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THE COLEOPTERIST

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Editor: H. MENDEL

ATHETA (S.STR.) HEYMESI HUBENTHAL (STAPHYLINIDAE) NEW TO BRITAIN

R. M. Lyszkowski

On 26 February 1983 the writer collected a number of frozen tussocks from the edge of a marshy area in Glen Artney, Perthshire (NN711162). One of the tussocks contained the remnants of a rodent nest and the ground around the edge of the marsh was extensively riddled with mole burrows.

Among the small number of Coleoptera later found in the defrosted tussocks were a male and female of an unfamiliar species of *Atheta* (*s.str.*). The very distinct spermatheca suggested that I had found a pair of *Atheta heymesi* Hubenthal. The specimens were eventually sent to P. M. Hammond (Natural History Museum, London) who told me (*in litt.*) that they agreed with an Austrian specimen in the museum collections.

Externally the species is very similar to the common *A. graminicola* (Gravenhorst). However, *A. heymesi* is 3.5-4mm long, slightly dull and is of a distinctly brownish-black colour, whilst *A. graminicola* is 4-4.5mm long, rather shiny and black. Females of the two species are easily distinguished by the shape of the spermatheca which, in *A. heymesi*, has the free end of the basal piece greatly expanded, and quite unlike that of any known British species of *Atheta*. Males of *A. heymesi* lack the strong granulations of the 6th visible tergite of *A. graminicola* and, furthermore, the raduliform puncturation of the elytra is far weaker in the former species. Fresh specimens exhibit slight differences in the elytral pubescence. In *A. heymesi* the hairs at the rear edge of the elytra are directed approximately backwards, whilst in *A. graminicola* they are directed towards the hind angles of the elytra.

According to Palm (1970, *Svensk Insektfauna* 9, Coleoptera : Fam. Staphylinidae, part 6, p.230) *A. heymesi* was originally described from specimens collected from a mole's nest at Thüringen, and in Scandinavia the species has been found in a few locations in southern Norway, sometimes in numbers, usually in the burrows of the water vole.

Good illustrations of the genitalia are given in both Palm (*op. cit.*, plate XV) and in Freude, Harde and Lohse (1972, *Die Käfer Mitteleuropas*, vol.5, p.196).

I thank Mr P. M. Hammond for confirming the identity of my specimens and also Prof. J. A. Owen for help and encouragement.

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ATHETA (*A.*) *HEYMESI* HUBENTHAL (STAPHYLINIDAE) IN AYRSHIRE

M. Sinclair

Following Mr R. Lyszkowski's introduction of this species to the British list, I can report a specimen from Auchalton Meadows, a local nature reserve in Ayrshire (V.C. 75, Ayr, NS336035/6). It is a female that was in a batch of beetles caught in pit-fall traps by Dr G. N. Foster in April 1990. The beetle had dried and is in poor condition, but Mr P. Hammond of the Natural History Museum, London, whom I thank, verified its identity.

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AGABUS WASASTJERNAE (DYTISCIDAE) SAHLBERG NEW TO SCOTLAND

J. A. Owen, R. M. Lyszkowski, R. Proctor & S. Taylor

Among some beetles collected by pitfall trapping in a pine wood in upper Speyside, last summer (1991), was an example of *Agabus wasastjernae*. Other specimens have since been found in the area by netting small pools.

This boreal Holarctic species has its Palaearctic headquarters in northern Scandinavia, Finland and western Siberia. Isolated colonies in central Europe are thought to represent ice-age relict populations and this is also likely to be the case with these Scottish specimens. The species had been recorded previously from England but only in the form of sub-fossil fragments (Coope, 1959; Osborne, 1972).

We hope to publish a full account of our findings in due course.

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LATHROBIUM FENNICUM RENKONEN (STAPHYLINIDAE) IN EAST SUSSEX - THE FIRST RECORD FOR THE BRITISH MAINLAND

Peter J. Hodge

During a brief visit to Castle Water near Rye Habour, East Sussex, with Prof. J. A. Owen and Mr R. M. Lyszkowski, on 12 April 1992, I took a single male *Lathrobium* from the margin of a stand of *Phragmites*. Dissection of the aedeagus proved that the specimen was *L. fennicum* Renkonen, a species that hitherto has only been recorded as British from Tresco in the Isles of Scilly.

