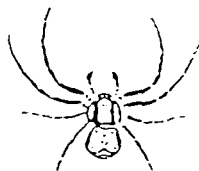


British Arachnological Society

NEWSLETTER No. 13



MARCH 1992

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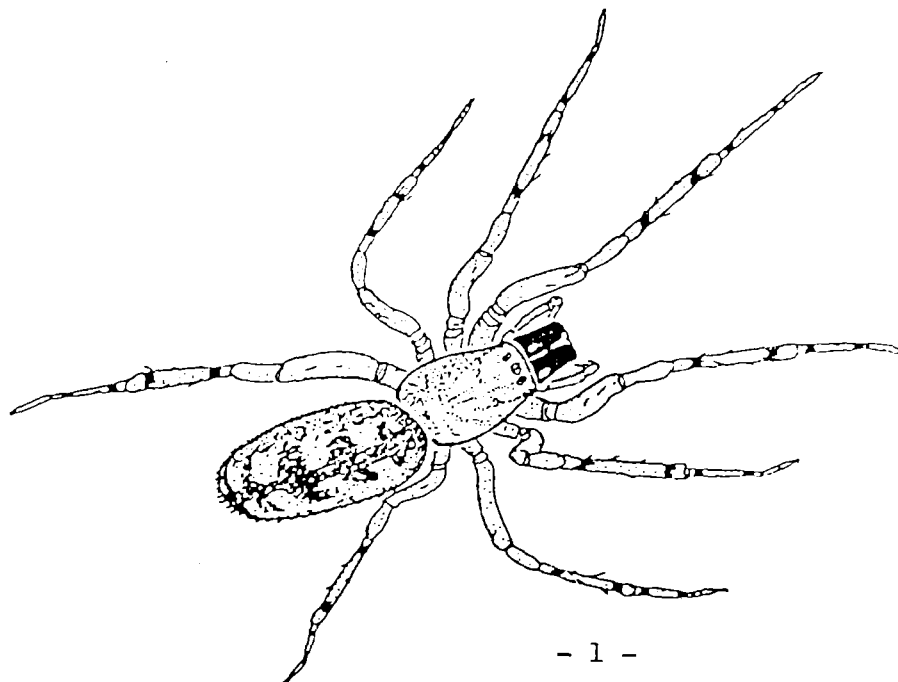
SPIDER RECORDING SCHEME

During the past three months, completed RA65s and other SRS record cards have been coming in at a most encouraging rate, and it seems as if many Recorders have made good use of inclement weather and long evenings to get themselves up to date. While thanking all those who have submitted material, the following three outstanding contributions deserve special mention:

Essex Records have been sent in by Peter Harvey, the Area Organiser, by Ray Ruffell, David Carr, Ken Hill and others. As a result, there are now 492 cards for South Essex and 625 for North Essex - well ahead of any other vice-county totals. Plans are already laid to cover those 10Km squares with inadequate records, and soon Essex will have a better-known arachnofauna than any other county in the country.

John and Frances Murphy have submitted their records, mainly covering their fieldwork between 1954 and 1973 when they were activated by their youthful enthusiasm. Most of their subsequent British recording has already found its way onto SRS cards, but the magnum opus they have just sent in provides extensive coverage for Middlesex, Surrey and the Home Counties. Most species have a number of site records, and there are few species they have not recorded. Since the records are so fully and legibly written, there will be no need to transfer them onto GEN7 cards.

Middlesex and London records have been sent in by Edward Milner in the form of a computer print-out, covering well over 100 sites. Most of these sites have been worked by Edward himself, but he also includes data accumulated by Savory, Bristowe and others. Several of these sites are liable to be threatened by development - for example, Oxleas Wood, and it is well to have our ammunition ready for possible threats.



Segestria
senoculata

enlarged from
a drawing by
Mike Roberts

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS.

The following new Recorder has been registered since SRS Newsletter No.11
Mr George Fussey, Biology Department, Eton College, WINDSOR, Berks. SL4 6DW

This issue of the SRS Newsletter includes a list of the Names and Addresses of Area Organisers. Dr Colin G Butler, AO for many years for Cornwall, has now retired to Cambridge and we would like to thank him for all that he has done to supervise spider recording in that county. This leaves Cornwall with no Area Organiser: records should be sent to me direct until we can appoint a successor.

