

# The Coleopterist

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# The Coleopterist

Volume 10 Part 2 ♦ August 2001



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*Ophonus subsinuatus* new to Britain  
Notes ♦ Reviews

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## Taxonomic notes on British *Ophonus* Dejean (Carabidae)

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The purpose of this paper is to define the species of *Ophonus* Dejean occurring in Britain and to clarify some nomenclatural issues. This was prompted by Riccardo Sciaky's (1987) revision of the western Palaearctic species of *Ophonus*, which has several implications for the British checklist. This paper will only consider the species of *Ophonus* as included by Sciaky (1987); it will not cover the other members of *Harpalus* Latreille (in the wider sense).

### The generic status of *Ophonus*

British coleopterists are familiar with the approach adopted by Pope (1977) in which the genus *Harpalus* is divided into three subgenera: *Pseudophonus* Motschulsky, *Ophonus* and *Harpalus* Latreille s. str. Although *Ophonus* is regarded as a subgenus of *Harpalus* in recent standard works used by British coleopterists (Lindroth, 1974; Lindroth, 1986; Luff, 1993, 1998), there is now a strong case for following the treatment of recent authors elsewhere in Europe (Sciaky, 1987; Turin, 1990; Kryzhanovskij *et al.*, 1995; Hansen, 1996; Anderson *et al.*, 1997; Turin, 2000) and regarding *Ophonus* as a distinct genus. This treatment is supported by Brandmayr *et al.* (1980), in their taxonomic study of the larval stages of *Harpalus* in the widest sense. They concluded that two genera should be recognised, and furthermore that *Ophonus* and *Harpalus* are convergent rather than closely related.

However, Brandmayr *et al.* (1980) threw doubt on the convenient distinction between *Ophonus*, *Pseudophonus* and *Harpalus* based on the distribution of pubescence on the upper surface of adults. As defined by Brandmayr *et al.* (1980), the members of subgenus *Pseudophonus*, with their pubescent elytra, are placed in genus *Harpalus*. More confusingly, *H. tenebrosus* Dejean and *H. melancholicus* Dejean, which lack pubescence on the upper surface, are transferred to genus *Ophonus*. More recently, B. Kataev, in a footnote on page 141 of Kryzhanovskij *et al.* (1995), has argued persuasively for the retention of the traditional division between *Ophonus* and *Harpalus*, although he notes that *tenebrosus* and *melancholicus* are members of a 'rather disjunct' group within the genus *Harpalus*. In conclusion, I recommend that British coleopterists should regard *Ophonus* as a genus, and not as a subgenus of *Harpalus*.

### Species level nomenclatural changes

#### *Ophonus stictus* Stephens, 1828

The name *Ophonus* (s. str.) *obscurus* (Fabricius, 1792) in recent British works has been known to be a junior homonym of Herbst's (1784) description (= *Agonum obscurum*)

since at least Pope (1977). Sciaky (1987) introduced *Ophonus stictus* Stephens, 1828 as a replacement name. This has been followed by most subsequent authors, although not by UK Biodiversity Group (1999).

Freude (1976) used *Harpalus (Ophonus) obscurus* (Fabricius) in the traditional sense (as used by Lindroth (1974) and others). However, he used *stictus* Stephens as his name for the species traditionally called *ardosiacus* Lutshnik. Sciaky (1987) examined the lectoholotype of *stictus* Stephens and was able to conclude that Freude was wrong.

#### ***Ophonus ardosiacus* (Lutshnik, 1922)**

The species named *Harpalus (Ophonus) ardosiacus* Lutshnik, 1922 in recent British works (Lindroth, 1974; Pope, 1977; Luff, 1998) was originally described as *Harpalus rotundicollis* Fairmaire & Laboulbène, 1854. This proved to be a homonym of Kolenati's (1845) description; consequently Lutshnik (the author styled himself "Lutshnik" and this spelling will be followed here) created a new name *ardosiacus* in 1922. It should also be noted that Freude (1974) erroneously synonymised *ardosiacus* Lutshnik with *stictus* Stephens, 1828, as discussed above.

According to Sciaky (1987), the correct spelling is 'ardosianus'. However, the spelling used in the original description is 'ardosiacus', and thus the traditional spelling is also the correct one (Alders 1989; Roger Booth, *in litt.*).

The median lobe of the aedeagus of *Ophonus ardosiacus* shows a variable pattern, with either two or three dense groups of darker internal spines, as figured by Alders (1989). Sciaky (1987) reports his findings from several species of *Ophonus* that a certain amount of variation occurs in the number and position of groups of internal spines, even within a population. On this evidence, the variation in *ardosiacus* may be regarded as genuinely intraspecific. Only the form with two groups of internal spines is illustrated in Sciaky (1987); British coleopterists should thus be aware that the form with three groups of spines does occur in this country (all three male British specimens in my collection).

#### ***Ophonus punctatulus* (Duftschmid, 1812)**

The name *Harpalus punctatulus* (Duftschmid, 1812) has been used by recent British authors (Lindroth, 1974; Pope, 1977; Luff, 1998) in the knowledge that this is a junior homonym of *Carabus* (now *Licinus*) *punctatulus* Fabricius, 1792. The name *Ophonus nitidulus* Stephens, 1828 has been used as a replacement by Lindroth (1986), following Silfverberg (1977), and by Sciaky (1987). However, Stephens equated his *nitidulus* with the *Carabus* (now *Chlaenius*) *nitidulus* of Schrank, 1781 (R. Booth, *pers. comm.*). Stephens' use of the name was thus a misidentification, and cannot be used as a replacement name. Further work is required, and in the meantime the name *punctatulus* (Duftschmid) remains the best one to apply to the species.

#### ***Ophonus melletii* (Heer, 1837/8)**

Biström & Silfverberg (1988) report that the name *O. melleti* (Heer, 1837) should be spelt 'melletii'. *Harpalus melletii* (with -ii) was used in Heer's original description, and

under current ICZN rules, this is the correct species name spelling (R. Booth, *in litt.*). There is some doubt about the year in which Heer's description was published, and it may not have been until 1838 (R. Booth, *in litt.*).

### **Reported additions and deletions to the British *Ophonus* checklist**

#### ***Ophonus diffinis* (Dejean)**

*Ophonus ardosiacus* is a scarce carabid with a scatter of records throughout southern Britain. There has been some confusion between *O. ardosiacus* and its close relative *O. diffinis* (Dejean). For example, Joy (1932) names the British taxon *diffinis* Dejean, treating it as synonymous with 'rotundicollis Brit. Cat.' (= *ardosiacus*, see above). Without comment, Sciaky (1987) attributes *O. diffinis* rather than *O. ardosiacus* to the British fauna. The two species can be rapidly differentiated using a character of the sutural angle of the elytral apex in females: in *diffinis* the elytral angle is produced, whereas in *ardosiacus* the angle is simple (illustrated by Sciaky (1987)). There are no specimens of *diffinis* in the general British collection of the Natural History Museum, or in my personal collection, which includes *ardosiacus* specimens from Dorset and Essex. *O. ardosiacus* is certainly a British species, but there is currently no evidence that *O. diffinis* is British. However, coleopterists should perhaps be vigilant for this species as a potential future addition to our fauna.

#### ***Ophonus subquadratus* (Dejean)**

Some mystery has surrounded the status of *Ophonus subquadratus* in Britain for several decades. Moore (1956) in his paper entitled "Is *Harpalus (Ophonus) subquadratus* Dej. (Col., Carabidae) a British insect?" was aware that Andrewes (1939) had listed the species as British but was not aware of any published record. Moore found two British specimens in the collections of the British Museum (Natural History) standing over the name *subquadratus* but did not know who had determined them.

This mystery is now solved — Sciaky (1987) attributes *O. (s. str.) subquadratus* (Dejean) to Britain on the authority of Pater (1938). Dr Pater states (my translation from the original French) 'In a series of Sharp's *Metophonus* sent by the British Museum, I was surprised to find three very clear ('très nets') individuals of *subquadratus*, of which two were captured at Portland in 1886'. It must have been Pater's redetermination of Sharp's specimens which prompted Andrewes to insert *subquadratus* into his list, which even references Pater (1938). The two specimens which Moore found in the BM(NH) collections ('2 males, one taken many years ago by the late J.J. Walker at Portland, Dorset; the other without data') must have been originally determined by Pater. Moore redetermined the 'subquadratus' that he found as 'dark forms' of *azureus*. It seems certain that he was right, as Pater (1938) gives no indication that he was aware of the occurrence of unmetallic forms of *azureus*. *Ophonus subquadratus* thus has no claim to a place on the British checklist. However, coleopterists should be vigilant and check unmetallic or

weakly bluish male specimens resembling *azureus* by reference to the aedeagus, as figured by Moore (1956) and Sciaky (1987).

### *Ophonus subsinuatus* Rey, 1886

This species has been added to the British list by Telfer (2001) based on a male and a female collected by J.J. Walker at Portland in 1886, and a male with no data from the Crotch collection (amassed from the late 1850s to 1872), which had been given to Sharp.

### Acknowledgements

I am greatly indebted to all who have contributed to this paper, including: Stuart Hine for assistance in working on the Natural History Museum, London (NHM) collections, and for arranging the loan of specimens from the NHM; Roger Booth for helpful discussion of nomenclatural issues; Brian Eversham for first drawing my attention to Sciaky's paper, and for helpful comments; Martin Luff for discussion of the generic status of *Ophonus*; Jo Hodgkins and Henry Arnold for helpful comments; and Maarten van Damme for assistance with Dutch-English translation. I am also indebted to the AltaVista BabelFish, a free automatic translation service at <http://babelfish.altavista.com/>.

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### The identity of *Trixagus elateroides* (Throscidae) of British authors

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From early times, *Throscus* (as it was then) *elateroides* Heer, 1841, has had a place on our list, but the species so designated has never been well understood or properly characterized. Recently, Dr L. Lesseigneur has made good that deficiency and established that two distinct species are involved, differing most decisively in their male characters. He shows that our so-called *elateroides*, which has a very wide range from southeast England and North Africa to Asia Minor, is almost certainly identical with *T. gracilis* Wollaston, 1857; though a small degree of uncertainty remains because Wollaston's unique type is a female. The true *elateroides* Heer appears unlikely to be found in Britain.

Males of *Trixagus gracilis* (as our species must now be called) may be readily known, both from females and from other species, by characters of the middle legs. These take the form of a triangular tooth-like fascicle of dark hairs or setules on the outer side of the tibia near the base, and a less conspicuous tuft or fringe of whitish hairs, best developed ventrally, at the upper apex of the femur. The former of these is very obvious but is unnoticed in existing works, doubtless because of the difficulty in extending the legs of these little beetles unless they have been killed with ethyl acetate.