Just to make quite sure that the specimen was not a solitary vagrant or a variant of the closely similar species, *L. quadratum* (Paykull), the site was revisited (with Prof. J. A. Owen) on 3 May 1992. We succeeded in finding 4 males and 2 females of what is unquestionably *L. fennicum*.

Although this is the first record of *L. fennicum* from the British mainland there may well have been an established colony at Rye Harbour for many years. On 27 May 1986 I recorded *L. quadratum* from Castle Water but no reference specimen was retained! The Coleoptera list for Rye Harbour SSSI states that Mr J. A. Parry has also noted *L. quadratum* from Castle Water, but gives no date. This latter species is widespread and frequent in marshy places in East Sussex, especially on the levels, but it is quite possible that some records should be referred to *L. fennicum*.

Reference

MacKECHNIE-JARVIS, C., 1968. *Lathrobium fennicum* Renk. (Col., Staphylinidae) : a species new to Britain. *Entomologist's mon. Mag.*, **104**: 123-124.

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RHAGIUM BIFASCIATUM (F.) V. *MEDIOFASCIATUM* PIC (CERAMBYCIDAE): A MISNOMER

R. R. Uhthoff-Kaufmann

Because of an unfortunate *lapsus calami*, this name appeared as a new variety, instead of v. *medionotatum* Pic, in the Coleoptera section of the *Zoological Record*, **48**: 235 (1911). Although the mistake invalidated the name, it was repeated in Winkler's Vienna *Catalogus Coleopterorum regionis palaearcticae*, 10 (1929) and the variety subsequently described and figured by Dr K. G. Blair in the *Entomologist's mon. Mag.* (1940) and the *Proceedings of the S. London ent. nat. hist. Soc.* (1940-41). Later authors, following identifications in the National Collection in the Natural History Museum, London (including the Stephensian Collection) and in other collections followed suit.

Any British *Rhagium* labelled 'v. *mediofasciatum* Pic' must be referred to the var. *medionotatum* Pic (*vide* Pic, *Matériaux pour servir à l'étude des Longicornes*, **7(2)** (1910).

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LEIODES STRIGIPENNE DAFFNER (LEIODIDAE) IN BRITAIN

J. Cooter

This species was recently separated from *Leiodes flavicornis* (Schmidt) and I am trying to establish if we have, in Britain, one or both species. So far, the few specimens I have examined have proved to be *Leiodes strigipenne* and I am keen to see more exponents of *'flavicornis'*. Should anyone wish to have their material verified, please send to me at the address below.

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ANOBIUM INEXSPECTATUM LOHSE (ANOBIIDAE) IN CUMBERLAND

Peter J. Hodge

Short notes in the journals have, for some time, been pushing the known range of this species further north in England and Wales. On 29 July 1982 I beat several specimens of *Anobium* off ivy-covered bushes on the north bank of the River Irthing, just west of Lanercast Bridge, near Brampton, Cumberland (NY5563). Not surprisingly, these turned out to be *A. inexspectatum*. The first record for Scotland is eagerly awaited!

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LIMONISCUS VIOLACEUS (ELATERIDAE) MÜLLER AT BREDON HILL N.N.R., WORCESTERSHIRE

Howard Mendel

In a batch of click beetle larvae collected in Worcestershire (SO 94) by Mr P.F. Whitehead in 1989, and sent to me for identification, was a single example of *Limoniscus violaceus*. The only previous record of *L. violaceus* outside Windsor Forest was from 'Tewkesbury, Glos.' on the 23rd May 1939 (Mendel & Owen, 1990).

