

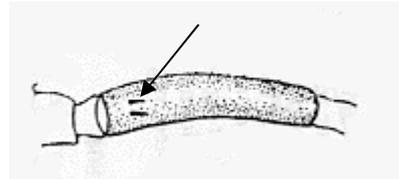
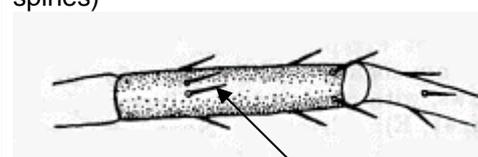
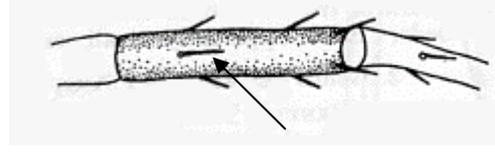
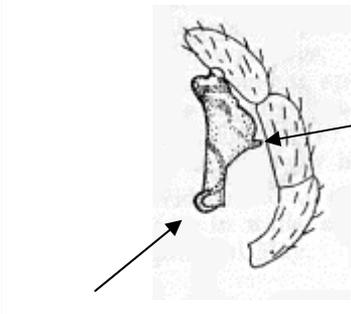
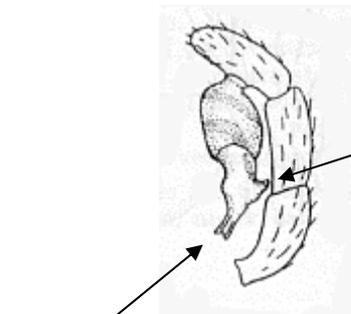
Identification of *Dysdera crocata* and *Dysdera erythrina*

The females of these two species can be very difficult and some may be best left unidentified unless dissected. Adult females have no epigyne, but in *D. crocata* in particular the adnexae are visible through the cuticle in preserved specimens. Juveniles certainly cannot be reliably identified to species level. Particular caution is needed for any *Dysdera* recorded from synanthropic situations, where *D. erythrina* is unlikely to be found.

D. crocata is often found in synanthropic situations in gardens, post-industrial situations and various kinds of wasteground, as well as in shingle or stony habitats. Reliably identified *D. erythrina* suggest that it is a species much more restricted in habitat preferences, and is most likely to occur on heathland, old undisturbed coastal shingle and old grasslands.

The tibial spines are very variable and should not be relied on for identification. The femoral spines are a better guide but again are not totally reliable. If the dorsal femoral spine is present then it is certainly *D. crocata*, but these may be absent in some *D. crocata* leading to confusion with *D. erythrina*.

In living or freshly preserved individuals carapace colour is a guide – typically dark red in *erythrina*, more orange-red in *crocata*. There may be a subtle difference in abdomen colour as well.

	<i>D. erythrina</i>	<i>D. crocata</i>
Length	Smaller: male 7-8mm, female 9-10mm	Larger, male 9-10mm, female 11-15mm
Femur IV	No dorsal spines	Short spines (usually 2) dorsally, close to basal end 
Tibia IV	Usually with 2 ventral spines in basal half (apart from the lateral and apical spines) 	Usually with 1 ventral spine in basal half (apart from the lateral and apical spines) 
Female genital markings		Usually pronounced in preserved specimens
Male palp		

Figures from Locket & Millidge (1951).

References

Locket, G.H. & Millidge, A.F. 1951. *British Spiders* Volume 1. Ray Society, London.

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