I obtained a short series of *T. gracilis* near Belvedere, N.W. Kent, from about the base of a Thames-side wall, in one spot, on 12.x.1984. Before that I had met with only a single example (male) under horse dung on a path in the Lea Valley near Cheshunt, Hertfordshire, 6.x.1947. Other specimens in my collection are from Ayot, Hertfordshire, mostly taken 20.xii.1924, by P. Harwood.

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## A previously undescribed defence mechanism in the larval Glow-worm *Lampyrus noctiluca* (Linnaeus) (Lampyridae)?

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It has been known for over twenty years that some lampyrids contain lucibufagins, steroids which make them distasteful, or even poisonous, to birds and reptiles (Eisner *et al.*, 1978; Jones, 1932; Knight *et al.*, 1999). However, no work appears to have been done on whether this defence is effective against invertebrate predators. With this in mind, in May 2000 I placed a final-instar female Glow-worm larva on the centre of a large Wood Ant *Formica rufa* nest, in the middle of a dense swarm of ants.

Expecting that I would have to rescue the larva at any moment, I was surprised to find that very few of the ants even attempted to attack it, even though at times it was almost submerged beneath an unbroken carpet of them. In the vast majority of cases the ant would simply touch the larva briefly with the tips of its antennae before walking away. Watching the ants clambering over it, I noticed a row of pale spots, rather like droplets of milk, appear along both sides of the larva. On closer inspection with a hand-lens these proved to be eversible tubercles in the unsclerotized cuticle adjacent to the anterior-dorsal corners of the abdominal pleurites (Fig. 1). They were present on abdominal segments 1 to 7, but not on segments 8 (which bears the light organ) or 9 (the final segment). Nor were they present on any of the thoracic segments. The droplet-like appearance which I had first noticed was actually due to the unpigmented skin of the glands (if that is what they prove to be), contrasting with the greyer cuticle surrounding them. It was not possible to see whether or not any liquid was being secreted.

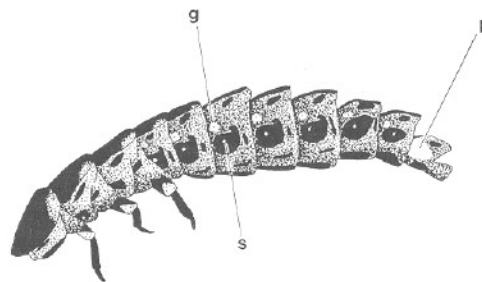


Fig. 1: *L. noctiluca* larva, side view, showing 'glands' (g), light organ (l) and spiracles (s).

know whether they are indeed glands and, if so, what it is that they are secreting. As they say in all the best research papers, "more work is needed"!

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## *Ophonus subsinuatus* Rey (Carabidae) new to Britain, with a discussion of its status

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On a visit to the Natural History Museum, London (NHM), on 30th September 1994, I noticed that three specimens in the general British beetle collection had been separated out, and that the two males had been labelled '*Ophonus (Metophonus) / subsinuatus* Rey / 1886 / J. Serrano det' [handwritten text shown in italics, printed text in normal typeface; text on different lines of the label is separated by '/'], a potential addition to the British carabid fauna. One of the males (Pl. 1) was labelled '*Portland. Sept. 1886 / J. J. Walker*', and the third specimen, a female, was similarly labelled '*Portland / 1886. Walker*'. The other male specimen came from the Crotch collection in Cambridge, where Sharp found it amongst a series, all without data (Sharp, 1912b).

To the best of my knowledge, nothing has previously been published about these specimens. I have recently confirmed Serrano's determination, so this paper serves to add *O. subsinuatus* Rey, 1886 to the British List, 115 years after its capture.

### Identification of *Ophonus subsinuatus*

There are two British subgenera of *Ophonus* Dejean, 1821: *Ophonus s. str.* and *Metophonus* Bedel, 1897, distinguished by the shape of the pronotal hind-angles, which are strongly rounded in *Ophonus s. str.*, but well-marked in *Metophonus*, which usually also shows sinuate sides to the pronotum. *O. subsinuatus* is a small non-metallic member of subgenus *Metophonus*.

*O. subsinuatus* has a pronotum shaped as in Fig. 1, with no trace of a basal bead, and only a single longer seta on each side of the pronotum at about its widest point, rarely a second in front of this. Using Lindroth (1974), *subsinuatus* would key out quite comfortably on external characters alone to couplet 11, as *melletii*. However, identification of small *Metophonus* on external characters is fraught with pitfalls, and an adequate level of confidence can only be obtained by examining the male genitalia. *O. subsinuatus* is particularly distinctive within the British *Ophonus* fauna in having a sinuate median lobe (Fig. 2a), with a small but distinct apical disc, such that in lateral view it appears slightly hooked above and below at

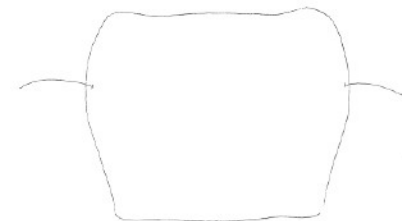
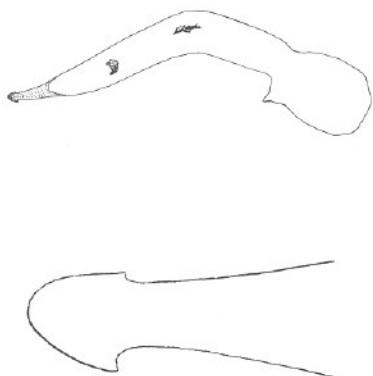


Fig. 1: Outline of pronotum of *Ophonus subsinuatus* in dorsal view, showing the position of the longer setae on the side.

**Fig. 2:** Median lobe of the aedeagus of *Ophonus subsinuatus* in lateral view  
**a** the whole median lobe; **b** the apex.



the apex (Fig. 2b). *O. melletii* is equally distinctive, with its large apical disc, perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the median lobe and protruding more above than below the apex.

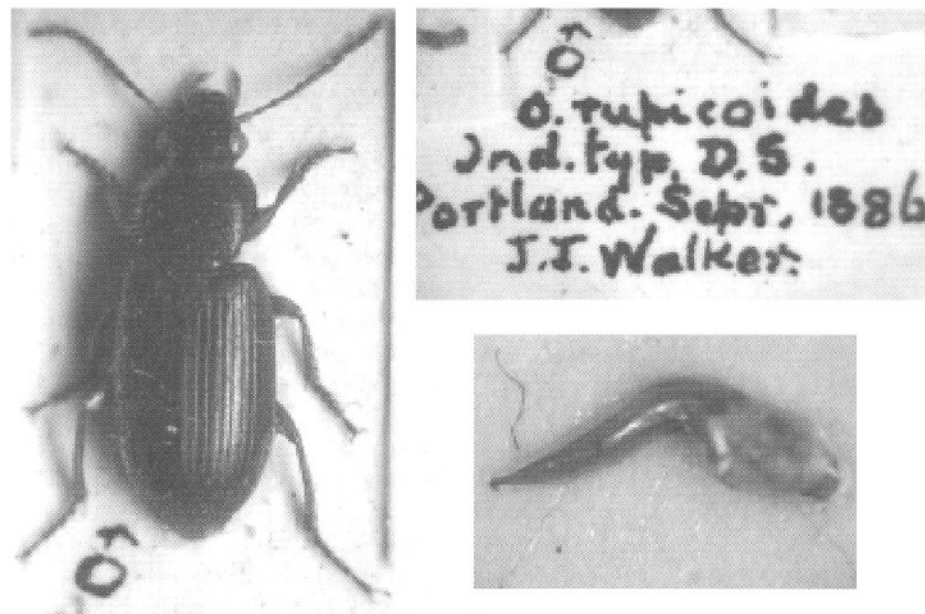
There is a possibility of confusion with *O. schaubergerianus* Puel, 1937, which also possesses a sinuate median lobe, although to a lesser extent, but lacks an apical disc, the apex of the median lobe being just slightly decurved. The principal confusion species for *subsINUATUS* is *O. brevicollis* (Serville, 1821) which is a closely related species with a

broadly similar geographical range (Sciaky, 1987). The name *Ophonus brevicollis* (Serville, 1821) is used here in the same sense as Sciaky (1987), and applies to a non-British species. It has been used erroneously by British authors in the past as a name for each of the three British species currently known as *rufibarbis* Fabricius, *schaubergerianus* Puel, and *parallelus* Dejean (Lindroth, 1972; Sciaky, 1987). Sciaky (1987) provides a key (in English) which suggests external characters for the separation of the two species, but the male genitalia provide the safest basis for identification. The two species have similarly shaped median lobes, but very different patterns of internal spines (figured by Sciaky (1987); see also Fig. 2), and it was this which formed the basis of my identification of these specimens as *subsINUATUS*.

#### Why were these specimens overlooked for so long?

Sharp originally determined these three specimens as *O. rupicoloides*, which he described in 1912 (Sharp, 1912b). *O. rupicoloides* is a synonym of *O. melletii*. Both the males are labelled 'rupicoloides' [or 'rupicoides', in error] on the same card as the beetle and in Sharp's hand. The female was 'standing in Sharp coll. as *rupicoloides*'. The male from Portland in Sept. 1886 by J.J. Walker forms part of the type material of *O. rupicoloides*, being labelled 'Ind. Typ. D.S.' (Pl. 1).

Sharp's work on the British species of *Ophonus* (Sharp, 1912a, 1912b, 1912c) was pioneering in its use of the aedeagus to establish species limits and relationships. How could Sharp have failed to recognise that one of the dissected male specimens in his type series of *rupicoloides* possessed a very different aedeagus to the remainder? The male from the Crotch collection is labelled 'var.', but unfortunately Sharp (1912b) makes no reference to it. Sharp's apparent failure to recognise the *subsINUATUS* specimens in his series is all the more remarkable when one considers that Sharp also described *championi*, which is exceedingly similar to *rupicoloides* and likewise synonymous with *melletii* —



**Pl. 1:** *Ophonus subsinuatus*, male from Portland, Sept. 1886 coll. J.J. Walker. **left** whole specimen; **top right** label; **bottom right** aedeagus. M. G. Telfer

he certainly gave these specimens serious scrutiny. The only conclusion seems to be that Sharp dissected out the male genitalia but either overlooked the morphological differences, or regarded them as of little taxonomic value.

Lindroth (1935) synonymised *rupicoloides* Sharp and *championi* Sharp with *melletii* Heer, but without having examined Sharp's type material. Later, Lindroth (1972) was able to examine the types of *rupicoloides* and *championi* and to confirm their synonymy with *melletii*. Unfortunately, however, Lindroth (1972) only examined a single male of *rupicoloides* in the Sharp collection (which he designated 'Lectotypus *rupicoloides* Sharp'), and seemingly overlooked the presence of *subsINUATUS* amongst Sharp's other *rupicoloides* specimens.