In 1990/1991 I was contracted by the Nature Conservancy Council to look at woodlands and parklands on the Worcestershire/ Gloucestershire border, in the Tewkesbury area, to advise on which might possibly support *L. violaceus* and hopefully find a breeding colony. Although a number of woods in the area contained ancient trees which looked ideal for *L. violaceus* it was only possible to prove breeding at Bredon Hill N.N.R. (SO 93). In May 1991 a dead adult and a half-grown larva were found in black wood mould, at ground level, in an old hollow ash, *Fraxinus excelsior* L. The situation was very similar to the rot-holes in beech, *Fagus sylvatica* L. in Windsor Forest which support the species.

Bredon Hill is an outlier of the Cotswolds. The main reason that Bredon Hill N.N.R. has been scheduled is because of its grassland communities but there are a significant number of ancient ash trees across the area. *Ampedus rufipennis* (Stephens) breeds commonly in old ash logs and there is likely to be a significant saproxylic beetle fauna. Perhaps other colonies of *L. violaceus* survive on similar wooded outliers over the border in Gloucestershire.

Acknowledgements

I thank P.F. Whitehead for sending me a larva which proved to be *L. violaceus* and English Nature for arranging access to Bredon Hill NNR.

Reference

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SAPROXYLIC COLEOPTERA FROM *FRAXINUS* IN WORCESTERSHIRE, INCLUDING THE RE-DISCOVERY IN BRITAIN OF *CRYPTOPHAGUS INTERMEDIUS* BRUCE (CRYPTOPHAGIDAE)

Colin Johnson

On 15th April 1992, in company with my friend Jonathan Cooter, a brief visit was paid to the western slope of Bredon Hill N.N.R., Worcestershire (SO93). The time was spent searching beneath bark and in rotten wood of the many old *Fraxinus* at the site, and a bagsieve was used to gather sievings for beetle extraction at Manchester through Berlese funnels. Coleoptera proved very scarce, and of the thirty-five species collected by myself, fifteen of these are only represented by single specimens. However, since some of these are sufficiently notable (* - asterisked in the list), the saproxylic coleopterous fauna of *Fraxinus* is little-studied and the site is also a National Nature Reserve, publication of a complete list seems desirable. Numbers of specimens found are given where appropriate.

Histeridae: *Abraeus globosus* (Hoffmann) - 4; **Abraeus granulum* Erichson - 2; *Paromalus flavicornis* (Herbst) - 1.

Scydmaenidae: **Stenichnus godarti* (Latreille) - 2.

Staphylinidae: *Phloeonomus punctipennis* Thomson - 1; **Coryphium angusticolle* Stephens - 2; *Gabrius splendidulus* (Gravenhorst) - 3; **Quedius microps* Gravenhorst - 1; **Sepedophilus testaceus* (Fabricius) - 3; *Leptusa fumida* Kraatz - 1; **Dexiogyia corticina* (Erichson) - 3.

Pselaphidae: *Euplectus piceus* Motschulsky - 3.

Lucanidae: *Dorcus parallelipipedus* (Linnaeus) - larvae and adults; *Sinodendron cylindricum* (Linnaeus) -larvae.

Elateridae: **Ampedus* sp. - larvae; **Stenagostus villosus* (Fourcroy) - larvae.

Dermestidae: **Megatoma undata* (Linnaeus) - 1.

Cleridae: *Thanasimus formicarius* (Linnaeus) - 1.

Rhyzophagidae: *Rhyzophagus dispar* (Paykull) - 1.

Cryptophagidae: **Cryptophagus intermedius* Bruce - 1 male; **Cryptophagus labilis* Erichson - 4; *Cryptophagus scanicus* (Linnaeus) - 1.

Biphyllidae: *Biphyllus lunatus*(Fabricius) - 1.

Cerylonidae: *Cerylon histeroides* (Fabricius) - numbers.

Endomychidae: *Mycetaea subterranea* (Fabricius) - 1.

Latridiidae: **Enicmus rugosus* (Herbst) - 2.

Cisidae: *Cis bilamellatus* Wood - 1; *Cis boleti* (Scopoli) - few; *Cis fagi* Waltl - 1; *Cis nitidus* (Fabricius) - numbers.

Tenebrionidae: **Prionychus* sp. - larvae in numbers.

Salpingidae: *Rhinosimus planirostris* (Fabricius) - 1.

Pyrochroidae: *Pyrochroa serraticornis* (Scopoli) - 1 larva.