Other counties with no Area Organisers are: Suffolk, Cambridge, Hereford, Nottingham and a number in Wales. Volunteers to take over these posts are welcome, and should get in touch with me for consideration.

Recorders who have not sent their records to Area Organisers, and Area Organisers who have not sent records from their areas, are asked to send them to me as soon as possible. Please do all you can to help.

SPIDER RECORDING IN ESSEX

Arachnologists in Essex have set themselves the task of recording at least 100 species of spider in each of the 57 x 10Km squares covering the county. They have already considerably exceeded this number in the majority of the squares and it cannot be long before their target is completely achieved.

The Essex Spider Group has just published an 83 page book of provisional maps on a 5km square basis, together with notes on 'Some Interesting records made this year (1991)', and an appendix of spider lists for 17 "interesting and well-recorded sites". From such a wealth of information, it is difficult to select one or two items for special mention, but the following are of particular interest:

"There have been two New County Records this year, Wiehlea calcarifera in pitfalls from very old grassland at Mucking Heath, and Theridiosoma gemmosum from wet marsh in Lake Wood at Gosfield Lake."

"Some interesting records have been made this year from the use of pitfall traps at a number of roadside verge locations. There are many parts of Essex where so much land is arable farmland that the verges can represent the main areas of grassland habitat. Ray Ruffell recorded species such as Dysdera erythrina, a rare spider in Essex, and Robertus neglectus, only the third county record. Cicurina cicur, Walckenaeria atrotibialis and many other interesting species were found. "

Peter Harvey, Area Organiser for Essex, pays tribute to David Carr, Ken Hill and Ray Ruffell; and like so many of us he expresses his thanks to Peter Merrett for confirming the new county records and determining all the other specimens that are sent to him.

Other interesting species recorded in Essex during 1991 include: Nigma puella, Haplodrassus minor, Zelotes pusillus, pedestris and serotinus, Philodromus albidus, collinus and praedatus, Enoplognatha cruciferae and latimana, Theridion instabile, Zilla diodia, Ceratinella scabrosa, Entelecara congenera, Porrhomma oblitum, Centromerus incilium and serratus, Lepthyphantes insignis and Zodarjon italicum.

GRAMPIAN SPIDER GROUP REPORT

A R Jackson in 1913 wrote: "the Highlands of Scotland are almost virgin soil as far as arachnids are concerned ... half a dozen collectors in various parts of the Highlands would do wonders." Well, not a great deal has been done in this part of the country since Jackson wrote those words - that is, until now.

During 1991 a number of day outings were organised and attended by Jackson's recommended half a dozen. No really rare spiders were found but a good start was made in recording on some local SSSIs and NNRs. April took us to the Braes of Gight woods where the sun shone and Tapinocyba insecta confirmed its presence. May saw us knee deep in the warmth of Mortlach Moss, along with such spiders as Latithorax faustus and Hilaira pervicax, while a sunny day at the Sands of Forvie NNR in June gave us Walckenaeria monoceros and Silometopus incurvatus. The programme of monthly outings ended in August with yet more beautiful weather at St. Cyrus NNR and a specimen of Agroeca cuprea.

Mike and Debbie Roberts (now adopted Scots) kindly hosted an excellent weekend in September when a number of sites in Moray and Banffshire, such as Culbin Forest, were visited. Through the good work of Mike, the Nature Conservancy Council was persuaded to give the BAS a grant for travel to these sites and we are hopeful that a similar grant will be given for our 1992 programme.

We would be pleased to hear from anyone thinking of visiting the area - good weather is guaranteed - bring your own rarities!

(Mike Davidson, 25 Rutherford Folds, Inverurie, Aberdeenshire AB5 9JH)

A REQUEST FOR THE LOAN OF PHILODROMUS SPECIMENS

Hendrik Segers has identified a male Philodromus that I collected last year from Somerset and a female that I collected from Kent as P. longipalpis Simon. I have a similar female collected several years ago at Box Hill and a male collected in Essex, but to date no males have been taken together with females or other than as individual specimens. Three of the four specimens were taken from oak and the fourth was swept from heather under oaks as an immature which was then kept to maturity. Other Philodromus from the same overall localities have included the species P. aureolus, P. praedatus, P. cespitum & P. collinus.

