mossica</i> sens. lat.     | 1972          |
| <i>Megalephyphantes nebulosus</i>            | 1969          | <i>Micrargus subaequalis</i>                     | 1976          |
| <i>Meioneta innotabilis</i>                  | 1960          | <i>Microctenonyx subitaneus</i>                  | 1960          |
| <i>Meioneta saxatilis</i> sens. str.         | 1954          | <i>Micrommata virescens</i>                      | 1900          |
| <i>Meioneta saxatilis/mossica</i> sens. lat. | 1960          | <i>Moebelia penicillata</i>                      | 1969          |
| <i>Microlinyphia impigra</i>                 | 1973          | <i>Oonops domesticus</i>                         | 1974          |
| <i>Microneta viaria</i>                      | 1966          | <i>Pardosa hortensis</i>                         | 1899          |
| <i>Moebelia penicillata</i>                  | 1960          | <i>Pelecopsis mengei</i>                         | 1969          |
| <i>Monocephalus fuscipes</i>                 | 1960          | <i>Pelecopsis nemoralis</i>                      | 1909          |
| <i>Ozyptila trux</i>                         | 1966          | <i>Philodromus emarginatus</i> Nb                | 1937          |
| <i>Palliduphantes ericaeus</i>               | 1960          | <i>Pocadicnemis pumila/junceae</i> sens. lat.    | 1966          |
| <i>Peponocranium ludicrum</i>                | 1970          | <i>Porrhomma convexum</i>                        | 1977          |
| <i>Pholcomma gibbum</i>                      | 1966          | <i>Prinerigone vagans</i>                        | 1909          |
| <i>Pirata latitans</i>                       | 1966          | <i>Robertus neglectus</i>                        | 1960          |
| <i>Pirata piscatorius</i>                    | 1970          | <i>Scotina gracilipes</i>                        | 1963          |
| <i>Porrhomma microphthalmum</i>              | 1960          | <i>Tapinocyba praecox</i>                        | 1963          |
| <i>Robertus lividus</i>                      | 1971          | <i>Tegenaria parietina</i>                       | 1963          |
| <i>Robertus neglectus</i>                    | 1970          | <i>Thyreosthenius parasiticus</i>                | 1969          |
| <i>Saaristoa abnormis</i>                    | 1960          | <i>Trichopterna thorelli</i>                     | 1911          |
| <i>Silometopus reussi</i>                    | 1963          | <i>Typhochrestus digitatus</i>                   | 1960          |
| <i>Tapinopa longidens</i>                    | 1960          | <i>Walckenaeria dysderoides</i>                  | 1971          |
| <i>Tegenaria atrica</i>                      | 1960          | <i>Xysticus luctuosus</i> Nb                     | 1908          |
| <i>Theridion familiare</i> Nb                | 1899          |  |               |
| <i>Tenuiphantes tenebricola</i>              | 1960          |  |               |
| <i>Tiso vagans</i>                           | 1964          |  |               |
| <i>Walckenaeria cucullata</i>                | 1960          |  |               |
| <i>Walckenaeria cuspidata</i>                | 1964          |  |               |
| <i>Walckenaeria nudipalpis</i>               | 1970          |  |               |
| <i>Xysticus erraticus</i>                    | 1957          |  |               |
| <i>Zygiella atrica</i>                       | 1960          |  |               |

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## Two linyphiids new to Lincolnshire

by Annette Binding

In February 2015 I received an email from Jon Daws asking me if the two species of linyphiid he had recorded at Chapel St Leonards on the Lincolnshire coast, were new to the county. The two species concerned were *Palliduphantes (Lepthyphantes) insignis* and *Porrhomma errans*. A check on the Lincolnshire database showed no other records for either species, confirming that they were both new county records. *Palliduphantes insignis*, a female, was found in 'the sewer' near Acacia Avenue on the 15<sup>th</sup> September 2014 and a male *Porrhomma errans* was found in a ditch in the churchyard on Church Lane on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2015. Both species are Notable b.

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## *Palliduphantes insignis* in Lincolnshire and other garden spiders

by Jonathan Daws

Having moved to Chapel St Leonard's (9 miles north of Skegness) in early July 2014, I have spent several hours a month collecting spiders in my large garden (TF557730). The usual collecting techniques were employed (beating, grubbing about and looking under stones and bits of wood), with the two most productive methods being; searching the lawn / concrete edges interface and taking the manhole covers off the sewer.

The manhole covers were relatively easy to remove using their built in handles on a new cover and by using a couple of old screwdrivers to lever up an old cover where the handles had rusted away. The manhole cover was then turned onto its back and scrutinised (since spiders like to hang upside down) followed by a search of the sewer, paying particular attention to the corners across which spiders build their webs. There are usually a few young and immature *Tegenaria* sp. in their sheet webs, with a few species of transient spiders (such as *Tenuiphantes tenuis* and *Erigone* spp.) and the odd opportunist breeders of subterranean habitats (*Ostearius melanopygius*, *Palliduphantes pallidus* and on the 15/09/2014 a female *Palliduphantes (Lepthyphantes) insignis* with egg sac).

At the interface where the lawns meet the various concrete borders and retaining walls a line of grass usually escapes the mower blades and either overhangs the borders or forms an edge to the walls. Pulling the grass back usually reveals a micro-habitat that can be utilised by an array of spiders. Amongst the commoner species collected there are occasionally the odd interesting records; *Saaristoia abnormis* 1 female 07/07/14, *Centromerita bicolor* 14/09/14 - 20/02/14, *Pelecopsis parallela* 3 male 20/09/14 & 1 male 13/11/14, *Silometopus reussi* 1 male 02/10/14, *Tenuiphantes mengei* 1 female 17/12/14 and all of the male *Dicymbium* being *brevisetosum*.