Curculionidae: *Euophryum confine* Broun - 2.

Scolytidae: *Leperisinus varius* (Fabricius) - borings and remains.

Discussion

(1) *Cryptophagus intermedius* Bruce

This is one of our rarest *Cryptophagus*, only known from three localities: Cambridge (C. E. Tottenham), Thornton Dale, Yorkshire (W. D. Hincks)(Coombs & Woodroffe, 1955a, 1955b), and Tubney, Berkshire (J. Collins)(Johnson, 1988). My specimen, very fortunately a male, was found beneath the bark of a fallen *Fraxinus* branch which had been extensively bored by larvae of the scolytid *Leperisinus varius* (Fabricius). This capture was not completely unexpected. Earlier, my Swedish friend Bengt Ehnström (pers. comm.) had described this precise habitat to me as being the habitat of *intermedius* in Sweden, and had remarked that careful searching would surely produce more English records. *C. intermedius* belongs to the *dentatus* group, and requires dissected

males for positive identification (Johnson, 1988).

(2) *Cryptophagus labilis* Erichson.

In a recent paper (Johnson, 1988), I clarified the status of this hitherto little-known deadwood species in Britain, and brought the number of localities known for it upto eight within seven English vice-counties (Lloyd's Blenheim record should be placed under Oxon). Previous captures, where known, are from *Fagus* but with a probable *Ulmus*, so the Bredon specimens add a further host tree as well as a new vice-county record. Wood which has been extensively bored by larvae of Lucanidae as well as Cerambycidae seems particularly attractive to this species.

Acknowledgements

My best thanks are due to: Jonathan Cooter, who very kindly introduced me to the locality and arranged access through English Nature (West Midlands); Bengt Ehnström, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Uppsala, for information on the habitat of *Cryptophagus intermedius* in Sweden; Howard Mendel for helpful discussion.

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THE DEAD-WOOD BEETLES OF ATTINGHAM PARK

Derek Lott & Keith Alexander

1. Introduction

Attingham Park is a National Trust property situated near Shrewsbury in Shropshire. The property includes several areas of woodland and parkland which contain mature trees up to approximately 450 years old. This paper summarises the known records of beetles associated with the dead-wood habitats provided by these trees. The records are mainly derived from surveys carried out separately by the authors during one visit in 1985 and five visits in 1991. An additional record of *Melasis buprestoides* was communicated by F.A. Hunter, who visited the site in 1974.

The collecting methods used in recent surveys are listed below.

a. Beating foliage and dead branches was carried out in May and July.
b. Fungal fruiting bodies growing on dead and living trees were sieved on to a sheet, mainly in the autumn.
c. Grass traps were constructed from mouldy grass cuttings wrapped around pork bones and placed in tree cavities which were mainly situated at ground level. When placed in hollow trunks these traps often yield species associated with hole-nesting birds such as jackdaws.
d. Insects were searched for under the loose bark of trunks, branches and cut logs.
e. Insects were extracted from rotten wood. A few large species were taken in the field from fallen branches and cut logs, but the majority of specimens were extracted using a Tullgren funnel.

2. Species recorded

110 species of beetles with a strong association with dead-wood habitats have been recorded together with another 30 species which are characteristic of dead-wood habitats, such as tree cavities or lignicolous fungi, but which are also widely known from other habitats. These species are listed in the appendix together with their conservation status, host trees and methods of capture.

3. Threatened and localised species

Three species from Attingham are listed in the British Red Data Book (Shirt, 1987). All three are associated with dead-wood habitats:

a. *Prionocyphon serricornis* (category 3: rare)
One male of this species was beaten from oak on 26th July. The larvae of this species develop in wet rot-holes in old trees.

b. *Agrilus sinuatus* (category 2: vulnerable)
One specimen of this species was beaten from a dead branch of an ancient oak pollard on 22nd July 1991.

c. *Notolaemus unifasciatus* (category 3: rare)
One specimen of this species was extracted from under the loose bark of a fallen oak branch on 26th July 1991. This species is subcortical in its habits and usually associated with oak.