The eventual discovery of the *subsINUATUS* specimens by José Serrano is undated but almost certainly took place in 1989, and at any rate following the publication of Sciaky (1987), and a few years before my first encounter with them in 1994.

#### Distribution and ecology

The world distribution of *O. subsINUATUS* is centred on the Mediterranean region, including North Africa, and extending eastwards to Uzhhorod (48° 37' N, 22° 17' E) and northwards to Germany (Sulldorf); a distribution map and list of localities is provided in Sciaky (1987). Published ecological information on *O. subsINUATUS* is extremely sparse. The most useful contribution comes from Sciaky (1987) who reports that *subsINUATUS*

tends to be found in humid, lowland sites, in contrast to *O. brevicollis* which has been collected from drier and more hilly districts. However, for a British population on the northern edge of its range, an ecological shift towards sites with warmer and sunnier micro-climates might be expected.

### The provenance of British specimens of *Ophonus subsinuatus*

Could the collection data have been swapped with other specimens? All three specimens are recognisably on the original cards by Sharp, and with all the collection data written in Sharp's hand on the upper surface of the card. Although they have been re-pinned, the data and the specimens could not have been swapped. In the case of the Crotch specimen, it appears to have been received direct-pinned from G.R. Crotch, and carded by Sharp. There cannot be absolute certainty that it was collected in Britain, since Crotch collected in Spain and the Canary Islands (Darby, [undated]), although Crotch may have been meticulous in keeping foreign and British material separate. All Crotch's European Coleoptera were collected between the late 1850s and October 1872, when he emigrated to the United States. His specimen thus pre-dates Walker's by at least 14 years.

J.J. Walker, who collected the male at Portland in September 1886, was a naval officer and may have been stationed at the Portland naval base at the time. He did travel to the Mediterranean region and thus he too might have mislabelled specimens which were actually captured abroad. However, the chances of both Crotch and Walker mislabelling foreign-collected *subsinuatus* specimens seem very remote. There can be little doubt that *subsinuatus* was taken in the wild in Britain.

Whether or not *O. subsinuatus* can be regarded as a native species in Britain is a matter of conjecture. Its occurrence on Portland, which provides a warm, sunny south-coastal location, with open limestone escarpments, seems entirely in keeping with the habits of other species of the genus. Portland is a considerable northern extension of the known range of *subsinuatus* (Sciaky, 1987) and so there has to be some question as to whether it may have been transported to this latitude by man, perhaps in the ballast of ships collecting a cargo of Portland limestone. The carabid *Scybalicus oblongiusculus* (Dejean, 1829) sets a relevant precedent, being regarded as a 19th-Century introduction to Britain: it was known from Portland and elsewhere in Dorset up to at least 1926. Despite raising the possibility of an alien status, I prefer to give *O. subsinuatus* the benefit of the doubt as a British native unless there is overwhelming evidence to the contrary.

### Conservation

*O. subsinuatus* is likely to be very rare, if not extinct, in Britain. The priority for conservation of this species in Britain is to conduct surveys to try and locate an extant population, using the locality details and ecological information above as a guide. Coleopterists should also check existing specimens in the hope of discovering any overlooked examples of this species, which may provide additional data on its British distribution.

### A remarkable coincidence?

During a recent investigation into the question of whether *Ophonus subquadratus* is a British insect (Telfer, 2001), I discovered a startling coincidence. The capture details (locality, sex, date, collector) of the three specimens which Pater (1938) determined as *subquadratus*, and which Moore (1956) later redetermined as *azureus*, are the same as the three British specimens of *O. subsinuatus* described above. I formed the idea that this may not be mere coincidence, and went to some lengths to try and find any evidence that might resolve the issue. However, I was unable to find any published evidence or specimen labels to come to a firm conclusion. On balance, it seems unlikely that the coincidence of capture details is anything more than a coincidence, since neither Pater or Moore is likely to have misidentified *subsinuatus* as *subquadratus* or *azureus*: both the latter species have rather rounded pronotal hind-angles, in contrast to the well-marked hind-angles of *subsinuatus* (Fig. 1).

### Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Stuart Hine for assistance in working on the NHM collections and for arranging the loan of specimens from the NHM, Jo Hodgkins for helpful comments and Brian Eversham for the loan of *O. subsinuatus* specimens collected in the south of France. I am indebted to the Alta Vista BabelFish, a free automatic translation service at <http://babelfish.altavista.com/>.

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## *Aegialia (Rhysothorax) rufa* (Fabricius) (Scarabaeidae: Aegialiinae) in Britain

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*Aegialia rufa* (Fabricius, 1792) has always been a rare beetle since its discovery at New Brighton (SJ 39; VC 58) by F. Archer in June 1862 (Archer, 1864). A single specimen was exhibited by Mr G.R. Crotch at the November 1864 meeting of the Entomological Society of London, although apparently several further specimens taken by Archer were accidentally destroyed (Anon, 1865: 125; Rye, 1866: 87). It was not seen again until 1883, when Mr R. Wilding took two specimens at Wallasey Sand hills (probably in SJ 29; VC 58) (Wilding, 1884), where during 1885 and 1886 it occurred frequently (Ellis, 1889). *Aegialia rufa* appeared to be restricted between the Rivers Dee and Ribble on the sand-dunes at Southport and Birkdale (usually recorded in SD 20, SD 21 and SD 31; VC 59) and Wallasey, where it was locally abundant until 1906. Johnson (1962: 155) believed this to be the last record, however there are several specimens in the Hope Entomological Collections (HEC) with the data 'Southport, 16-vi-1910 R.W.[ilding]' and two specimens in the Tomlin collection at the National Museum and Galleries of Wales which have the following data: 'Southport, 02.vi.1919, R.W.[ilding]'. It is interesting to note that the majority of museum specimens of this species bear the initials or name of R. Wilding, as in HEC where some 83% of the 65 specimens were collected by him. It was not until some 50 years later that Williams (1963) discovered a single example at Formby sand-hills in July 1963; this, and Ainsdale dunes, still remain the most often recorded localities for this species. The most recent record from the area known to us being that from 1983 at Formby (SD 20).

With an unassuming statement, Jackson (1907) recorded a single specimen of *rufa* found dead on the sand-hills in the neighbourhood of Barmouth, North Wales (SH 61; VC48). One might have expected this record to have provoked more of a response since it is some distance from the other known localities. Fowler (1890: 39) mentions being told of a specimen, also from Barmouth, in the collection of his late colleague Garneys. This record is unsubstantiated and in the later 'Additional Localities, Notes etc' (Fowler & Donisthorpe, 1913: 272) Barmouth is credited to Jackson. There is no mention of the Garneys record in the list of Merioneth Coleoptera by Skidmore & Johnson (1969: 193).

A second Welsh locality for *rufa* was discovered by David Copestake in June 1981 where a single specimen was found crawling on bare sand at Merthyr-mawr Warren National Nature Reserve (NNR) (SS 87; VC 41) (Copestake, *pers. comm.*). This renowned sand-dune system has been visited by numerous coleopterists, but no other records are known, suggesting as with the northern populations, a very low number of individuals with sporadic increases to detectable levels.

During a programme of pitfall trapping as part of an M.Sc. project (by AR; Ramsay, 1994), a single specimen of *rufa* was discovered amongst a sample collected on 20th July 1994. The project was carried out at Kenfig Burrows NNR (SS78; VC41) during July and August 1994 to assess the invertebrate fauna of wet dune slacks. *A. rufa* was obtained from a slack characterised by extensive growth of Creeping Willow *Salix repens* Linnaeus (Salicaceae), with an understorey of Skullcap *Scutellaria galericulata* Linnaeus (Lamiaceae), moss *Calliergon cuspidatum* (Hedwig) Kindb. (Amblystegiaceae) and sporadic Dewberry *Rubus caesius* Linnaeus (Rosaceae), horsetail *Equisetum* sp. (Equisetaceae) and Marsh Pennywort *Hydrocotyle vulgaris* Linnaeus (Apiaceae), which dominated the surface of the slack in the absence of Creeping Willow. Although this species is recorded from dune systems in Britain, this would appear to constitute the first recorded instance of *A. rufa* from a vegetated dune slack habitat.

*Aegialia rufa* is rare throughout its range in Europe: Great Britain; Belgium; The Netherlands; Germany; Denmark; Norway; Sweden; Poland and western Russia (Baraud, 1992; Stebnicka, 1977). In Britain, Hyman (1992: 382) gives *rufa* an RDB1 'Endangered' status. However, until a

survey using suitable techniques is conducted of the dune systems along the coast from the Severn Estuary north to the Cheshire/Lancashire dune systems, *A. rufa* would be better regarded as RDB I 'Indeterminate' (IUCN Red List Category: Data Deficient), that is, a species with an uncertain RDB status.

The biology of the species is unknown. Adults have been recorded across its range between January and September (May to July in Britain). The adults are thought to feed upon detritus in the sand, and the larva is unknown. The ecological data available on this species shows *rufa* to be stenotopic, being only associated with littoral sandy habitats, occurring on coastal dunes and sandy banks of inland waters (Stebnicka, *loc. cit.*).

### Acknowledgements

We would like to thank David Copestake for providing us with information on his capture and allowing us to publish his data, Dr Mike Wilson (National Museum and Galleries of Wales) for access to the Tomlin collection and Stella Brecknell (Hope Entomological Library) for assistance with locating some of the references.

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## *Eulagius filicornis* (Reitter) (Mycetophagidae) and other saproxylic beetles from the Maidenhead Thicket area, Berkshire

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On 20th July 2000 five specimens of *Eulagius filicornis* (Reitter) were obtained by beating decaying oak *Quercus* boughs near to Maidenhead Thicket in Berkshire. The first example was from a small decaying bough with some encrusting fungi (possibly a *Phellinus* sp.), on a medium-sized oak located within shaded woodland (SU 854816). Later in the day a further four specimens were beaten from a bough of a large open grown, 'stags horn' oak in a farmland hedgerow a little further west (SU 852816). At the time of their capture the identity and significance of the beetles was not realised as it not a species I have previously encountered. At a later date my colleague Keith Alexander examined them and suggested they might be *E. filicornis*. Subsequent reference to Harrison (1996) confirmed their identity.