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## *Porrhomma errans* new to Lincolnshire

by Jonathan Daws

On the 06/02/2015 I visited the Parish Church at Chapel St Leonard's (TF552720) to look for spiders, with the initial hunt around the grave stones producing very little. The churchyard has been extended to accommodate further burials with the dry ditch lying between the two areas, which has been partly filled in. This ditch produced the majority of specimens from beneath pieces of stone and squashed former tree guards.

This small haul of spiders was dominated by *Diplostyla concolor* (one of the commonest species from under stones and general rubbish) and included a male *Cnephalocotes obscurus*. However the icing on the cake was a male *Porrhomma errans* that Annette Binding confirmed as a new county record.

In my experience *P. errans* is usually found in open rough grassy places with some bare ground present (such as overgrown abandoned allotments) or as an aeronaut.

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## *Theridion blackwalli* in South-west Yorkshire

by Jonathan Daws

Until recently I had lived in South Yorkshire for two years, but unfortunately my usual frequent collecting activities had been somewhat curtailed. Despite this some of the few trips I did make produced several *Theridion blackwalli* records. They are as follows:

Cusworth Hall 22/08/2013 1 female SE545038  
Cusworth Hall 27/04/2014 1 female SE545038  
Carisbrook Court, Arksey Village 12/04/2014 1 sub-male SE579068  
Barnby Dun Churchyard 03/05/2014 1 female SE614097

The Cusworth Hall specimens were collected from beneath small overhangs in the stonework of the main house (now a council museum). A sub-adult male was collected from under the window sill of a house in Carisbrook Court, Arksey village and a further female was found in a corner of the outside wall of Barnby Dun church. These records indicate that *T. blackwalli* is probably as frequent in South Yorkshire as it has proved to be in Leicestershire.

There is an old isolated record for County Durham on the BAS website for this species; but I firmly believe that eventually *T. blackwalli* will be found frequently, in its preferred habitat, across the whole of England, Wales as well as southern Scotland.

If you haven't found it to be a frequent spider in your area, you're not spending enough time looking in the right place!!! I look forward to reading about the avalanche of new *T. blackwalli* records in the next winter issue of the SRS newsletter?

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## Some common Yorkshire spiders?

by Richard Wilson

### Introduction

Since becoming the Area Organiser for the majority of Yorkshire's vice-counties, I have had the opportunity to review recording effort in the region and produce a list of species rarely recorded in this county (Wilson, 2011a). Furthermore, as a result of ongoing work, I have occasionally been surprised as to what I have perceived as being common species turning out to be relatively rarely recorded, as was the case for *Araneus quadratus* in Malhamdale (Wilson, 2011b).

The following maps illustrate a variety of what are generally considered to be common and widespread species nationally in England, and in some cases, the UK. However, even these common species have noticeable (and notable) gaps in their distribution. For instance, the daddy-long legs spider *Pholcus phalangioides* is sporadically recorded in Watsonian Yorkshire (Figure 1), and extremely rare in VCs 61 (south-east) and 62 (north-east Yorkshire). Surely it is more widespread than the map indicates?

**Figure 1:** Distribution of *Pholcus phalangioides* in Watsonian Yorkshire. Data correct up to 30<sup>th</sup> November

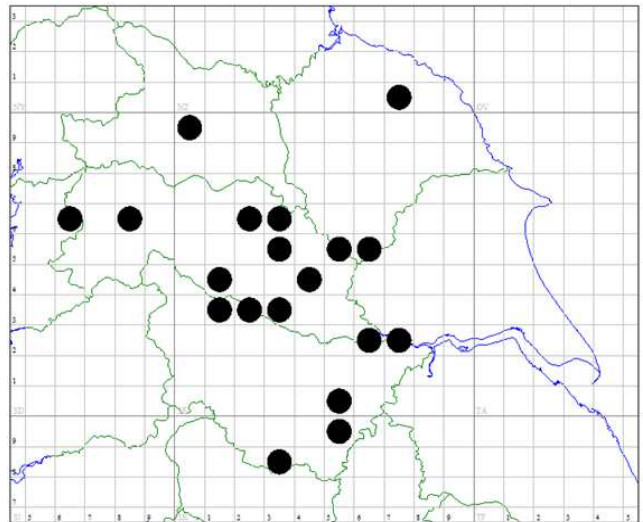
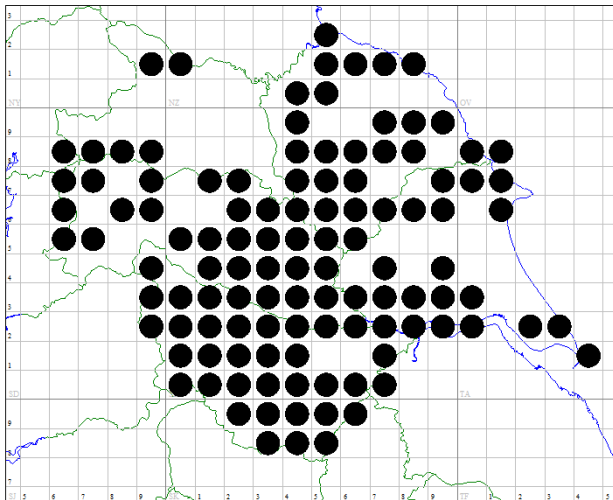


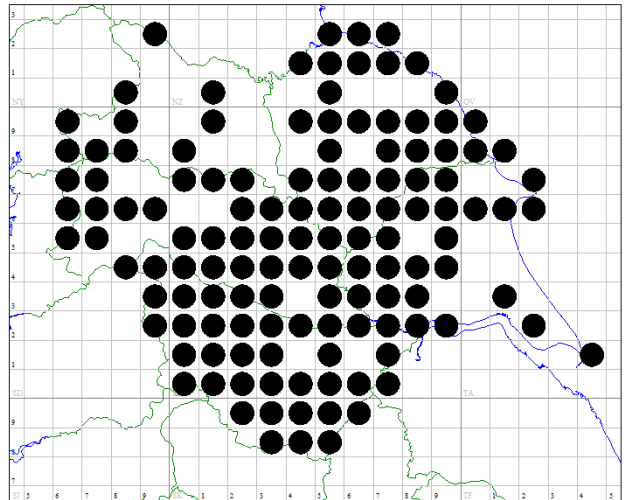
Figure 1 shows a good example of how BAS members as well as the general public can contribute effectively to the national recording scheme at a local level.