20 further species are designated nationally notable by Ball (1986). The 'Red Data Book' and 'Nationally Notable' listings have been reviewed very recently (Hyman & Parsons, 1992) but the revised gradings were not available at the time of writing.

There has been an insufficient amount of recent work on beetles in Shropshire to allow a proper analysis of the species list in a local context. However, several species on the list are rarely recorded or local in the Midlands. Although better known as a rare synanthropic species in Britain, *Mycetophagus quadriguttatus* is also found in the wild in bracket fungi and rotten fungoid wood in old pasture-woodland sites such as the New Forest (J.A. Owen, pers. comm.), Boconnoc Park, Cornwall (K.N.A. Alexander, unpublished) and in Central Europe. The occurrence of several specimens in an old grass trap placed in the base of an ancient oak just inside an area of woodland is therefore noteworthy.

Other species recorded include *Atheta fungicola*, *Dromius angustus* and *Tetropium gabrieli* the last two species being associated with conifers.

4. Ancient woodland indicator species

The species list includes 25 species which were included in a list of indicators of the continuity of dead-wood habitats in ancient woodlands by Harding and Rose (1987). Of these *Abraeus granulum*, *Abdera quadrifasciata* and *Scraptia testacea* are listed as grade 1 indicators and *Plegaderus dissectus*, *Prionocyphon serricornis*, *Dorcatoma chrysomelina* and *Notolaemus unifasciatus* are grade 2 indicators.

The list in Harding & Rose (*op. cit*) has been used to calculate an *'Index of Ecological Continuity'* which can then be used to assess the national importance of individual sites (Alexander, 1988 and Harding & Alexander, in press). On the basis of survey results to date, Attingham Park has an index of 35 (three grade 1 species, four grade 2 species and 18 grade 3 species). An index of 20 or more is currently considered to be of national significance for the conservation of Coleoptera associated with dead wood.

Various possible changes to the list of indicator species have been discussed by Hammond & Harding (1991) and a review of the species included in the list needs to be made, possibly on a regional basis. In particular some grade 3 indicators, which are currently used to evaluate the continuity of dead-wood habitats, are, in fact, widespread in secondary habitats. From the Attingham list *Sinodendron cylindricum*, *Ctesias serra*, *Triplax aenea*, *Pseudotriphyllus suturalis*, *Eledona agricola*, *Tetratoma fungorum* and *Ischnomera cyanea* probably fall into this category in the Midlands.

On the other hand there are several species which could be added to the list of indicators. Candidates for inclusion on the basis of their recorded distribution in the Midlands include *Agrilus laticornis*, *Cis vestitus* and *Anaspis garneysi*, all of which were found at Attingham.

Even when these potential changes to the list of indicators are taken into account, the Attingham Park dead-wood beetle fauna is of national importance and comparable to that of a pasture-woodland site with a continuity of habitat stretching back to the mediaeval period. However, there is no known documentary evidence for the existence of a mediaeval park at Attingham. It may be that the dead-wood fauna originated in pasture-woodland systems operating in ancient forest in this area.

5. Acknowledgements

We thank Colin Johnson of Manchester Museum for determining specimens of *Ptinella aptera*. We thank Bill Anslow and staff at Attingham Estate for help with access and site information.

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Appendix: The dead-wood beetles of Attingham Park

Nomenclature follows Pope (1977) as updated in Antenna and by Lohse (1990). (l) = larvae, (r) = remains.

Consvn Status (Conservation Status): R2 = vulnerable species (category 2), R3 = rare species (category 3) (Shirt, 1987). Na, Nb = nationally notable grade a and b as listed by Ball (1986).

Ind Grade (Indicator Grade): 1, 2, 3 = grade of saproxylic indicator as listed by Harding & Rose (1986), -- = species strongly associated with dead-wood and associated fungal habitats, - = species associated with dead-wood habitats such as tree cavities or tree fungi but also found in other habitats.