I should be very grateful if arachnologists would loan me Philodromus from the aureolus group that look unusually pale, females with no dark or mottled lateral carapace bands and males with unusual tibial apophyses. With females it would be necessary to dissect out the genitalia but these would be kept with the specimen in a small tube within the main tube. I would of course reimburse postal costs and return the specimens within a period of say about 2 - 3 months.

Specimens should be sent to: Peter R Harvey, 9 Kent Road, GRAYS, Essex RM17 6DE.

DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN PHILODROMUS PRAEDATUS AND P. AUREOLUS

An article on this subject, written by Peter Harvey, appeared in the most recent B A S Newsletter. Members of the SRS, who are not members of the BAS, can obtain a photocopy of this article by sending a stamped and addressed foolscap envelope to Clifford Smith. We are grateful to John Dalingwater, editor of the BAS Newsletter, for permission to make copies of the article.

SPIDER NOTES FROM LANCASHIRE

An early Lancashire record of Pirata uliginosus (Thor.): Since the first record of Pirata uliginosus (Thor.) in Britain in 1951, several earlier specimens have been discovered in museums and private collections throughout the country - usually confused with related species. In addition to these are two females in the Linnaeus Greening collection of spiders at Warrington Museum which were collected by Dr. C R Billups on Rixton Moss, near Warrington (SJ.96) on the 9th August, 1902. Consequently this record pre-dates by 67 years the first published Lancashire record of mine from Kirkby Moss, near Liverpool (SJ.49) in 1969.

Scytodes thoracica Latreille in Lancashire. An adult female and three immatures of Scytodes thoracica were among several invertebrates caught in October 1991 on sticky-pad traps places in a Liverpool city-centre storage area by members of Liverpool Museum conservation department. As far as I know, these specimens are the first to be recorded in Lancashire.

News of another Lancashire locality was kindly provided by Mrs M J Dempsey who recently recorded a specimen in a house at Caton, near Lancaster. As in the case of several Pholcus phalangioides Fuesslin which are known from a house in St. Helens Lancashire, it is almost certain that in both instances, the Scytodes have somehow been imported from outside Lancashire.

It is interesting to note that the Liverpool specimens, which may be part of a breeding population, had survived a fumigation programme before coming to grief on the sticky traps.

(Chris Felton, Entomology Department, Liverpool Museum, Liverpool L3 8EN)

FOREIGNERS IN CHESHIRE

Last July, a live spider was brought to the Liverpool Museum for identification after being found amongst a stack of timber in a British Rail workshop at Ditton, Widnes. Its dark colour and sinister appearance instantly suggested Amaurobius ferox (Walck) or a member of the Gnaphosidae, but it was soon obvious under the microscope that it was foreign and one I did not know. I sent it to Peter Merrett who in turn passed it to John Murphy who identified it as Badumna robusta, a well-known synanthropic species in West Australia. I subsequently contacted the original finder who reported that the spider was found in a consignment of Eucalyptus timber imported from the Perth area and had taken about a month to reach Britain.

About the same time, another foreign spider bearing conspicuous abdominal tubercles and possessing distinctive muff-like hairs on the front tibiae, came into the Museum for identification. It had been collected by Mr Mike Brown, a gardener in Calderstones Park in Liverpool from a greenhouse containing a thriving and well-established colony. This too was sent to Dr Merrett who readily identified it as Uloborus plumipes (Lucas) that hails from the Mediterranean area. I have since learned from John Murphy that this species has been found in the Chelsea Physic Garden recently. Members may now be tempted to look a little closer at spiders in their own greenhouses!

(Chris Felton, Entomology Department, Liverpool Museum, Liverpool L3 8EN)

Editor's Note: A recent visit to Liverpool Museum revealed progress being made in readiness for the BAS/AGM and Weekend Meeting centred on the Museum April 24-26. Great strides in housing the BAS Library, and the cataloguing of some 70,000 tubes of specimens are attractions in themselves, quite apart from the warm welcome extended to all visitors. Further details from Francis Farr-Cox, 1 Winchester Road, Burnham-on-Sea, Somerset. TA8 1HY.

SPIDER COURSES IN 1992

Isle of Wight: 3-5 July at Medina Valley Centre, Dodnor Lane, Newport, Isle of Wight PO30 5TE. Course Tutor: Dick Jones. Contact the Centre for further details.