**Figure 2:** Distribution maps of widespread English spiders in Watsonian Yorkshire. Data correct up to 30<sup>th</sup> November 2014

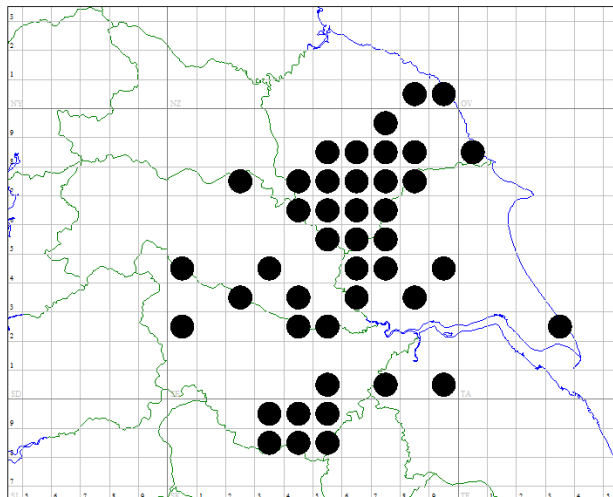
376 *Araneus diadematus* Clerck, 1757



368 *Metellina segmentata* sens. str. (Clerck, 1757)



443 *Pisaura mirabilis* (Clerck, 1757)



400 *Zygiella x-notata* (Clerck, 1757)

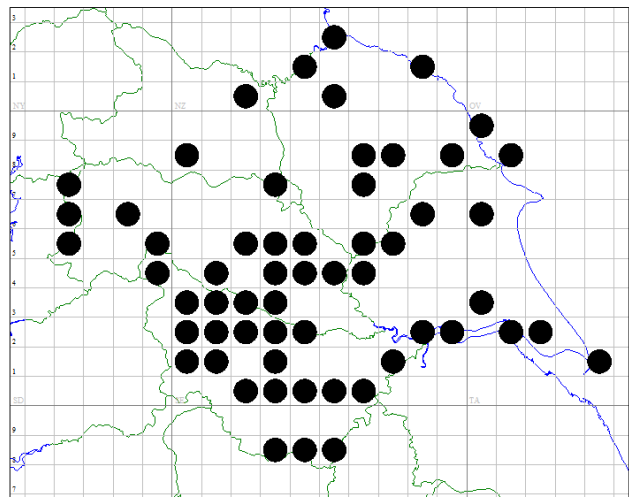




Figure 2 provides four more examples of generally common species including some that might not be routinely collected (*Araneus diadematus*, *Metellina segmentata*) by arachnologists. These maps offer the opportunity for beginners to genuinely contribute; for example records of *Zygiella x-notata* are almost absent in VC 65 (north-west Yorkshire) and northern parts of VC 64 (mid-west Yorkshire). Well, it isn't really but perhaps every arachnologist visiting the VC before has dismissed it as having been previously recorded by someone else. Given that a significant part of this distributional gap consists of the Yorkshire Dales National Park, there is clearly scope for visitors to Yorkshire to contribute, even if it is just visiting family, friends or for a day out.

I hope that by way of this article, this encourages Area Organisers to review their 'common' species and perhaps publish their own maps for their area. In doing so, it should encourage BAS members to think about how they could contribute. If there are any BAS members in VC 65 or the northern half of VC 64, note that you can make some significant contributions to our knowledge of a region or county's arachnofauna. So please check and identify that spider in the window corner; or the one hanging from the ceiling in the cupboard under the stairs; or the garden spiders. You can start to make a difference!

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## The status of spider recording in Watsonian Northumberland

by Richard Wilson

### Introduction

In the latter part of 2014, I took on the role of Area Organiser (AO) (recorder) for the two Watsonian vice-counties (VC) covering the administrative county of Northumberland; VC 67 (South Northumberland) and VC 68 (North Northumberland). This therefore provided the opportunity to review the status of spider recording, based on the national spider recording scheme (SRS) dataset that I hold and a desk-based study of relevant literature.

My motivation for taking on the AO role was initiated as a consequence of professional survey work for *Semljicola caliginosus* on a number of the Northumberland Border Mires, part of Natural England's species recovery programme. The purpose of this article is therefore to:

- provide a brief introduction to the history of spider recording within Watsonian Northumberland;
- summarise the extent of recording across the two

VCS based on the national SRS dataset 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 Northumberland.

Whilst it is unlikely that I will become a regular visitor to the two VCs, it is the hope that this article stimulates BAS members to appreciate that there is much to discover in this little-visited area of England.

### Northumberland

Northumberland is located in the north-east of England, bordering Scotland to the north and the administrative counties of Cumbria to the west, and County Durham and Tyne and Wear to the south. It covers an area of c. 5,000 km<sup>2</sup> which represents just less than 4 % of England. Northumberland has a varied environment, from the coastal sand dunes and the offshore islands of Lindisfarne (Holy Island) and the Farnes rising up to the higher ground within the Northumberland National Park, including the Cheviot Hills which contain upland moor, large coniferous plantations (e.g. Kielder Forest) and the Northumberland Border Mires. Lowland Northumberland includes woodlands, grasslands and restored habitats associated with the extraction industries and of course the Tyneside conurbations centred around Newcastle.