Trees:

Ac = sycamore	Cr = hawthorn	La = larch	Qu = oak
Ae = horse chestnut	Fa = beech	Pi = pine	Rh = rhodedendron
Al = alder	Fr = ash	Po = poplar	Sa = willow
Be = birch	In = unidentified	Pt = aspen	Ti = lime
Ca = sweet chestnut			

Methods of Collection:

bt = beaten from foliage and dead branches
fg = sieved from fungal fruiting bodies
gt = sieved from grass trap placed in tree cavity
lb = collected from under loose bark
rw = extracted from rotten wood

	Consvn Status	Ind Grade	Trees	Methods of Collection
Dromius agilis		--	Qu	bt
D. angustus		--	Pi	bt
D. quadrimaculatus		--	Qu,Ti	bt
D. quadrinotatus		--	Ae,Fa,Qu	bt,lb
Plegaderus dissectus	Nb	2	Fa,Po,Sa	rw
Abraeus globosus		--	Fa,Po,Ti	rw
A. granulum	Na	1	Po	rw
Paromalus flavicornis		--	Fa,Po,Qu,Ti	lb,rw
Hister merdarius		-	Qu	gt
Ptenidium laevigatum		-	Qu,Sa	gt,rw
Ptinella aptera		--	Fa	rw
P. errabunda		--	Fa,Pt,Sa	rw
Pteryx suturalis		--	Fa	rw
Silpha atrata		-	Po,Pt,Sa	lb,rw
Proteinus brachypterus		-	In,Sa	fg

P. ovalis		-	In,Qu	fg
Dropephylla grandiloqua		--	Pi,Qu	lb
D. vilis		--	Ae,Fr,Pi,Qu	lb
Omalium rivulare		-	In,Sa	fg
Phloeonomus punctipennis		--	Po,Qu,Sa	lb
Xylodromus concinnus		-	Qu	gt
X. depressus		-	Qu	gt
Siagonium quadricorne		--	Sa	lb
Atrecus affinis		--	Fa,Sa	lb,rw
Nudobius lentus		--	Pi	lb
Philonthus fimetarius		-	In	fg
Gabrius splendidulus		--	Fa,Pi,Po,Qu	lb,rw
Quedius lateralis		--	Fa,In	fg
Lordithon trinotatus		--	Fa	fg
Sepedophilus littoreus		--	Qu	bt
Tachinus humeralis		--	In,Qu	fg
T. marginellus		-	Sa	rw
Cypha longicornis		-	Cr,Qu	bt
Oligota apicata	Nb	--	Qu	gt
Homalota plana		--	Fa,Qu,Sa	gt,lb
Anomognathus cuspidatus		--	Fa,Pi,Sa,Ti	lb
Leptusa fumida		--	Fa,Qu	lb
Bolitochara obliqua		--	Qu	lb
Autalia impressa		-	Qu	fg
A. longicornis		-	Al,In,La,Qu,Sa	fg
Dinaraea aequata		--	Po,Qu	lb
D. linearis		--	Sa	lb
Atheta (III) liturata		--	In,Qu	fg
A. (III) nigricornis		-	Fa,In,Qu	fg
A. (Anopleta) corvina		--	In	fg
A. (II) sodalis		-	Qu	gt
A. (II) taxiceroides		--	In,Qu	fg
A. (II) trinotata		-	Qu	gt
A. (Datomicra) dadopora		--	In,Qu	fg
A. (s.str.) castanoptera		-	In	fg
A. (s.str.) pertyi		-	Qu	fg
A. (s.str.) xanthopus		-	Qu	gt
A. (I) britanniae		-	Qu	gt
A. (I) crassicornis		-	Fa,In,Qu,Sa	fg,gt
A. (I) fungicola		-	Qu	fg
A. (I) nidicola		--	Qu	gt
A. (Dimetrota) marcida		-	Fa,La,In,Sa	fg