*E. filicornis* was added to the British list (Harrison, *loc. cit.*) following its discovery on hornbeam *Carpinus* logs located in parkland within the Reading University campus during 1993, with subsequent searches during 1995 revealing it on decaying branches of oak and hornbeam near to the original site, and from alder *Alnus* some 3 km to the south. In addition to these original published records Harrison (*in litt.*) informs me that he has since found the species on other oak and beech *Fagus* trees in the Reading district during 1996 and 1998, indicating that it is firmly established in that area. The subsequent occurrence near Maidenhead, approx. 10 km northeast of the Reading localities, would suggest that it is now resident more widely in the Berkshire countryside. It clearly occurs on a variety of tree species (oak, beech, hornbeam and alder to date) and may be associated with encrusting fungi — Harrison (*loc. cit.*) originally discovered it in association with *Stereum hirsutum* (Willd.) and one of the beetles at Maidenhead was beaten from a bough with an encrusting fungus (likely to have been a *Phellinus* sp., although neither samples or details of the fungus were kept).

A variety of other noteworthy saproxylic beetles were also recorded on 20th July including several *Lissodema quadripustulata* (Marshall) (Salpingidae) by beating decaying hawthorns *Crataegus* within the shaded woodland (approx. SU 854816). Other species recorded with *E. filicornis* on the open grown oak (SU 852816) were: *Agrilus laticornis* (Illiger) (Buprestidae), *Dorcatoma chrysolina* Sturm, *D. flavicornis* (Fabricius) (Anobiidae) and *Abdera quadrifasciata* (Curtis) (Melandryidae). Also, to the south of the main A404 road, within Maidenhead Thicket (approx. SU 853810), the following were recorded: *Lymexylon navale* (Linnaeus) (Lymexylidae), one adult on the sawn end of a large oak trunk in a glade; *Diplocoelus fagi* Guérin-Méneville (Biphylidae), one by beating a fallen beech bough; *Cicones undatus* Guérin-Méneville (Colydiidae), in numbers on a fallen sycamore *Acer* bough with sooty bark disease in shaded woodland; and *Anisoxya fuscata* (Illiger) (Melandryidae), one by beating a dead standing hawthorn alongside a wide sunny section of ride.

A visit on 24th July to a nearby area just to the north of Pinkney's Green (approx. SU 861833) resulted in more records of notable saproxylics: a large felled oak trunk was riddled with the recent borings and exit holes of *Agrilus pannonicus* (Piller & Mitterpacher) (Buprestidae); a single adult *Mordellistena variegata* (Fabricius) (Mordellidae) on the same trunk; and a single *Abdera quadrifasciata* obtained by beating a *Piptoporus* fungus on birch.

In view of its RDB2 - Vulnerable status in Shirt (1987) and Hyman (1992), and requirement for old oaks, perhaps the most significant record is that of *L. navale*, though its occurrence here is not especially surprising in view of the relatively close proximity to Windsor Forest, a known locality. Moreover, although the areas mentioned above now form part of the Manor of Cookham & Maidenhead, a property owned by the National Trust, historically this complex of greens and commons were Crown land (up to the early 19th Century) and were probably contiguous with Windsor Forest. Many of the wooded areas at Cookham & Maidenhead are now dominated by dense

semi-natural, secondary woodland and scrub, much of it birch *Betula* and hawthorn, though many large old trees occur within and there is clear potential for further scarce saproxylics to occur.

### Acknowledgements

I am grateful to Keith Alexander for guidance on the identity of *Eulagius* and to Tom Harrison for providing details of his recent observations on the species.

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## *Stenolophus mixtus* (Herbst) (Carabidae) new to Scotland

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During the course of monitoring work at the Mersehead RSPB reserve (NX 930563; VC 73, Kirkcudbrightshire), a single female specimen of *Stenolophus mixtus* was taken in a pitfall trap. The trap had been set from 29.iv.1999 to 25.v.1999 in a formerly arable field which had been restored to wet grassland, with much standing water.

No published record of this species appears in the Scottish Insects Records Index held in the National Museum of Scotland. Luff (1998) also states that *S. mixtus* does not occur in Scotland and is mainly a southeastern species, although there is one recent (1993) record from the Isle of Man. This is a spring breeder which flies readily and could very easily cross the distance from the Isle of Man to the Scottish Solway coast. It is likely that it will become established along this coast wherever suitable habitat occurs.

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- LUFF, M.L. 1998. *Provisional Atlas of the Ground Beetles (Coleoptera, Carabidae) of Britain*. Huntingdon: Biological Records Centre.

## *Pycnota paradoxa* Mulsant & Rey (Staphylinidae) in a vole's nest

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On 24th September 2000, whilst searching for the carabid *Anisodactylus poeciloides* (Stephens) (Carabidae) on the North Kent Marshes at Higham (TQ 7075), I turned over some pieces of old wood lying on the ground between a dyke and the sea-wall and found the nest of a vole (*Microtus agrestis*?). It contained upwards of 20 small staphylinid beetles which on later examination proved to be *Pycnota paradoxa*, a species that is not uncommon at Higham in nests of the Mole *Talpa europaea*, but never, as far as I am aware, with any other mammal. The nest contained a few mites (Acari) but no other arthropods that I could see, certainly no fleas (Siphonaptera) or their larvae on which the beetle is said to feed. However, in another vole nest a few metres away there was a large population of fleas of several sizes plus numerous larvae, but no *Pycnota*. Two more nests were examined during the day, of which one contained fleas but neither harboured *Pycnota*.

Hyman (1994) confirms that *Pycnota* is primarily associated with mole nests but in addition gives one record from a Badger *Meles meles* sett and more significantly, in view of the present note, one from field mice *Apodemus* runs.

### Acknowledgements

I am indebted to the Action for Invertebrates project and Ian Middlebrook, Invertebrate Conservation Officer, for the opportunity to visit Higham.

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## The Australian Fern Weevil *Syagrius intrudens* Waterhouse (Curculionidae) confirmed on Guernsey

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The 1977 record of *Syagrius intrudens* Waterhouse on Guernsey (Heijerman, 1999) prompted RTT to visit the island to look for it. Heijerman's specimen had been taken near Fermain Bay, so the search was concentrated in that area. On 2nd September 1999, at about noon, three specimens were taken on a private estate near Fermain Bay. One was swept from an area of dense Bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* in the open, the others from sparse bracken under trees about 50 m from the first specimen. On 22nd August 2000 we obtained two further specimens from the estate and two from bracken beside the cliff path about 500 m distant. Both pairs of specimens were about 50 m apart. Heijerman's specimen was also taken on the cliff path (R. Snazell, pers. comm.) but probably further south than ours. The two collection sites are separated by a wooded valley with a sparse herb layer and hardly any ferns. The surrounding area is built-up and appears to be fern-free. These circumstances suggest that the population may be of long standing, perhaps dating from a time when the bracken was more extensive.

We have failed to identify the point of introduction of the weevil into Guernsey. There are several large houses in the Fermain Bay area in which exotic ferns could have been cultivated in the past and from which the weevils could have escaped.

### Observations on the habits of *Syagrius*

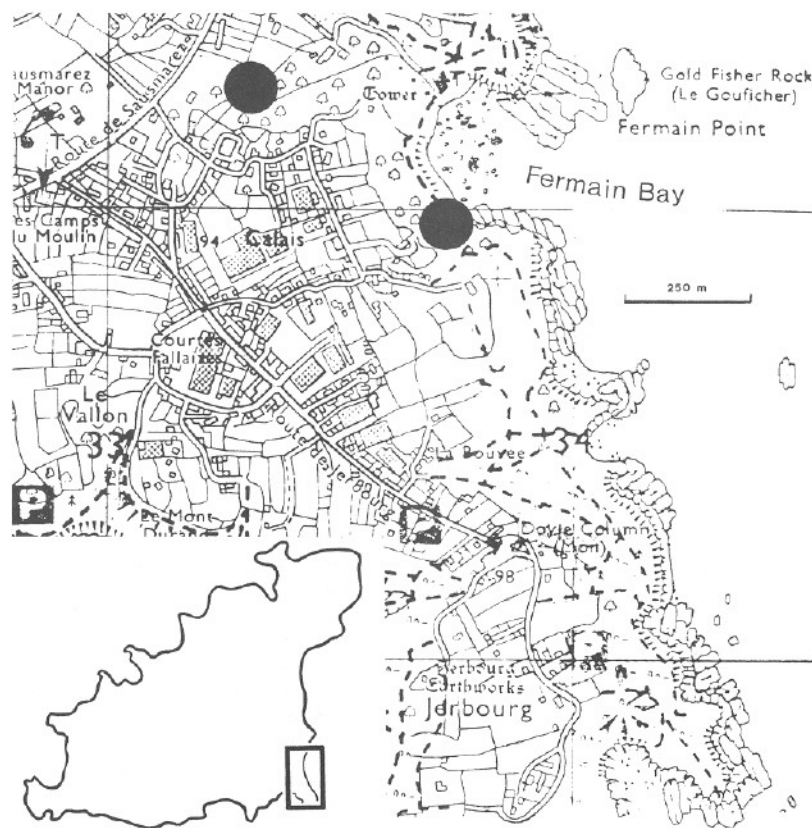
Early accounts (Carpenter, 1903; Mangan, 1908) describe *Syagrius* adults as being strictly nocturnal, remaining in the soil during the day (the original infestation at Glasnevin was finally brought under control by immersing the pots in water and picking off the weevils as they emerged from the soil and crawled up the plants). We, by contrast, found specimens exposed on the upper parts of the plants in warm sunshine. Indeed it was easier to obtain them by observation than by sweeping. There may well have been other specimens lurking in the undergrowth which would account for the very low density we found; unfortunately we did not go out to look for them at night.

### Acknowledgements

We wish to thank Peter de Sausmarez and Major Lionel Bailey for their kind assistance, without which these records would not have been made. The map is reproduced by kind permission of the Government of Guernsey.

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**Map 1:** Map of Fermain Bay, Guernsey, showing collecting sites of *Syagrius intrudens* (solid circles). For discussion, see text.

## *Ceutorhynchus hirtulus* Germar (Curculionidae) in Norfolk

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A single specimen of *Ceutorhynchus hirtulus* Germar was taken from Holme, West Norfolk (TF 6943) on 3.vi.2000. The beetle was swept from tall meadow vegetation growing on wet, sandy ground in the dune slacks. The weather was fine and bright but the vegetation remained damp. The plant species from which the beetle was taken was not observed.

This appears to be the first record of *C. hirtulus* in Norfolk. Mike Morris notes (pers. comm.) that although the beetle is widely distributed in the British Isles, it seems to be under-recorded. It has been recorded from Suffolk and its presence in Norfolk is perhaps not unexpected.

### Acknowledgements

I thank Martin Collier for confirming the identification of *C. hirtulus* and for noting its probable absence from Norfolk, and Mike Morris for providing further information on its known range.