### History of Spider Recording in Northumberland

The earliest catalogue of spiders associated with Northumberland is presented in Hull (1896). The Reverend John Edward Hull was one of the UK's early eminent arachnologists, and like several before him (e.g. Octavius Pickard-Cambridge), was a vicar. He spent the majority of his adult life in Northumberland, taking curacies at South Shields, Bedlington and Haltwhistle before becoming Vicar of Ninebanks in 1905 and subsequently Belford before retiring in 1944 (Heslop-Harrison, 1960). Throughout his life, he was an avid naturalist as well as an expert in the Celtic language, ultimately becoming an authority on mites (Arachnida, Acari) as well as spiders (Turk, 1961). His 1896 catalogue covered both Northumberland and Durham and listed 192 species collated from earlier publications as well as his own observations. Extracting those recorded from Northumberland, the county list at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was 162 species. A subsequent note by Hull (1909) states that the Northumberland list stood at 293 species a little over a decade later.

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there were extended periods of very little survey effort, particularly between the 1930s and late 1960s. There was a brief period of increased recording during the 1970s and 1980s; the latter decade perhaps reflecting the efforts to support the newly established national recording scheme started by Clifford Smith in 1987. By the end of 2001 and the publication of the provisional Atlas (Harvey, Nellist and Telfer, 2002), the number of species recorded in the respective VCs had increased to 319 (VC 67) and 261 (VC 68).

### Spider Recording (Post 2002 Atlas)

As of 1<sup>st</sup> January 2015, the total number of species recorded in the administrative county of Northumberland is 345 species; of which the SRS database lists

326 species for VC 67 and 266 species for VC 68. Species diversity across the two VCs is illustrated in the diversity map (by hectad) presented in Figure 1 and Table 2. There is clearly a bias towards under-recording as approximately 69 % (52 out of 75 hectads covering Watsonian Northumberland (in whole or part)) have recorded no more than 50 species.

Since the Atlas' publication, recording has continued to be limited to sporadic visits. In South Northumberland, only 339 records have been submitted to the SRS out of a total of 5,213 (c. 6.5 %) for VC 67; whilst North Northumberland has received almost no attention (a meagre 36 records out of a total of 1,252 (c. 2.9 %) for the VC). Note these numbers differ slightly than those given in Harvey (2014) as a consequence of records submitted by me as a result of autumn surveys undertaken in the Northumberland Border Mires.

The distribution of records within both VCs is therefore dominated by historical recording effort (i.e. pre-Atlas publication) and in very limited geographic areas. Figure 2 suggests that the River Tyne valley between Hexham and Ryton (west of Newcastle); the Northumberland Border Mires between Spadeadam and Redesdale; and the north-eastern Cheviot Hills around Wooler have received the most attention.

There are 18 hectads where there are no historical spider records out of the 75 that cover the two Northumberland VCs and these are listed in Table 1 below; though note that there is overlap between VC 67 and VC 68, indicated with an asterisk (\*) and adjacent VCs such as Durham (VC 66) and Cumberland (VC 70). Of the 28 hectads covering VC 68, eight (c. 29 %) have no spider records whilst eight out of 44 hectads (c. 18 %)

have no records in VC 67. Allowing for the seven hectads that overlap both VCs, just less than a quarter (c. 24 %) of all hectads covering the county have no records. The national atlas had 86 % cover, i.e. only 14 % of hectads across UK (Telfer, Harvey and Nellis, 2002), meaning that the two VCs are significantly under-recorded compared with the national average.

### 'Rare' Spiders

An analysis of the SRS database available online for each of the VCs has provided the results illustrated in Table 2. Approximately a quarter of all Northumberland's species have not been recorded for more than 50 years and between half and two-thirds, depending on the VC, have not been recorded for at least 25 years.

This table, in combination with Table 1 really emphasises the significant under-recording experienced within Northumberland. In some ways, this is not unsurprising, given that it is a remote location except for the Tyneside conurbations. For example, the Northumberland National Park is the least visited in England and Wales and despite the large number of visitors each year visiting the Farne Islands, and resident wardens/naturalists, there have been only 30 species recorded from the archipelago, of which 29 have not been recorded since 1931!

### Future Work

There is clearly a lot to achieve by visiting either vice-county, and recording even the most common of species. For example, there is only one record of the synanthropic *Pholcus phalangoides* ('daddy long-legs spider') from Hexham (hectad: NY 96) and very scattered records of

