

OPILIONES (HARVEST-SPIDER) RECORDING SCHEME

Newsletter No. 5 - July 1986

Trogulus tricarinatus

The size of British specimens is rather bigger than Jochen Martens gives for continental ones and there is the possibility that ours represents an isolated race and perhaps even meriting the rank of species. Thus a good series of adults of both sexes is needed by Jochen. But they are hard to come by. Almost certainly more or less confined to chalk and other limestone soils mainly in the southern counties, it lurks under stones, logs, old sacking on the ground, in leaf litter and in moss, mainly in open woodlands. It is best collected by the sieve method described in Newsletter No. 3 (April 1984). I have sent a few specimens to Jochen, but my own collection is very sparse; young specimens seem to be easier to come by than adults; Doug Brown has pitched in with one or two as well. So if anyone has any spare Trogulus please pass them on to me (in 70% alcohol) and I will send them to Jochen.

Mitopus

Paul Hillyard and I have looked at more specimens some of which seem to be undoubted ericaeus but we seem also to have intermediate forms, especially in the shape of the penis, between this species and morio. In our forthcoming Synopsis revision we have included M. ericaeus as a species though we and Jochen still have some reservations. It may be that we should refer those specimens with intermediate characters to the upper end of a cline beginning with the lowland morio form. Any views please?

Sabacon viscayanum ssp. ramblaianum

Cynthia Merrett of the National Museum of Wales at Cardiff reports a third station near Ammanford (Dyfed); this is excellent news. My bet is that if a lot of people looked for it, it would turn up in many other places in South Wales.

Any more visitors?

Jochen tells me that Opilio canestrinii (Thorell) is spreading in Germany. It is a species often associated with gardens and walls and could easily be accidentally imported as eggs in soil, or in any stage, in horticultural or arboricultural merchandise. It differs from our two species of Opilio in lacking the small stout tubercles dorsally and ventrally on the palpal femur. It has two well marked carinal lines on the shaft of the male organ. Keep a look out for it.

The Linnean Society Synopsis No. 4 (Opiliones) revision

Now virtually completed - slight holdup because my friend and colleague Paul Hillyard broke his leg recently when cross-country running. Tripped over a Trogulus I suspect, but we hope he will shortly regain the agility of a Leiobunum! Reference will be made in this publication with grateful acknowledgement to the many people who have helped us in so many different

ways. Impossible to mention everyone by name, especially the many recorders who have supplied records and specimens over the years. Thank you one and all; your contribution has been most valuable and we are very grateful for your assistance.

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