## An infestation of *Podagrica fuscicornis* (Linnaeus) (Chrysomelidae) on cultivated Malvaceae

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On 13th July 2000, I noticed that the leaves and flowers of a Hollyhock *Althaea rosea* var., growing in a private garden in Harrow (TQ 164885; VC 21, Middlesex) had been severely attacked to the extent that most of the leaves had been 'skeletonised'. More than 35 chrysomelid beetles were present on the plant, and using Joy (1932) these were identified as *Podagrica fuscicornis*. By 17th July, the numbers of beetles on the original plant had fallen markedly to about 15. Most of the remaining beetles were on the flower-heads where they were causing severe damage to the deep purple petals. Elsewhere in the garden, three pink- or cream-flowered Hollyhocks (from the same 'Victorian' stock as the purple-flowered plant) exhibited a lesser degree of infestation. Between three and twelve beetles were present on each plant, and every leaf was extensively holed, typically with about 30 holes from 0.5-8.0 mm in diameter. Most of the holes were 4-5 mm in diameter, smooth-edged and slightly oval. Little or no damage was seen on the flowers of these plants.

A woody-stemmed tree mallow *Lavatera* was growing about 2 m from the purple-flowered Hollyhock. Of the four main stems of this plant, one was severely affected by the beetle. The leaves were semi-skeletonised, and the petals two-thirds eaten. Twelve beetles were seen on the plant on 17th July, five on the damaged flower-heads and the others elsewhere on the plant. The other three side branches showed only slight leaf damage, and the flowers were intact. Examination of a similar plant, growing in a shady position in the garden, revealed five beetles and minor but widespread leaf damage.

Although *P. fuscicornis* was seen eating petals, it is possible that other species may have been partly responsible for holing and skeletonising the leaves. However, no other chrysomelid beetles, or other species known to be capable of causing the observed damage, were seen. In view of the large numbers of *P. fuscicornis* present in the garden, and that damage of this type was confined to Malvaceae, it seems probable that this species was the sole or prime agent causing the leaf damage.

On 17th July I conducted a search for this beetle on unrelated plants in the garden. Three beetles were found on a deciduous Californian Lilac *Ceanothus* 'Gloire de Versailles'. Two were on the flowers, and close examination revealed that they were reaching up to the anthers and feeding on pollen. The third beetle was on a leaf edge, with its mouthparts enclosing the pointed tip of one of the small serrations on the leaf margin. Subsequent examination with a hand-lens revealed no damage to the serration. In view of the hot and sunny weather, it is possible that the beetle was taking exudate from the leaf.

The numbers of beetles on the plants dwindled markedly during the following days. On 22nd July one specimen was found in the greenhouse in the garden. During the same period individuals were found in the house and on a small patch of rough grassland in the garden, and it may be that active dispersal was occurring. On 14th August only one individual could be located, in the open and undamaged flower of a tree mallow. None of the plants were killed by the infestation, and the affected flowers formed apparently normal seed heads.

*P. fuscicornis* is a Nationally Notable species, widespread but very local in the UK and associated in the wild particularly with Musk Mallow *Malva moschata* growing in unimproved grassland (Hyman, 1992). These observations suggest that *P. fuscicornis* has the potential to become established on Malvaceae cultivars growing in domestic gardens.

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## Additional records of *Glocianus moelleri* (Thomson) (Curculionidae) from North Hampshire and Surrey

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*Glocianus moelleri* has long been considered a rarity, and Morris (1999) provides a workable key to the genus, as well as a detailed résumé of its known distribution, to which I can add the following.

On 31.v.2000, I found two specimens of *G. moelleri* on unimproved chalk grassland at Colekitchen Down, Surrey (TQ 0848). The weevils were captured in a suction sample taken using a petrol-powered garden vacuum modified for collecting invertebrates. I revisited the site in July and September but could not find any more adults. This appears to be the first modern record for VC 17 and possibly the first for over a century.

Other recent captures in Wiltshire (Roger Booth, pers. comm.) also came from chalky sites, but a 'problem' specimen in my backlog material, bucks the trend. This is a male *G. moelleri* taken 'by grubbing' at Woolmer Forest, North Hampshire (SU 7831) on 14.vi.1996. The capture site is on the Folkestone Beds of the Lower Greensand, and is disturbed heathland with acid grassland and bryophyte-dominated ground of a 'Breckland' character. *Leontodon autumnalis* is abundant, but several other yellow composites occur on the site. This is a remarkable capture, for a site which was already known to support a rich assemblage of uncommon weevils (Denton, 1996). *G. moelleri* and the weevils previously reported from Woolmer Forest, occurred on ground which was completely covered in railway sidings up to the 1960s. By the late 1980s the old track beds were covered in dense birch *Betula* woodland, which was cleared in 1988-89.

### Acknowledgements

Many thanks to Prof. Mike Morris for checking the specimens of *G. moelleri*, and to Surrey Wildlife Trust for supporting survey work on Colekitchen Down.

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## A belated record of *Medon castaneus* (Gravenhorst) (Staphylinidae) from Lincolnshire

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This species is listed as RDB I - Indeterminate, with post-1970 records from only two vice-counties (Surrey and West Norfolk). Hyman (1994) lists pre-1970 records from 11 vice-counties, but Lincolnshire is not amongst them. Amongst material donated to the British Entomological & Natural History Society collection by Charles MacKechnie-Jarvis, I found a specimen of *M. castaneus* labelled 'Rauceby, L[inc]s 18.v.[19]44. In disused mole nest'. I am not sure who collected the specimen.

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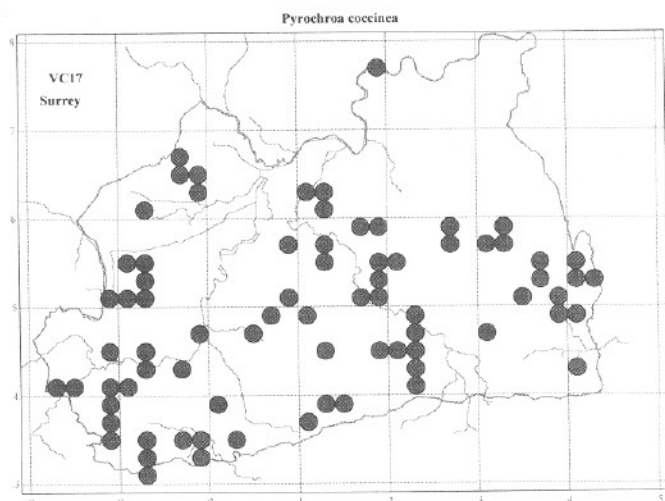
## *Pyrochroa coccinea* (Linnaeus, 1761) (Pyrochroidae) in Surrey

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It is remarkable that this unmistakable beetle is not included in the list of beetles in the Victoria County History of the county of Surrey produced by Champion, Donisthorpe & Lloyd (1902). The first Surrey record of which I am aware, was made by Duffy (1945) at Wyke (SU 95) in the early 1940s. Fred Coulson recorded Coleoptera in Surrey, but he had no records for *P. coccinea* up to the 1950s. He regularly collected around Esher without finding it.

Allen (1955) pointed out that this species must have increased during the 20th Century, as Fowler (1891) cited only five localities. This species does appear to have undergone a genuine expansion in Surrey during the 20th Century. Today it is frequently encountered flying across the rides on Esher, Fairmile, Oxshott and West End Commons. Morris (2000) states that *P. coccinea* "seems to be confined to woodlands in east and central Surrey...". This is clearly erroneous and Map 1 shows the distribution of all the Surrey records I have collected to date.



Map 1: Distribution of *Pyrochroa coccinea* (Pyrochroidae) in Surrey.

*P. coccinea* has been present in west Surrey since at least the 1940s. In the Surrey/Hampshire border area — which I have worked since 1988 — I have come across adult *P. coccinea* as frequently as *P. serraticornis*, but county-wide the latter is more frequent. *P. coccinea* is increasingly frequent on wooded heathland, where adults are regularly encountered around log piles of birch *Betula* and oak *Quercus* left after clearance operations intended to restore ericaceous habitat.

### Acknowledgements

Many thanks to Graham Collins, Ray Fry and Roger Hawkins for providing records.

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## Rare and uncommon Coleoptera in England and Wales, 2000

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**DORSET** (VC 9). Coccinellidae: *Platynaspis luteorubra* (Goeze), Grove, Portland (SY 6973), 1 in closely cropped limestone grassland on cliff top 7.ix, with *Scymnus frontalis* (Fabricius) and numerous *Coccinella undecimpunctata* Linnaeus, the latter frequent on Ribwort Plantain *Plantago lanceolata*. Chrysomelidae: *Donacia impressa* Paykull (Na), Tonerspuddle Heath (SY 8292), at pond margins on *Scirpus*. Curculionidae: *Trachyploeus alternans* Gyllenhal and *Orthochaetes insignis* (Aubé), Grove cliff top, Portland (SY 6973) 7.ix; *Smicronyx reichi* (Gyllenhal) (RDB3), East Weare, Portland (SY 7072), abundant on Common Centaury *Centaureum erythraea* on revegetating bare chalky area created by turf stripping 23.vi.

**SOUTH HAMPSHIRE** (VC 11). Chrysomelidae: *Calomicrus circumfusus* (Marshall), Browdown (SZ 5798), abundant under *Ulex europaeus* on shingle 24.vi. Curculionidae: *Baris lepidii* Germar (Na), on Smith's Pepperwort *Lepidium heterophyllum* growing on shingle adjacent to a damp area on Browdown (SZ 5898) 30.vi; *Sibinia arenaria* Stephens, *Strophosoma faber* (Herbst) and *Trichosirocalus dawsoni* (Brisout), all at Rook Cliff, Milford-on-Sea (SZ 2891) 3.vii. Chappett's Copse (SU 6522) — Anobiidae: *Ptinomorpha imperialis* (Linnaeus) on ivy *Hedera* clad beech iv-v; Biphylidae: *Diplocoelus fagi* Guérin-Ménéville under beech and sycamore bark, v-x; Latridiidae: *Enicmus brevicornis* (Mannerheim) under sycamore bark 20.viii; Melandryidae: *Orchesia minor* Walker, beaten from dead ash and beech 20.viii and 30.ix; Colydiidae: *Cicones undatus* Guérin-Ménéville under sycamore bark 12.x; Salpingidae: *Lissodema quadripustulata* (Marshall) on Field Maple *Acer campestre* vi-viii; Cerambycidae: *Leptura aurulenta* (Fabricius), adult in flight 28.vii; Anthribidae: *Platystomos albinus* (Linnaeus) beaten from various deadwood branches v-viii. Scolytidae: *Ernoporus fagi* Fabricius, in fine beech twigs iii and x, the latter also at Theddon Copse (VC 12; SU 6839) 12.iii.