**Table 1:** Hectads within Watsonian Northumberland with no spider records (as of 1<sup>st</sup> January 2015)

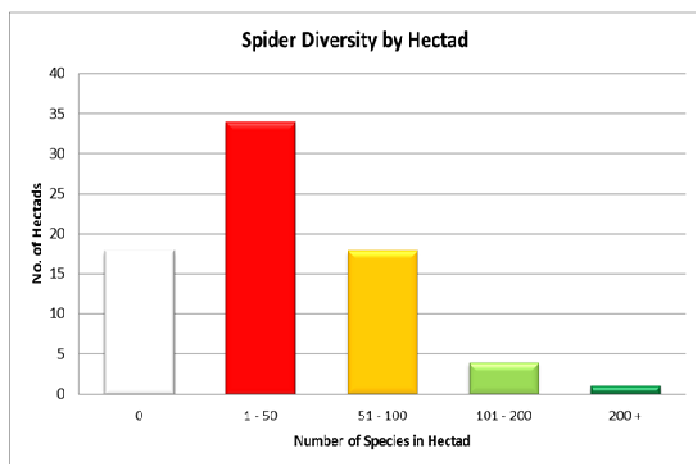
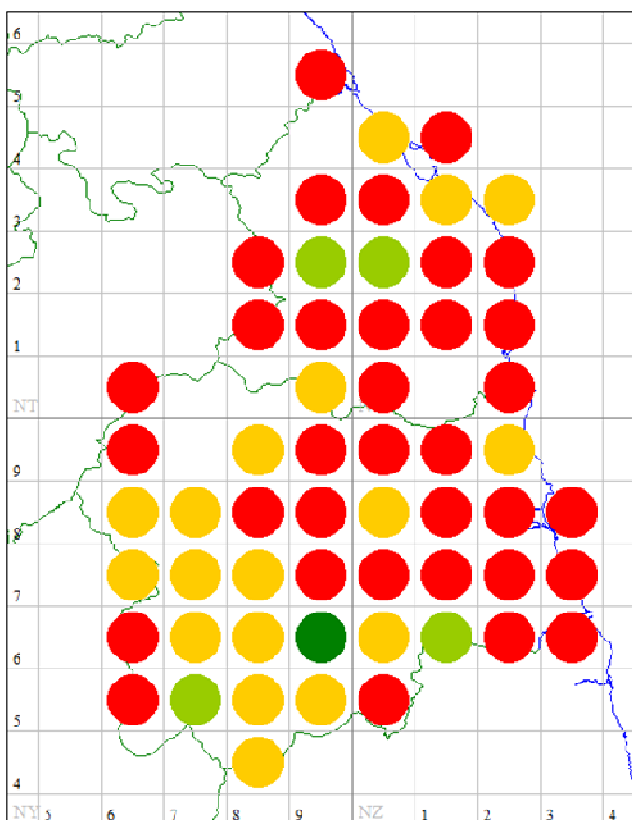
| North Northumberland (VC 68) |  | South Northumberland (VC 67) |  |
|------------------------------|--|------------------------------|--|
| Hectad                       | Location   | Hectad                       | Location   |
| NT 94                        | Countryside to south-west of Berwick around villages of Murton and Duddo.          | NY 79                        | Emblehope Moor and area (north-east of Kielder Water).   |
| NT 84                        | Rural area to west of the River Till and south of River Tweed, near Castle Heaton. | NY 88                        | Rural area centred around Bellingham and Hareshaw Common.  |
| NT 83                        | Rural area immediately south of Coldstream (Scotland) and River Tweed.             | NZ 18                        | Land to west of Morpeth within the River Wansbeck valley.  |
| *NT 80                       | Isolated upland area within Northumberland NP; centred on Crigdon Hill.            | NY 64                        | Upland area around Skelling Moor and Gilderdale Forest, west of Alston.                            |
| NT 73                        | A tiny area of land around the small village of Carham by the River Tweed.         | NY 74                        | Upland east of Alston, around Middle Fell.   |
| NT 71                        | Cheviot Hills, south-east of Jedburgh, near the summit of Woden Law.               | NY 94                        | Area around Stanhope Common, around village of Rookhope.   |
| *NT 70                       | Land to the south of Jedburgh, centred on the village of Bairnkine.                | NZ 04                        | Area around Waskerley Reservoir, Skaylock Hill and Muggleswick Common.                             |
| NU 10                        | Rural area south of Alnwick, in the vicinity of Newton-on-the-Moor.                | NZ 15                        | Triangular area of land between the Milkwell Burn and River Derwent either side of Broad Oak Farm. |

**Table 2:** Number of species last recorded in each date class (as of 1<sup>st</sup> January 2015).

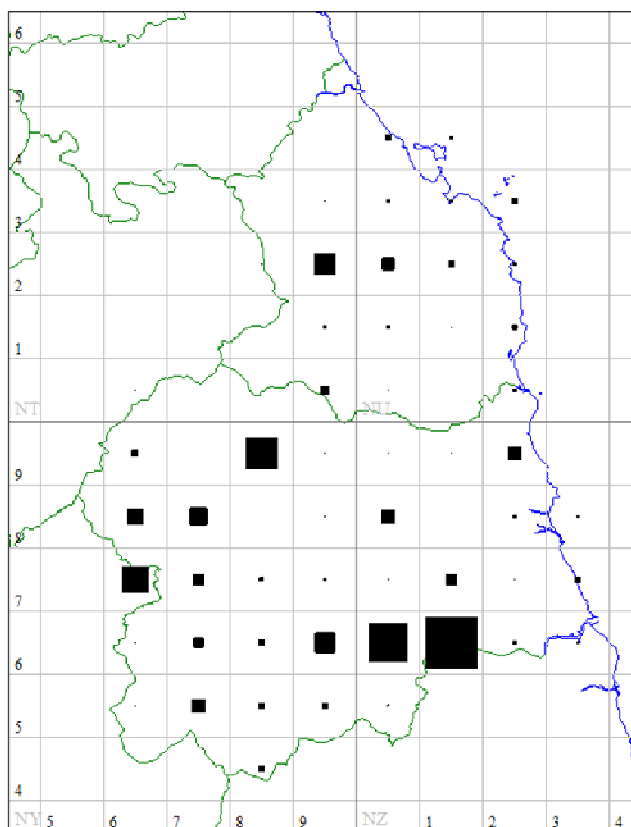
| Vice-county          | Before 1964 | Between 1964 & 1989 | 1990 to 2014 |
|----------------------|-------------|---------------------|--------------|
| South Northumberland | 82 (25.1 %) | 80 (24.5 %)         | 165 (50.4 %) |
| North Northumberland | 69 (25.6 %) | 109 (40.4 %)        | 92 (34.0 %)  |

two frequent, familiar and widespread species; the ubiquitous *Zygiella x-notata* which is typically recorded from the corners of windows; and the common garden orb-web species *Araneus diadematus*. The latter two species' distribution within Watsonian Northumberland are illustrated in Figure 3 which really demonstrates that members of the public as well as arachnologists can contribute to our knowledge.

**Figure 1:** Spider diversity within Watsonian Northumberland. Red circles:  $\leq 50$  spp.; yellow circles: 51 to 100 spp.; pale green circles: 101 to 200 spp.; and green circles:  $> 200$  spp.