Hampshire: 24-26 July at Rogate Study Centre, The Red House, Rogate, Petersfield, Hampshire GU31 5HN. Course Tutor: Dick Jones. Contact Anne Finlay at the Centre for further details.

Eelmoor Marsh: Day Meeting, 7 June. Further details in SRS Newsletter no.12.

NEWS FROM S R S RECORDERS

Richard Wright (SRS no 39) is undertaking a spider survey of Cannock Chase in Staffordshire on behalf of a team of environmental consultants, over a period of 6 working days.

Mike Taylor has secured a contract to identify spiders from a pitfall trapping programme on the recently declared NNR at Whixall Moss in Shropshire. (SRS no 68)

Geoff Oxford (SRS no 61) is visiting the Birdale Tunnel on the Yorkshire Wolds. It has been closed to rail traffic for many years, and there is regulated access, for pedestrians. A report that Meta menardi was recorded there in the 1960s is not backed up by a specimen, and Geoff is undertaking visits in the hope that it is there. There do not seem to be any other records for this species in VC 61.

Alan Scott (SRS no 37) has recorded Porrhomma microphthalmum from Warburton's Wood in Cheshire (SJ 55.76.) - an ancient broadleaved woodland in a ravine, with a small damp meadow adjacent. The only previous record for this species in the county was before 1930. The species has not been recorded in Lancashire or Wales.

Gerry Fenwick is nibbling with the idea of identifying mites (free-living). He has already got all of Hull's keys, including some that have never been published as far as he can tell; most of them are dated about 1940. Can any SRS Member provide any advice on how best to proceed with his study? His address is: (SRS no 135) Dept. of Clinical Microbiology, Royal Victoria Infirmary, Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE1 4LP.

ITEMS FOR THE NEXT S R S NEWSLETTER

Material for the June SRS Newsletter will be prepared for publication during the last week of May, and Recorders are invited to submit items that they think will be of interest. This issue will contain a summary of the numbers of completed RA65 cards for each vice-county, and it would be particularly nice to include statistics from recorders who have not sent in anything for some time.

We hope also to include a report from a small group - Brian Eversham, John Crocker and Craig Slawson - on the use of computer recording. This has arisen out of a decision by the Council of the BAS to review this increasingly important technique in all aspects.

However, there will still be room for articles and notes submitted by SRS Recorders. So, please do send them along for publication.

NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF S. R. S. AREA ORGANISERS : March 1992

<u>Vice-County Number and Name</u>	<u>Name and Address of the Area Organiser</u>
1 & 2 Cornwall Scilly Isles	Dr Trevor Hughes, Rimes House, Kingston Bagpuize, Oxon OX13 5AY
3 & 4 Devon	Mr Peter Smithers, 40 Copperfields, Horrabridge, Yelverton, Devon PL20 7UB
5 & 6 Somerset	Mr Francis Farr-Cox, 1 Winchester Road, Burnham-on-Sea, Somerset TA8 1HY
7 & 8 Wiltshire	Mr Richard B Coleman, 44 Roman Road, Salisbury, Wiltshire
9 Dorset	Mr Rowley Snazell, Institute of Terrestrial Ecology, Furzebrook Research Station, Wareham, Dorset BH20 5AS
10, 11 & 12 Hampshire & Isle of Wight	Mr Rod Allison, The Laurels, Manchester Road Sway, Lyminster, Hants SO4 OAS
13 & 14 Sussex	Dr Chris Topping, Institute of Horticultural Research Worthing Road, Littlehampton, West Sussex BN17 6LP
15 & 16 Kent	Mr Eric G Philp, 6 Vicarage Close, Aylesford Kent ME20 7BB
17 Surrey	Mr Martin Askins, 47D Upper Court Road, Epsom, Surrey KT19 8RE
18 & 19 Essex	Mr Peter Harvey, 9 Kent Road, Grays, Essex RM17 6DE
20 Herts	Mr David Nellist, 198A Park Street Lane, Park Street, St Albans, Herts AL2 2AQ
21 Middlesex	Mr J Edward D Milner, 80 Weston Park, London N8 9TB
22 Berks	Dr Steve P Hopkin, Dept of Zoology, Univ. of Reading, Whiteknights, POBox 228, Reading RG6 2AJ
23 Oxon	Mr Lawrence Bee, 14 Tower Hill, Witney, Oxon OX8 5ER
24 Bucks	Ms Helen J Read, Towerwood, Park Lane, Burnham Beeches, Bucks SL1 8PN
25 & 26 Suffolk	
27 & 28 Norfolk	Ms Deborah Procter, 60 Bracondale, Norwich NR1 2BE
29 Cambridge	
30 & 31 Beds & Hunts	Mr T Thomas, 142 Selbourne Road, Luton, Beds. LU4 8LS
32 Northampton	Mr Anthony J White, 25 Shelsley Drive, Parklands, Northampton NN3 1ET
33 & 34 Gloucester	Mr David J R Haigh, Merrivale, 27 St Luke's Road, Cheltenham, Glos. GL53 7SF
35 Monmouth	Ms Cynthia Merrett, 3 River Walk, Llantwit Major, South Glamorgan CF6 9SY
36 Hereford	
37 Worcester	Mr Mike Taylor, The Willows, Lye Head, Rock, Bewdley, Worcs DY12 2UT
38 Warwick	Mr Richard Wright, 70 Norman Road, Rugby, Warks. CV21 1DN
39 Stafford	Mr G Craig Slawson, Ecorecord Unit 212, Jubilee Trades Centre, 130 Pershore Street, Birmingham B5 6NB