**NORTH HAMPSHIRE** (VC 12, all grid refs are SU). Scarabaeidae: *Aphodius obliterated* Panzer, Chawton Park (7036) 1 in horse dung 20.iii - this is usually an autumn species, but a singleton was found in Gloucestershire in flood refuse on 16.i.1965 (Atty, 1983). Elateridae: *Cardiophorus asellus* Erichson, Woolmer Forest (7931) 10.vi. Staphylinidae: *Lomechusa emarginata* (Paykull) (N), Castle Bottom NNR (7959), 1 swept from open heathery slope 12.viii; *Stenus fuscicornis* Erichson (N), South Hay (7739), in leaf litter on scree of malmstone (Upper Greensand) rubble 5.iii; *Dianous coeruleus* (Gyllenhal), Hammer Bottom (8732) on mossy overhang of stream 19.viii - new for VC 12? Lycidae: *Platycis minutus* (Fabricius), Chawton (7037), on rotten beech *Fagus* log 9.viii. Chrysomelidae: *Luperus flavipes* (Linnaeus) in numbers on large aspen *Populus tremulae* with *Dorytomus tremulae* (Fabricius) (Curculionidae), Castle Bottom NNR (7959) vi-vii. Bramshott Common (8533) — Eucnemidae: *Hyllis olexai* (Palm), 1 male landed on large rotten beech trunk 8.viii. Tenebrionidae: *Eledona agricola* (Herbst), on large well-rotted bracket, vi-vii. Melandryidae: *Abdera biflexuosa* (Curtis), on oak *Quercus* boughs vi-vii; *Anisoxya fuscata* (Illiger), beaten from rotten birch *Betula* branch 23.vii. Atelabidae: *Rhynchites cupreus* (Linnaeus), on Whitebeam *Sorbus aria* 10.vii. Curculionidae: *Smicronyx jungermanniae* (Reich), several from Common Dodder *Cuscuta epithimum* on *Lotus* 8.vii.

**EAST SUSSEX** (VC 14). Carabidae: *Stenolophus skrimshiranus* Stephens (Na), Offham Marshes (TQ 4011), under material dredged from ditch 6.vi.

**WEST KENT** (VC 16). Holwood Mansion (TQ 4163)—Lycidae: *Platycis minutus* (Fabricius) (Lycidae), abundant both singly and in copula on a well-rotted lime *Tilia* stump 18 and 23.viii.1999 and 5.ix.2000. Biphylidae: *Diplocoelus fagi* Guérin-Méneville on beech vii. Melandryidae: *Orchesia minor* Walker and *O. undulata* Kraatz, on beech vii.

**SURREY** (VC 17). Carabidae: *Agonum livens* (Gyllenhal), Run Common (TQ 0342) flood debris 31.iii; *Odacantha melanura* (Linnaeus), Dunsfold village (TQ 0036), abundant in *Typha* stems 13.i - first modern Surrey record. Staphylinidae: *Dianous coeruleus* (Gyllenhal) Hammer Bottom (SU 8732), on mossy overhang of stream 19.viii - last recorded in VC 17 near Boxhill in the 1920s; *Stenus butrintensis* Smetana, Dunsfold Green pond (TQ 0036) 13.i; *S. circularis* Gravenhorst, Eashing Valley (SU 9443) in flood refuse 7.i; *Sepedophilus bipunctatus* (Gravenhorst), Gracious Pond NR (SU 9863), 1 under wet pine bark 2.vi. Ptinidae: *Ptinus palliatus* Perris, Peper Harow Park (SU 94) knocked out of Elder *Sambucus* growing beside an old rotten fence post - the previous Surrey record is from Richmond Park (Fowler & Donisthorpe, 1913). Elateridae: *Cardiophorus asellus* Erichson (Nb), Thursley Common NNR (SU 9040), abundant in malaise trap on open heathland v-vi. Cryptophagidae: *Telmatophilus schoenherri* (Gyllenhal), West End village pond (SU 9461), abundant in stems of *Typha angustifolia* 17.x - new for VC 17. Melandryidae: *Phlotrya vaudoueri* Mulsant, Gracious Pond NR (SU 9863), 4 beaten from dead bough of beech 12.vii; *Anisoxya fuscata* (Illiger) West End Common, Esher (TQ 16), on dead aspen *Populus tremula* 14.vii. Chrysomelidae: *Donacia impressa* Paykull, Newdigate clay pits (TQ 2042) v-vi, on *Scirpus*, first post-1970 record for VC 17; *D. cinerea* Herbst was present on *Typha* at the same site, with *Stenus fornicatus* Stephens (Staphylinidae) and *Demetrias imperialis* (Germar) (Carabidae) in wet moss etc.; *Luperus flavipes* (Linnaeus) Broomhall Heath (SU 9666) on aspen v-vi. Curculionidae: *Orthochaetes setiger* Beck, Chipstead Bottom (TQ 2657), in vacuum sample from chalk grassland 12.x; *Sibinia primitus* (Herbst), Thursley NNR (SU 9040) 14.ix; *Trachodes hispidus* (Linnaeus), Sidney Wood (TQ 0235), beaten from moribund oak boughs, v-vi - does anyone know of any other Surrey records?

**BERKSHIRE** (VC 22). Green Park, Reading (SU 7070) viii — Staphylinidae: *Tachyusa atra* (Gravenhorst). Dytiscidae: *Hygrotus nigrolineatus* (von Steven); *Dytiscus circumflexus* Fabricius. Hydrophilidae: *Cercyon bifenestratus* Küster; *Helophorus griseus* Herbst; *H. longitarsis* Wollaston, all in pools in old clay pits. Curculionidae: *Gymnetron villosulum* Gyllenhal, abundant on *Veronica anagallis-aquatica*.

Staphylinidae: *Stenus butrintensis* Smetana (N), Grazeley (SU 6966), in *Typha* stems iv-v.

**BUCKINGHAMSHIRE** (VC 24). Cryptophagidae: *Telmatophilus schoenherri* (Gyllenhal), Wraysbury Gravel Pits (TQ 0172), in dead stems of *Typha angustifolia* 21.ii, with *Demetrias imperialis* (Germar) (Carabidae).

**WEST NORFOLK** (VC 28). Cantharidae: *Malthinus balteatus* Suffrian, Leath House, Burnham Overy Town (TF 8542), a female beaten from a hedgerow 17.vii. Curculionidae: *Otiorynchus raucus* (Fabricius) and *Strophosoma faber* (Herbst), Burnham Overy Staithe (TF 8145), under plantain *Plantago* vii; *Drupenatus nasturtii* (Germar), Cley-next-the-sea (TG 0442), swept from ditch margin 9.vi.

**DENBIGHSHIRE** (VC 50) Cross Lanes (SJ 3747), marshy margins of large field pond, 2.v — Staphylinidae: *Stenus fornicatus* Stephens. Dytiscidae: *Hydaticus seminiger* (Degeer). Scirtidae: *Cyphon pubescens* (Fabricius).

#### Acknowledgements

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## *Lomechusa paradoxa* Gravenhorst, 1806 (Staphylinidae) rediscovered in Somerset after 140 years

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As part of an invertebrate survey, primarily for Hymenoptera, on behalf of the National Trust, I visited Breaun Down, Somerset (VC 6; ST 2958) on 30th April 2000. It was a warm, sunny spring day and I had covered the whole survey area by mid afternoon. With the day still warm, I returned to the cliffs on the south side of the Down, which offered the best opportunity for nesting aculeates. On a steep slope with relatively short, fine grasses, I swiped at a passing bee and missed, but in the net was an odd-looking little staphylinid with its abdomen curled up in the manner of *Ocypus olens*. Having just attended a workshop on Aleocharinae, held at the British Entomological & Natural History Society headquarters at Dinton Pastures, I recognised it as one of the rarely encountered ant-associated species which I'd seen in one of Derek Lott's slides.

In Joy (1932) the specimen very readily keyed to *Lomechusa* (as *Atemeles*) but deciding between the two species without voucher material was difficult. I took the specimen to Dinton where I compared it with specimens from the Masee collection. When placed beside specimens of *Lomechusa emarginata* the difference in the shape of the pronotum was very evident; the hind corners are distinctly acute, elongated and laterally produced in *L. emarginata*. With direct comparison the slightly longer joints 9 and 10 of the antennae in *L. emarginata* also became apparent. A feature which is not mentioned by Joy (1932) is the sinuation of the hind margin of the elytra, which is much deeper in *L. emarginata*. The Masee collection contained only one specimen of *L. paradoxa*, which appeared to be structurally identical to my specimen (Fig. 1).

*L. paradoxa* is known in Britain from Cornwall, Devon, Hampshire, the Isle of Wight, Kent, Surrey and Somerset. All these records are old, the most recent from Whitesand Bay, Cornwall, in 1927 (Hyman, 1994). To this can be added a specimen from Ventnor, Isle of Wight, in 1931 (Masee collection). In Somerset it is known from a single specimen collected at Weston-super-Mare in 1860 (Duff, 1993). Weston-super-Mare is very close to Breaun Down so, given the tendency of the old collectors to be less than exact with their data labels, this one may well have come from the same site.

The specimen is retained in my collection.

#### Acknowledgements

I am very grateful to Jonty Denton, Peter Hodge and Paul Hyman for looking at the specimen for me and confirming its identification, and to Derek Lott for encouraging me to publish the observation and for commenting on a draft of this note.

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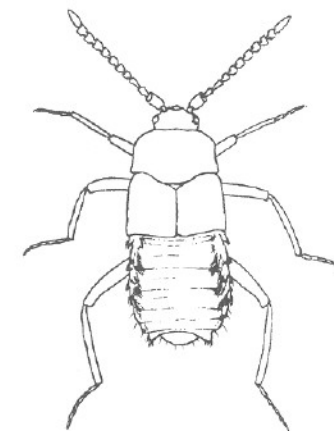


Fig. 1: *Lomechusa paradoxa* (Staphylinidae), traced from photograph of specimen from Breaun Down, Somerset D. Gibbs

## *Badister meridionalis* (Goeze) and *Amara strenua* Zimmermann (Carabidae) in East Sussex

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The distribution of *Badister meridionalis* in mainland Britain is restricted to a few wetland sites in Oxfordshire and East Gloucestershire (Hyman, 1992) and it is perhaps somewhat surprising that it should suddenly occur in East Sussex, even though this county contains several areas of apparently suitable unimproved marshland habitat.