**Figure 2:** Relative recording effort within the Northumberland VCs. The larger the squares, the more records. © SRS/ British Arachnological Society



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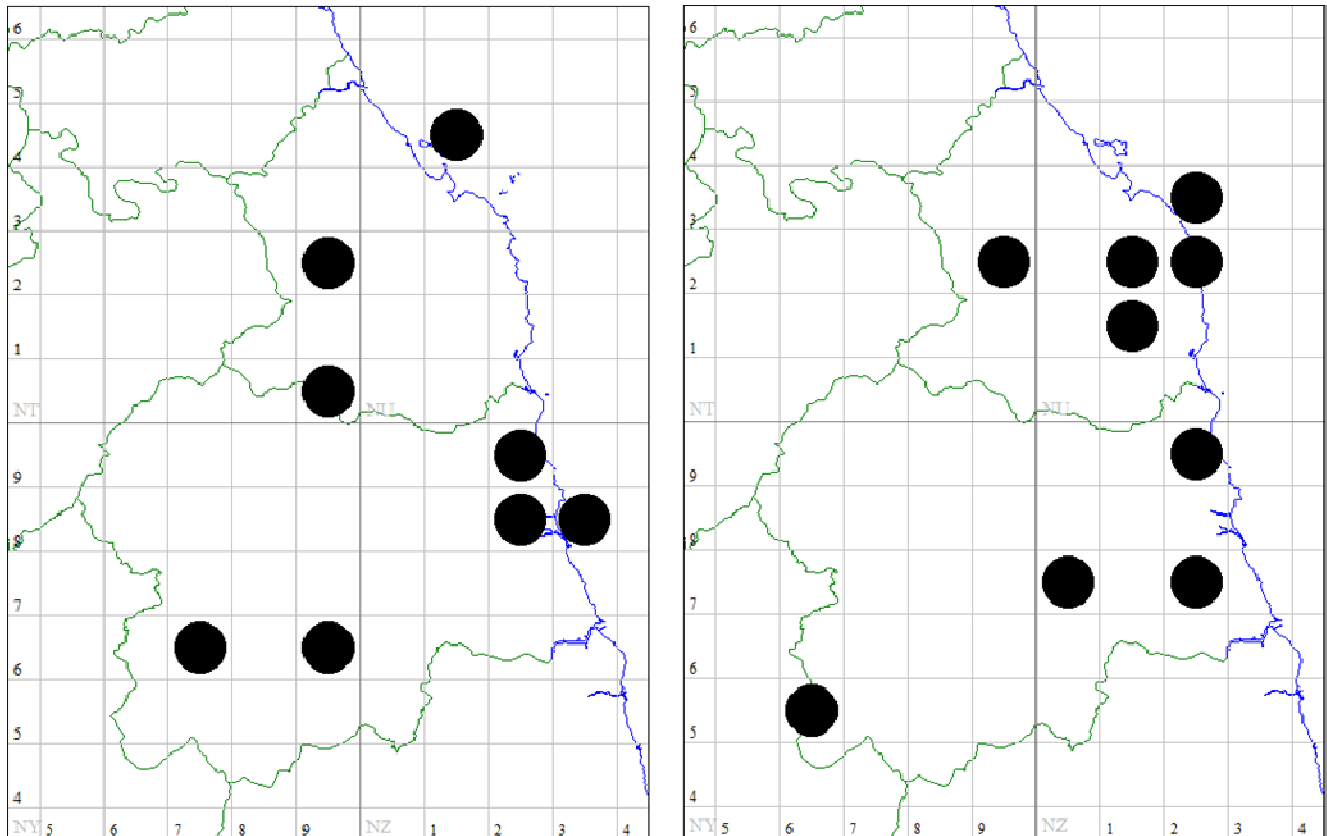
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**Figure 3:** Distribution of *Araneus diadematus* (left) and *Zygiella x-notata* (right) within the Northumberland VCs.  
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## Some interesting spider records from Kent, 2012-2014

by Tony Russell-Smith

Recording of spiders in Kent appears to have declined somewhat following the publication of the Provisional Atlas of British Spiders (Harvey *et al.*, 2002). Despite this, new and interesting spiders continue to be found in the county, largely as the result of the efforts of a small band of keen enthusiasts who meet two or three times a year to survey particular habitats of interest. Further records were kindly provided by Alex Williams, Greg Hitchcock and David Wilson. This article provides an update on some of the more interesting discoveries in the county during the three year period from 2012 to the end of 2014.

Alex Williams did some pitfall trapping on the sand dunes at Greatstone-on-Sea in April and August 2012 and kindly sent his records to me. By far the most interesting species collected was a male of *Trichopterna cito* (RDB, Endangered) collected in August. This sand-dune specialist was previously only known from four sites in Britain, Colne Point (Essex), Sandwich Bay & Dungeness (Kent) and Rye Harbour (Sussex). The discovery here on the dunes at Greatstone is a welcome addition to its known sites although its very small size means that it might well have been overlooked on other

dune systems in southern Britain. Other interesting species in the traps included the wolf spiders *Alopecosa barbipes* and *Xerolycosa miniata*, a male of the “wasp spider” *Argiope bruennichi* as well as the small ground spider *Zelotes electus*.

In October 2012, David Carr, Robin Rigby, Mark Ritchie and I visited Mersham Hatch Park near Ashford. This ancient deer park is an SSSI, the acid grassland of which is said to have not been ploughed over the past 500 years. It is also well known for its veteran oak and hornbeam pollards which support an important lichen flora. Among the more interesting species collected from the heavily grazed grassland were the wolf spider *Alopecosa barbipes*, the jumping spider *Sibianor aurocinctus* and the strikingly marked theridiid *Steatoda phalerata* which, like several other members of the genus, feeds on ants. The first of these is widespread in Britain but, at least in Kent, has a very patchy distribution which includes the shingle at Dungeness, one or two chalk grassland areas and several post-industrial sites. The common factor in these diverse habitats appears to be a relatively warm microclimate. Much the same preference seems to be exhibited by *S. aurocinctus* and *S. phalerata* as well, the latter of which is only known from half a dozen localities in Kent. Although our visit was relatively late in the year, it was clear that this was a potentially rich location for spiders and another visit was planned for 2013.