40	Shropshire	Mr Mike Taylor (as for 37 Worcs.)
41	Glamorgan	Ms Cynthia Merrett (as for 35. Monmouth)
44	Carmarthen	Mr Ian K Morgan, 16 Barn Road, Carmarthen. Dyfed SA31 1DD
45	Pembrokeshire	Mr Stan Dobson, Moor Edge, Birch Vale via Stockport SK12 5BX
46	Cardiganshire	Mr Adrian P Fowles, NCC Plas Gogerdden, Aberystwyth, Dyfed SY23 3EE
52	Anglesey	Mr Don Roscoe, Bwlch y Fron, Gaerwen, Anglesey, Gwynedd LL60 6BT
53 & 54	Lincolnshire	Mr Roy Kent, 'Stonehaven', Station Road, Sturton, Brigg, South Humberside DN20 9DJ
55	Leicester & Rutland	Mr John Crocker, 34 Bramcote Road, Loughborough, Leics. LE11 2SA
56	Nottingham	
57	Derbyshire	Mr Stan Dobson (as for 45. Pembroke)
58	Cheshire	Mr Alan G Scott, 70 Top Road, Five Crosses, Frodsham, Cheshire WA6 6SN
59 & 60	Lancashire	Mr Chris Felton, Entomology Dept., Liverpool Museum William Brown Street, Liverpool L3 8EN
61, 62, 63, 64 & 65	Yorkshire	Mr Clifford J Smith, 7 Malton Way, Clifton, York YO3 6SG
66, 67 & 68	Durham & Northumberland	Dr Steve Rushton, Dept. of Agricultural Zoology, The University, Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE1 7RU
69 & 70	Cumbria	Mr John R Parker, Stone Raise, 42 Lakeland Park, Keswick, Cumbria CA12 4AT
71	Isel of Man	Mr James Wright, 32 Wythburn Crescent, Carr Hill, St Helens, Merseyside WA11 7HD
SCOTLAND		
72, 78, 79, 80 & 81	South-East Scotland	Miss Isobel Baldwin, Royal Museum of Scotland, Chambers Street, Edinburgh EH1 1JF
82 -90, 98 & 102	East Central Scotland	Mr Jim A Stewart, 109 Greenbank Crescent Edinburgh EH10 5TA
73-77, 99-101	South-West Scotland	Mr David Beaumont, Flat 2/R, 20 Annette Street, Govanhill, Glasgow G42 8YA
91 - 95		Mr Mike B Davidson, 25 Rutherford Folds, Inverurie, Aberdeenshire AB5 9JH
96, 97 & 103		Mrs Claire Geddes, 1 Groam Farm Cottages, Kirkhill, Inverness IV5 7PB
104 - 112		Mr David Horsfield, c/o Nature Conservancy Council, 12 Hope Terrace, Edinburgh EH9 2AS

In cases where there is no Area Organiser named, correspondence should be sent to Clifford J Smith at 7 Malton Way, Clifton, York YO3 6SG (tel. 0904 625928)

Offers to act as Area Organisers for Vice-Counties should be sent to Clifford J Smith for consideration.