It was on 27th September 1999, whilst carrying out a survey of aquatic insects on the West Dean Brooks in the Cuckmere valley, on behalf of the Sussex Downs Conservation Board, that I collected a single *Badister* Clairville female. It was evidently closely allied to *B. bullatus* (Schrank), but differing slightly from that species on a number of minor points, including the colour of the first antennal segment which was almost entirely infuscated. The specimen was caught in the water net whilst fishing for aquatic insects in a grassy field pond (TQ 514004) after a period of very wet weather which had caused the water in the pond to rise well above its normal level.

Although it was considered most likely that my specimen was *B. meridionalis*, the descriptions by Lindroth (1974, 1986) did not entirely agree and so, after displaying the specimen at the British Entomological and Natural History Society's annual exhibition on 27th November 1999, I submitted it to Mark Telfer, the Carabidae National Recording Scheme organiser, for his opinion. The specimen was duly returned, determined as almost certainly a female *B. meridionalis* and so the species has been tentatively added to the Sussex list of recorded Coleoptera. However, because there is a remote possibility that the specimen belongs to the non-British *B. lacertosus* Sturm, a male from East Sussex is needed so that the identity can be confirmed using genitalia characters.

In October 2000, after one of the wettest autumns on record, the Cuckmere valley was severely flooded and on 12th October the West Dean Brooks were visited especially to search for the *Badister* in flood debris. Access to the pond where the female *B. meridionalis* occurred in 1999 was impossible due to the depth of flood water, but several suitable areas along the northern margin of the same meadow (at TQ 516006) were easily reached and some floating flood refuse was examined. Alas, no *Badister* were discovered on this occasion, but a single specimen of a large *Amara* proved to be a female *A. strenua*. This species has only been found in Sussex on one previous occasion, by David Hance who found a single example in flood debris in a field close to the River Rother near Maytham Wharf, East Sussex (TQ 876272) on 31st October 1998. This site is more than 13 km inland and well away from the tidal influence of the river.

Published notes on the ecology of *A. strenua* (Hyman, 1992; Luff, 1998) refer to its habitat as "saltmarshes though occurring inland" and "primarily a species of coastal saltmarshes" respectively. In view of the findings reported here, it is suggested that "water meadows near the coast" should be added to the range of habitats where the species has been found in Britain. It is also worth noting that a high percentage of British records are for specimens found in flood debris and this suggests it may be a difficult species to find in its natural habitat and is therefore under-recorded.

### Acknowledgements

I am grateful to Mark Telfer for his opinion on the identity of my East Sussex specimen of *B. meridionalis*, and to David Hance for allowing me to publish his record of *A. strenua*.

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## *Bruchidius varius* (Olivier, 1795) (Bruchidae) new to Oxfordshire

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*Bruchidius varius* (Olivier) was added to the British List by Hodge (1997) based on material collected on 9th October 1994 in East Sussex (VC 14). It has since spread rapidly across south and southeast England, and has been recorded in 11 vice-counties. A distribution map, vice-county list and identification details are given by Cox (2001). In mainland Europe, the species has expanded northwards in recent years, being recorded for the first time in Westphalia, Germany, on 24.ix.1994 (Drees, 1996) and for The Netherlands on 1.ix.1995 (Sterrenburg, 1996).

On 15th October 2000, while recording Coleoptera (MVLB) and Diptera (JWI) at Aston Rowant National Nature Reserve, Oxfordshire (SU 7298), using a modified garden vacuum, we collected a single specimen of *B. varius*. This is apparently the first record for Oxfordshire (VC 23). A continuation of the northward and westward expansion of this beetle's range is to be expected.

The catch from the vacuum-sampler was initially transferred to a long white net to collect Diptera, before being moved to a sieve and tray to extract beetles. The *Bruchidius* was pootered by JWI along with the flies in the 'net' stage; if the catch had been transferred directly to an open sieve and tray, in the normal fashion for Coleoptera, this notoriously flighty insect (Cox, 2001) would have been overlooked. The beetle was vacuumed from an area of steep chalk downland, among a cluster of Wild Mignonette *Reseda lutea*, on the flowers of which it may have been feeding.

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## Two recent records of *Acupalpus dorsalis* (Fabricius) (Carabidae) in southwest Scotland

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*Acupalpus dorsalis* (Fabricius) (Carabidae) has a rather southern and eastern distribution in Britain (Luff, 1998). The Scottish Insects Records Index held in the National Museum of Scotland notes only one Scottish record, in Dumfriesshire, 1948. Luff (1996) recorded its occurrence on the Isle of Man and since this is a winged species which flies readily, it could easily cross the distance from the Isle of Man to the southwestern Scottish coast.

Two specimens have recently been taken in pitfall traps set during research work carried out by Scottish Agricultural College. The first was in grassland near Dumfries (NX 9873; VC 72) in a trap set between 5.v.1997 and 4.vi.1997. The second was at Mersehead RSPB reserve (NX 9356;

VC 73, Kirkcudbrightshire), in a trap set between 29.iv.1999 and 25.v.1999 in a former arable field which had been restored to wet grassland, with much standing water. These may be transient specimens but it is possible that this species could be extending its range west and north, and could become established in southwestern Scotland where suitable habitat occurs.

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### *Onthophagus taurus* (Schreber) (Scarabaeidae) again found in the New Forest after a century and a half

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In looking over recently a few beetles of the above genus collected by my friend Keith C. Lewis, I was truly amazed to see a well-developed male of *O. taurus*. This *Onthophagus* has for some time, with good reason, been regarded as long extinct in our area — an estimate which, however, may possibly require revision. The above specimen was found on or near pony dung in Knightwood Enclosure, near Lyndhurst, S. Hampshire, on 24th August 1967, but not until now recognized as being of outstanding interest.

Significantly, the New Forest — Brockenhurst and Lyndhurst according to Stephens (1839) — is the chief British locality on record for *O. taurus*. Whether any details as to incidence, etc., are extant in old works, I cannot say; but I have seen none. Such records from there as exist probably date from early in the 19th Century. In any case, therefore, the above capture is of great interest, and poses questions. Has *O. taurus* been continuously present in the area from ancient times? That would seem implausible, given the apparent lack of records between then and now. Yet the hypothesis of an immigrant specimen from the French coast is hardly more satisfying.

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### *Ilybius guttiger* (Gyllenhal, 1808) (Dytiscidae) new to Hertfordshire

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On 7th July 1999, one specimen of this nationally scarce (Notable B) dytiscid was collected from the Hertfordshire side of Sawbridgeworth Marsh (TL 491158). Sawbridgeworth Marsh is a Site of Special Scientific Interest, bisected by the Hertfordshire/Essex border, designated because of its species-rich tall fen vegetation. This is almost certainly the first record for Hertfordshire and the species does not appear to have been recorded from North or South Essex. Foster (2000) describes the species as being associated with mesotrophic fens and other areas of dense vegetation in base-rich water, often found in partial shade, a situation which describes the sampled habitat perfectly. Foster (2000) takes into account the most recent changes in the IUCN Red List categories and criteria and gives *Ilybius guttiger* the status 'IUCN Lower Risk (nationally scarce List B)'.

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### A recent Irish record of *Siagonium quadricorne* Kirby (Staphylinidae)

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The Irish fauna of saproxylic Coleoptera is a peculiarly impoverished one. Fowles *et al.* (1999) give a total of 599 British species but only 204 of these are known in Ireland, i.e. 34% (Anderson *et al.*, 2000). To put this in context, 61% of the British fauna of Carabidae are recorded from Ireland (Anderson, 2000) and 68% of the aquatic Coleoptera (Ashe *et al.*, 1998).

*Siagonium quadricorne* is regarded as widespread but local in Britain, but in Ireland there has only been one published record, that given by Johnson & Halbert (1902) for Borris, Co. Carlow. To this I can add the occurrence of a male plus single larva under bark of a wind-thrown Scots Pine *Pinus sylvestris* at Fota Island Wildlife Park (W 785707), East Cork (coll. R. Anderson, 11th July 2000). Associated fauna included *Laemostenus terricola* (Herbst) (Carabidae), *Ptinella cavelli* (Broun) (Ptiliidae), *Dinaraea aequata* (Erichson), *Atrecus affinis* (Paykull), *Ocyopus compressus* (Marsham) (Staphylinidae), *Euophryum confine* (Broun) (Curculionidae) and *Tomicus piniperda* (Linnaeus) (Scolytidae). The occurrence of four naturalised introductions (*L. terricola*, *P. cavelli*, *E. confine*, *T. piniperda*) out of a total of eight Coleoptera, will illustrate the prevalence of introduced species in many Irish dead-wood habitats.

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### *Otiorhynchus crataegi* Germar (Curculionidae) in Abingdon, Berkshire (VC 22)

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This recent addition to the British List appears to be synanthropic in its habits, being associated with ornamental plants, on which it is considered a pest (Alford, 1995: 137). Since it was first discovered indoors at Old Windsor in October 1980, where it is still present (David Halstead, pers. comm.), it has only been recorded in three vice-counties — **Berkshire** (VC 22): Old Windsor (SU 97; Halstead, *loc. cit.*), Thatcham (SU 56; Hodge & Jones, 1995); **Surrey** (VC 17): Knaphill (SU 95; A.J. Halstead in Muggleton, 1998), Rowledge (SU 84; Salisbury, pers. comm.), West Molesey (TQ 16; Owen, 1999); **Middlesex** (VC 21): Staines (TQ 07; Muggleton, 1998).

Survey work at the Thatcham locality by Bartlett & Aitkenhead (1985) showed *O. crataegi* to be restricted to a single row of gardens by a military depot. It was suggested that the depot could have been the source of the beetles, since vehicles and supplies return there from manoeuvres abroad, such as Germany, where the beetle is known to occur. This was the last survey conducted for the species in the U.K., however from *ad hoc* recording the data suggest that *O. crataegi* is spreading in Britain, as in continental Europe. A recent capture in Abingdon lends support to this

idea. However, the spread of this species may be confounded by separate introductions and translocations that become established (D. Halstead, pers. comm.).

During October 2000, JWI collected a small number of weevils on the outside wall of a block of flats in Abingdon (SU 59), where they appeared to be attracted to the porch light. The next day they were determined by DJM as *O. crataegi* using Morris (1997). Since there was no material of this species in the Hope Entomological Collections (HEC), further searching was conducted that evening. In total 40 specimens were collected over the two nights, and a specimen was also found during mild weather on 22.i.2001. Sieving of the tree bark chippings and leaf litter under the ornamental plants at the flats produced another specimen on 13.iii.2001, however by the end of March the beetles were becoming active again, with a further 11 specimens being found between 27.iii and 28.iii.2001, and 20 on 2.iv.2001. The block of flats where the beetles are found was completed in 1994, but development in the area has been continuous from about 1991 until a few years ago, and during this period ornamental plants have been introduced continuously. It is thought that the *crataegi* colony in Abingdon is well established, based on the number of specimens seen, the period of time the beetles have been found, and the extent of the damage to the ornamental plants.