Male of the wolf spider *Alopecosa barbipes*, an uncommon species from dry habitats. Photograph © Evan Jones

Ranscombe Farm near Strood is managed by Plantlife, primarily for its rare arable plants. The farm also includes ancient woodland, grassland and part of the adjacent Cobham Park, with its veteran oak and chestnut trees. Hardly any recording for spiders had been undertaken previously in this area so in the last week of May 2013, the same group, together with Greg Hitchcock and Richard Price, visited the farm at the invitation of Richard Moyses, the reserve manager. The most interesting species found were two jumping spiders, both of which were collected on ancient trees in Cobham Park section of the reserve. *Marpissa muscosa* (Nationally Notable B) is relatively common in Surrey and Sussex but in Kent it is known from some ten hectads, all but two in West Kent. The species appeared to be quite abundant on the trunks of ancient pollards in Cobham Park and was even found on a tubular steel gate. The second salticid, *Salticus zebraneus* (Nationally Notable A) was collected by David Carr. This species is much less common and is known from only six hectads in Kent. Overall, we produced a respectable list of 60 spider species but there are doubtless many more to be found within this large reserve.



The large jumping spider *Marpissa muscosa* female from Cobham Park. This flattened hairy species is found on tree trunks and fences in southern England. Photograph © Evan Jones

Mid-June 2013 saw our return to Mersham Hatch Park, accompanied by Peter Harvey. Many of the more interesting species found on this occasion were collected from foliage or trunks of trees in the park. They included 2 males and 2 females of *Philodromus collinus* (Notable B) collected by David Carr from pine foliage while Peter Harvey found females of *Philodromus praedatus* (Notable B) on oak foliage and males of both the rare *P. longipalpis* and *Salticus zebraneus* on the trunks of ancient pollards. The heavily grazed acid grassland produced specimens of the uncommon money spiders *Walckenaeria furcillata* and *Tapinocyba praecox*, both of which are often found in ancient pastures. *T. praecox* is recorded from only 9 hectads in Kent but, being particularly small, may well be significantly under-recorded in the county. In total, 92 species were collected in Mersham Hatch Park, bringing the total known for this site to 116.

Mark Ritchie and I were invited to undertake a survey in Mote Park, Maidstone by Alan Frith, the development officer for the park, in July 2013. At first glance, this large 450 acre municipal park looks rather unpromising for wildlife as large parts of it are closely mown amenity grassland and it has very heavy visitor pressure, particularly from dog walkers. However, the park has a history dating back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century and includes areas of unimproved neutral grassland (a rare habitat in lowland Britain today), a lake with a small reed bed, secondary woodland and many fine specimen trees, both native and exotic. Interesting records from this site included a male and two females of *Nesticus cellulanus* from the reed bed. Although normally found in caves, cellars, drains and other dark and damp places, it has been recorded from a few wetland sites across Britain. In Kent it has only been recorded from three hectads previously but this may be more a reflection of its usually cryptic habitat than its real distribution. A second surprising record was a male of the small linyphiid *Monocephalus castaneipes*, a UK BAP species that has apparently declined significantly in the past 30 years. This was collected from ivy on an ancient yew tree in secondary woodland close to Mote House. It is a very scarce spider in Kent, known from only three other hectads but in all cases associated with ancient trees. During two visits in 2013 and another in 2014, a total of 93 species were collected from this previously un-surveyed site, showing how even apparently unpromising areas can harbour a wealth of spiders.

Greg Hitchcock visited Holborough Marshes LNR on the River Medway on the 17<sup>th</sup> May 2014 with the Kent Field Club. While sweeping tall neutral grassland he collected a male of *Meioneta mollis* (UKBAP) This spider has only been recorded from four other sites in Kent and has shown a significant decline in the UK over the past 20 years. In July, Richard Wilson set malaise traps on a green roof in Greenwich. Among the 8 spider species collected was a female of the pirate spider *Ero aphana* (RDB Endangered), the first record for Kent. In fact this species is now fairly frequent in Surrey and along the Thames estuary in Essex so its discovery in Kent is not totally unexpected. In Essex it seems to be most frequently collected on brown-field sites and may well turn up on similar sites along the Thames corridor in Kent.

On the last day of May 2014, I was joined by David

Carr and Richard Price on a visit to Canterbury Old Park, approximately a mile east of Canterbury city centre. As the name implies, this was also a late medieval park although one that apparently fell out of use in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Since then it has had a chequered career, having been used by the military in World Wars I and II and now is home to the Canterbury Golf Club. The acid grassland has been invaded by gorse, broom and young oaks in many areas which provide splendid breeding sites for such birds as Nightingales, Whitethroats and Turtle Doves. Together with species-rich wet woodland, this accounts for its SSSI status. On this first visit, interesting spiders recorded included the jumping spider *Sibianor aurocinctus* (Notable A), the theridiid *Steatoda phalerata*, the uncommon philodromid *Philodromus longipalpis* and the small money spider *Entelecara congenera*. I made a second visit on the 25<sup>th</sup> June when I swept a female of the small orb-web spider *Hypsosinga sanguinea* (Notable B) from acid grassland and beat a female of *Philodromus praedatus* (Notable B) from a young oak tree. *H. sanguinea* is recorded from 11 hectads in Kent, about half of them on chalk grassland. We returned to this site for the final visit on the 25<sup>th</sup> October in the company of Evan Jones. On this occasion, we found the tiny *Tapinocyba praecox* in grass at the base of a *Lasius* ant mound as well as the uncommon linyphiid *Centromerus incilium* (Notable B) which was collected in some numbers from heavily rabbit-grazed grassland by several participants. In Kent, *C. incilium* was previously only known from Sandwich where it was recorded by Alex Williams over 30 years ago. Another interesting species collected was the small dark gnaphosid *Zelotes electus*. This is most frequently found on coastal sand dunes but has been recorded from sandy grasslands inland on the brecks of Norfolk and Suffolk and at Sandy in Bedfordshire. This is the first confirmed inland record for Kent.



