

## OPILIONES (HARVEST-SPIDER) RECORDING SCHEME

Newsletter No. 2. April 1983.

Thanks to the efforts of a growing number of recorders, some 2,700 records of Opiliones are now on computer file at the Biological Records Centre, Monks Wood. These records have been used to produce listings of all the records of each species and for each vice-county. Interim computer maps have been made which show the distribution of recorders more than anything else; however, some species are clearly "southern" in distribution. At present there are too few records to make even preliminary distribution maps worthwhile.

As some of you know, Colin Howes has been collecting records of Opiliones for the British Arachnological Society, especially from Yorkshire and adjacent counties. I am pleased to say that during 1983/84 Paul Harding (BRC) hopes to be able to incorporate Colin Howes' records with those from this recording scheme. This will considerably increase the coverage of the scheme and may make a preliminary atlas a viable proposition in 1984.

Do not be complacent! More records are needed away from the larger built-up areas, especially in Wales and the Welsh borders, the South-West Peninsula, East Anglia, Lincolnshire, Scotland (except possibly Skye) and the whole of Ireland.

### Name changes

The names of several species have been changed since the publication of the Linnean Society Synopsis No. 4 (1974). These changes follow the nomenclature of Martens, J. 1978. *Die Tierwelt Deutschlands*, 64: *Spinnentiere, Arachnida, Weberknechte, Opiliones*. Jena: Gustav Fischer (cost c.£25-£30).

*Dicranopalpus ramosus* (= *D. caudatus*)  
*Nelima gothica* (= *N. silvatica*)  
*Lophopilio palpinalis* (*Oligolophus palpinalis*)  
*Paroligolophus agrestis* (= *Oligolophus agrestis*)  
*Paroligolophus meadii* (= *Oligolophus meadii*)  
*Rilaena triangularis* (= *Platybunus triangularis*)

*Odiellus spinosus* has now been removed from the genus *Oligolophus* and definitely assigned to *Odiellus*.

### New species

1. *Mitopus ericaeus* sp. nov. has been described as a new species to science from Co. Durham (Muggleswick Common) in 1980 at 260 m. O.D. by Dr Amanda Jennings (*J. Zool. Lond.* (1982), 198, 1-14), who is to be congratulated on this interesting addition to our opilionid fauna. It has also been discovered in a few other localities in the north of England, and is clearly an upland species and ought to be more widely sought, especially in Scotland. It is similar to *M. morio* but is larger, more heavily pigmented and has longer legs.

2. A member of the genus *Sabacon*, whose specific rank has not yet been determined, was discovered by Mr R H R Abbott of Manchester University (see British Arach. Soc. Newsletter No. 30, March 1981, page 4). Arachnologists visiting the Gower should keep a good lookout for this ground-living harvestman occurring in damp woodland. Males are particularly wanted by Professor Martens of Mainz University, as he is revising this genus.
3. A colony of *Leiobunum tisciae* Avram was found 'between Leek and Stoke-on-Trent' by Mons. S Ausobsky of Hungary. I have seen the specimens on Professor Marten's desk, but despite further search and unsuccessful attempts to contact the finder it has not been possible to obtain further specimens or indeed to pinpoint the original locality. So for the moment *L. tisciae* can hardly be admitted to the British list, but it would be well worth scouring Derbyshire! I believe grassy and stony places with rank vegetation might be its habitat.
4. Records and full details of capture, especially if beaten off or found near holm oak trees or other exotics, are much needed for *Dicranopalpus ramosus*. This species is proving to be more widespread than formerly indicated, and is often associated with urban parks, formal gardens made in this century or earlier and generally in places where one would not look for harvestmen. It would be helpful if those in a position to do so would get permission to beat any holm oaks and other exotic trees which have a good covering of ground vegetation under them in such areas.
5. *Boeotix manducus* Thorell; this exotic species has been recorded from Kew Gardens by Dr A J Rundle (see Hillyard, British Arach. Soc. Newsletter No. 31, July 1981, page 3).

#### Supplies of record cards

Supplies of cards may be obtained by recorders from the Biological Records Centre, Monks Wood Experimental Station, Abbots Ripton, Huntingdon, Cambs. PE17 2LS. Tel. Abbots Ripton 381.

#### Completed cards and specimens for identification

Completed cards should be returned to me, not to BRC. I am willing to assist with the identification of mature or near-mature specimens provided they are well preserved and properly labelled. See Newsletter No. 1 for further details.

Cards and specimens should be sent to my NEW ADDRESS:

John Sankey  
3 Glenrose  
Old London Road  
Mickleham  
Dorking  
Surrey  
RH5 6BY