The species is spreading across northwestern Europe and in addition to those countries cited in Morris (*loc. cit.*) it has now been recorded from Germany (Burgarth, 1989), Slovakia (Majzlan, 1999), Switzerland (Bassangova & Grunder, 1997) and Denmark (Palm, 1990). Palm (1998) states that (at the time of publication) there were only six known localities for the species in northern Europe and suggests that the lack of records may be due to this beetle's nocturnal habits and to it hiding deep in ground litter during the day, although Morris (pers. comm.) noted that this was not the case at the Molesey locality. However, Barclay (pers. comm.) found in May 1999 that the species was active on ornamental ivy *Hedera* (Araliaceae) and the lower branches of *Syringa* (Oleaceae) at around 9 p.m. at the same locality, in company with much larger (approx. 3:1) numbers of *Otiorynchus singularis* (Linnaeus). He also commented that a crepuscular feeding habit is characteristic of the majority of members of this genus in northern Europe. Palm (*loc. cit.*) collected the species by beating *Ligustrum* at night. In Abingdon the species was abundant at night and not seen during the day, therefore it would appear that night searching/collecting, in particular by beating appropriate plants, may be the most productive method of recording this species.

According to Morris (1997) *O. crataegi* is polyphagous with an association with *Syringa vulgaris* Linnaeus and *Ligustrum ovalifolium* Linnaeus (Oleaceae). Palm (1998, 1990) also lists *Pyracantha*, *Cotoneaster* (Rosaceae) and *Symphoricarpos* (Caprifoliaceae) as suitable hosts. The last two plants were noted at the Abingdon site and its surrounds, with signs of feeding damage typical of this weevil's activity. D. Halstead (pers. comm.) also noted feeding damage by this species on *Symphoricarpos* and *Syringa* at Old Windsor. The species is univoltine, usually emerging in July, and although adults can be found throughout the year they are most common in the autumn (Palm, 1998). March records from Abingdon suggest that this species hibernates as an adult below or near the host plants. The species is parthenogenetic across most of its range, although Mazur (1993) recently described the male from Turkey, which is possibly its centre of origin.

Voucher specimens have been deposited in the Natural History Museum, London; National Museum & Galleries of Wales, Cardiff; the Oxfordshire Museum Stores, Standlake; New Walk Museum, Leicester; and the Hope Entomological Collections, Oxford.

#### Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Maxwell Barclay (Natural History Museum, London), Paul Bartlett (Central Science Laboratory, York), David Halstead (Old Windsor), Mike Morris (Dorset) and Andrew Salisbury (Royal Horticultural Society, Wisley) for their useful discussions and sharing their data; Dorothy Newman (HEC) and Stella Brecknell (Hope Entomological Library) for their help in obtaining literature; Gary Powney (HEC volunteer) for sorting the leaf-litter samples; and

finally Derek Avery (Abingdon) for allowing us to collect on the site and for information on the flats and their development.

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### *Cionus scrophulariae* (Linnaeus) (Curculionidae) on the garden ornamental flower Cape Figwort *Phygелиus aequalis* (Scrophulariaceae)

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Many years ago, Mr Rex Broad of Chelmsford, Essex, showed me a *Buddleia davidii* which had a very heavy infestation of something which had eaten most of the leaves, leaving them stunted, brown and full of holes. He said that when he had looked at the plant a few days previously it had been covered with scores of little spherical bladders. When I examined the five-foot high plant on 10th July 1979 it was swarming with hundreds of *Cionus scrophulariae*, and interestingly a single *C. alauda* (Herbst) was also noticed. *C. scrophulariae* is more often found on figworts *Scrophularia*, especially when growing near water.

On 23rd July 2000 I noticed a similarly heavy infestation of *C. scrophulariae* on a large Cape Figwort *Phygелиus aequalis* growing beside my garden pond. Each of the 20 or more flower spikes had on them a dozen or more beetles and their pupal cases, and the leaves on the higher flower-bearing stems were badly disfigured, having been largely eaten away and turned brown. It is interesting that *P. aequalis* and *Scrophularia* spp. are both from the same family (Scrophulariaceae) whereas *Buddleia* is assigned to the Loganiaceae.



## Reviews

*Moccas: an English deer park. The history, wildlife and management of the first parkland National Nature Reserve.* Edited by Paul T. Harding and Tom Wall. English Nature, 2000. 348 pp, >100 figures. Soft cover, A4. Price £20 including p+p. Copies are obtainable from: Telelink, P.O. Box 100, Fareham, Hampshire PO14 2SX. Telephone 01329 668600, fax 01329 664725. ISBN 1 85716 511 X.

Moccas Park is one of the most famous of English historic parklands. Who hasn't heard about 'those grey old men of Moccas'? The editors describe this book as "a celebration of its beauty and importance and an exploration of the issues surrounding their maintenance for future generations". All aspects of the park are covered, each section having been especially commissioned and written by experts in their own fields. Three sections are of especial interest to readers of *The Coleopterist*: 'Coleoptera' by Colin Welch; '*Hypebaeus flavipes* (F.): the so-called Moccas Beetle' by Jon Cooter; and 'Saproxyllic invertebrates and the conservation evaluation of British parklands' by Roger Key. The appendices include a full list of the Coleoptera which have been reported from the park, compiled by CW and JC, and will doubtless lead to a flood of additional records from coleopterists who ought to have made their records available long ago!

Over 900 beetle species have been reported over the years and Colin Welch provides a review of the more interesting ones, with a detailed discussion of the "famous three" — *Hypebaeus flavipes*, *Pyrrhidium sanguineum* (Linnaeus) and *Ernoporus caucasicus* (Lindemann) — and other nationally important species. The text is illustrated by some fine drawings by R.W.J. Read plus distribution maps of the last two from Biological Records Centre. Unfortunately *Malthodes brevicollis* (Paykull) is treated as a valid British species here whereas all of the evidence suggests that it shouldn't be on the British List at all.

The emphasis on recording at Moccas has naturally been on the wood-decay fauna of the old parkland trees. The article draws attention to the many gaps in coverage that have resulted — Chrysomelidae and Curculionidae in particular. It also gives details of many important species for which there are only old records. There are also discussions of the habitat requirements of the saproxyllic and other beetles. This section — plus the species list in the appendix — should provide a very useful focus for determining future recording strategies for the park. *Hypebaeus* deservedly gets its own section in the book as the only beetle species unique to Moccas Park in Britain — again with an illustration by R.W.J. Read. Details of other European sites for the species are especially welcome to have available — its presence in Germany and Sweden makes one wonder why it has not been found at Windsor or elsewhere in lowland Britain.

It is a pity that a more ecological approach was not taken — to discuss wood-decay beetles separately from wood-decay Diptera and separately from the fungi seems odd. A chapter on wood-decay communities would have been more generally useful to the site owners, managers and their advisers, I feel, whereas the taxonomic division makes the book more useful to specialist entomologists and mycologists who want to know where the gaps in coverage are, to target future recording activities — natural history rather than ecology. I have left consideration of Roger Key's section on conservation evaluation last as it follows on more naturally from what I have said above. Here we do have a more integrated and wider-ranging review of one of the special interests of Moccas Park, albeit just from an invertebrate — particularly beetle — perspective. The core of the section is a discussion of the development of the Index of Ecological Continuity (IEC) and Saproxyllic Quality Index (SQI), which followed on from the pioneering groundwork of Francis Rose and Paul Harding on the assessment of the nature conservation importance of ancient wood pastures in lowland Britain. The author clearly favours the SQI over the IEC, although the relative strengths and weaknesses of the two systems are not fully explored. My own view is that the two indices measure different things and are most usefully applied together, in parallel, not either/or. It would

be good for this debate to be developed further. The chapter goes on to discuss Martin Speight's initiatives in the Council of Europe and species protection under the G.B. Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, European Directive on habitats and species 1992, and U.K. Biodiversity Action Plan.

The book really has something for everyone and will hopefully lead to readers seeing more clearly how their own interests fit into the bigger picture. It is a unique exploration of one important beetle site; hopefully other similar studies will follow.

Keith Alexander

*Ground Beetles* by Trevor G. Forsythe. Slough: Richmond Publishing, 2000. 96 pp., 6 pls. Hard cover, price £15. Paperback, price £8.95.

This addition to the series of 'Naturalists' Handbooks' is a second edition of the book first published in 1987. There are short chapters on natural history and techniques which are largely unchanged from the first edition. The information and ideas are still interesting but would have benefited from fuller revision. The book includes a checklist with species added to the list since 1987 placed at the end. The list of further reading does include some additional references. The main change from the first edition is that the keys, which make up the bulk of the book, now include all the British species. This is a major undertaking, especially in a volume designed for students and amateur naturalists. These keys are well illustrated by line drawings beside the couplets and by a diagram to show general features. Most distinctions are well shown although the notch on the fore tibiae is not very clear. At times I found the structure of the keys somewhat irritating. For example couplet 7 of Key 1 directed me to Key 4. Working through Key 4, I came to the same features repeated at couplet 25 and had identified *Loricera pilicornis* by its long antennal setae.

Nevertheless, the keys do achieve their main aim; most common species can be correctly identified by a determined beginner and the possibility of finding less common species is not ignored in this new edition. My young students who tried the keys liked the short couplets but were sometimes stumped by an unfamiliar word which they could not find explained, such as *setae* and *fovea*. I suspect that most coleopterists will find something of interest in the book but will not be tempted to use it for their identification of specimens.

A. J. W. Allen

*Les Buprestides de France: Volume 1, Texte* by L. Schaefer, 1949, 1955, 1984. (reissue) Price £69. *Volume 2, Compléments & Iconographie* by J. Forel and J. Leplat. Canterbury: Hillside Books, 2000. 116 pp. Price £69.

These two volumes are uniformly bound in heavy green boards. Volume one contains the original edition plus a reprint of the supplement. It is a classic work on French buprestids with 550 pages of keys, descriptions, information on larvae, distribution data and much else. It has 27 black-and-white plates. Volume 2 is a mixture of new material and reprinted papers. Seven of the papers are by Schaefer including a catalogue of French species originally published in 1971 and 1972 and papers on the buprestid fauna of some areas of France. There are 4 papers published between 1974 and 1996 by other authors with descriptions of new species.

The original material is an excellent detailed index to both volumes including the papers, a bibliography of L. Schaefer and 27 colour plates. These plates are magnificent colour photographs of 320 specimens including all native British species. Although they are not to scale the length of each species is given.

Anyone with an interest in buprestids or who collects in France and neighbouring countries will find these two books very useful.

A. J. W. Allen

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