Male of the ground spider *Zelotes electus*. Normally considered a sand-dune specialist but recently collected inland in Kent at Canterbury Old Park. Photograph © Evan Jones

A total of 111 species were recorded from Old Park during the course of three visits and this under-recorded site will almost certainly reward further survey.

Queendown Warren is one of the most important Kent Wildlife Trust chalk grassland reserves where David Carr, Michelle Fountain, Richard Price and I joined Greg Hitchcock on a Kent Field Club meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2014. Although the weather had been particularly dry in the previous weeks and spiders were rather thin on the ground, David managed to find *Salticus zebraneus* (Notable A) on a large tree trunk and the money spider *Meioneta mollis* (UK BAP) on very sparse chalk grass where a pipeline had been laid through an extension to the reserve. In total 43 species were recorded on this visit, bringing the total number known from the reserve to 97.

Our final field visit of 2014 was to the sand dunes at Greatstone-on-Sea on the 5<sup>th</sup> October with David Carr, Evan Jones and Richard Price. Here we collected many of the specialist sand dune spiders, including *Zelotes electus*, *Xerolycosa miniata*, *Philodromus fallax* (a new record for the site) and *Marpissa nivoyi*. However, the two most notable species were *Agroeca lusatica* (RDB) which is only known in Britain from the dunes at Sandwich Bay and Greatstone and *Trichopterna cito*. In fact, *A. lusatica* has been recorded at Greatstone on several previous occasions and appears reasonably abundant in autumn. Two males and two females of *T. cito* were collected by David and Evan, suggesting that this tiny money spider may also be well established here. Although only 34 species were collected on this occasion, they included three new for the site. Taken together with the 9 new species for the site collected by Alex Williams from pitfall traps in 2012, a total of 80 species have now been recorded from this small but very rich sand dune system.



*Philodromus fallax* female. A spider from the fore-dune zone at Greatstone-on-Sea which is superbly camouflaged against the pale sandy background. Photograph © Evan Jones



A male of the money spider *Trichopterna cito* found at Greatstone-on-Sea. This tiny (1.5 mm) spider is only known from five sand-dune systems in the UK. Photograph © Evan Jones

The sites visited over the past three years have included three that originated as medieval parks but which have had very different subsequent histories. Merton Hatch Park is a rare survival in much its original state with a central deer-grazed grassland “laund” surrounded by ancient pollards of hornbeam and oak. Canterbury Old Park was a royal deer park created in the 16<sup>th</sup> century but had relatively short life and was apparently disemparked in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. It was used for military purposes in both World Wars but much of its acid grassland survives. Mote Park was probably never a deer park and has now become a large municipal recreation area, much of it under amenity grassland. Despite these differences, at present the three parks have rather similar numbers of spider records, 92 and 93 from Merton Hatch and Mote Park respectively and 111 from Canterbury Old Park. To some extent this similarity probably reflects under-sampling and further recording will certainly result in many more species recorded from all three sites. It may also be partially a result of the methods used. Hand collecting on a few days in the year is not particularly efficient in grazed grassland where techniques such as pitfall trapping or suction sampling are needed to effectively survey the ground-active fauna.

#### Acknowledgements

I am particularly grateful to Evan Jones for allowing me to use some of his splendid photographs of spiders. My thanks also go to those who have sent me records during this period, Greg Hitchcock, Alex Williams and Richard Wilson. Finally, this article would have never have appeared without the hard work and dedication of my fellow arachnologists David Carr, Michelle Fountain, Peter Harvey, Greg Hitchcock, Richard Price, Robin Rigby and Mark Ritchie.

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## A Spider stowaway

by Annette Binding

Spiders spread in a variety of ways, among them stowaway. Just about everyone knows about those that stowaway in cargo such as bananas and other imported produce but most people would probably not expect to find a spider stowaway in their car and would be unlikely to see any that were there as most species prefer to keep hidden. However, in September one stowaway spider made itself known as the car it was in was being driven from the Isle of Wight to Reading. As the car travelled on the M3, the driver became aware of movement near the foot-well and was horrified to see a large black spider climbing up inside her car. The driver who like most people does not like spiders, knew that Winchester North Services was not far ahead and made for that. The second the car pulled up at the services, the spider was flicked out of the car, flying through the air and narrowly missing a passer-by who probably now believes that spiders can fly.

It is not known what species the spider was but from the description it could have been one of the large *Steatoda*. The place where we think the spider entered the car and the place where it disembarked are within range of both *Steatoda nobilis* and *Steatoda grossa* but it got me thinking that had the driver been travelling further north as she often does, the spider could have ended up in a place well out of its usual range.

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## *Opilio canestrinii* in South-west Yorkshire

by Jonathan Daws

This species has seen a dramatic increase in its distribution across the country over the last few years. So it is no real surprise that *Opilio canestrinii* has been found in S.W. Yorkshire, where it has been beaten from bushes in two churchyards.

Barnby Dun Churchyard 18/09/2013 1 male  
SE614097  
Owston Churchyard 25/09/2013 3 males  
SE551111

These were the first specimens I had collected of this species, and being fresh were easily identified due to their coloration.

I had previously been sent this species to identify collected in Leicestershire (where it also seems to be relatively common) by Graham Calow. Unfortunately my

copy of the synopsis of the British fauna No.4 (second edition) doesn't cover *O. canestrinii*, but fortunately a quick check on the internet identified these specimens from photographs. Perhaps it is time that the people who own the synopsis series commissioned a "fourth edition" to cover all the new additions to the British fauna!!

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*Philodromus buxi* female, one of two collected on 25 May 1992 at Belle Croix in Brittany, France from oaks growing in a heathy area of scrub and grassland. Photograph © Peter Harvey

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