Phloeopora corticalis		--	Qu	lb
Oxypoda alternans		--	Al,Fa,In,La	fg
Crataraea suturalis		-	Qu	gt
Haploglossa pulla		--	Qu,Ti	gt,rw
Aleochara sparsa		-	Qu	fg,gt
Euplectus infirmus	Nb	--	Qu	gt
E. karsteni		--	Fa	rw
E. kirbyi	Nb	--	Fa,Po	rw
E. piceus		--	Pi,Qu	lb
Sinodendron cylindricum		3	Be,Fa,Fr,Ti	rw
Prionocyphon serricornis	R3	2	Qu	bt
Agrilus laticornis		--	Qu	bt
A. sinuatus	R2	--	Qu	bt
Melanotus erythropus (l)		--	Po	rw
Melasis buprestoides	Nb	3	(coll FA Hunter, 1974)	
Malthinus flaveolus		--	Qu	bt
M. frontalis		--	Ti	bt
Megatoma undata (r)	Nb	--	Qu	bt
Ctesias serra (l)	Nb	3	Fa,Qu	lb
Dryophilus pusillus		--	Pi,Qu	bt
Xestobium rufovillosum		3	Fa,Qu	lb
Hemicoelus fulvicornis		--	Fa,Qu	bt
Anobium punctatum		--	Ca,Fa,Qu,Ti	bt
Ptilinus pectinicornis		--	Fa,Ti	bt,lb
Dorcatoma chrysomelina		2	Qu	bt
D. flavicornis	Nb	3	Qu	bt
Ptinus fur		-	Qu	gt
Dasytes aerosus		--	Cr,Qu	bt
Epuraea pusilla		--	Ca,Qu	bt,fg
Glischrochilus hortensis		-	In,Qu	fg
Rhizophagus bipustulatus		--	Qu	lb
R. dispar		--	Ae,Qu,Sa	lb
Cryptolestes ferrugineus		--	Ae	lb
Notolaemus unifasciatus	R3	2	Qu	lb
Silvanus unidentatus		3	Fa	lb
Triplax aenea		3	Ac,Ae	bt,fg
Dacne bipustulata		--	Ae,Qu,Ti	bt,fg,lb
Cerylon ferrugineum		--	Fa,Qu,Sa	lb
C. histeroides		--	Ae,Po	lb,rw
Aridius nodifer		-	Qu	gt
Enicmus testaceus	Nb	--	Rh	lb
Dienerella ruficollis		-	Qu	gt

Corticaria serrata		-	Fa,Qu	gt,rw
Cis alni		--	Qu	bt
C. bilamellatus		--	Fa,Qu	fg
C. festivus	Nb	--	Qu	bt
C. nitidus		--	Fa	fg
C. vestitus		--	Qu	bt
Pseudotriphyllus suturalis		3	In,Qu	fg
Litargus connexus		--	Fa	lb
Mycetophagus atomarius		3	Fa	lb
M. piceus	Nb	3	Qu	bt
M. quadriguttatus		--	Qu	gt
M. quadripustulatus		--	Fa,Ti	lb
Bitoma crenata		3	Fa,Fr,In,Qu,Ti	lb
Eledona agricola	Nb	3	Qu	fg
Cylindronotus laevioctostriatus		--	Fa,Qu	bt,lb
Prionychus ater	Nb	3	Fa	
Tetratoma fungorum		3	Qu	fg
Lissodema quadripustulata	Nb	--	Ae,Qu	bt,lb
Rhinosimus planirostris		--	Ae,Fa,Qu,Ti	bt,lb
Abdera quadrifasciata	Na	1	Qu	bt
Conopalpus testaceus	Nb	3	Ae,Qu	bt
Scraptia testacea	Na	1	Qu	bt
Anaspis frontalis		--	Cr	bt
A. garneysi		--	Cr,Qu,Ti	bt
A. humeralis		--	Cr,Qu,Ti	bt
A. maculata		--	Ae,Ca,Cr,Qu,Ti	bt
A. regimbarti		--	Ca,Cr,Qu,Ti	bt
Mordellistena variegata		--	Ca,Qu	bt
Ischnomera cyanea	Nb	3	Cr	bt
Aderus oculatus	Nb	3	Qu	bt
Tetropium gabrieli		--	Pi	rw
Rhagium bifasciatum		--	Pt	rw
Grammoptera ruficornis		--	on hogweed flowers	
Alosterna tabacicolor		--	on hogweed flowers	
Phymatodes testaceus		3	Qu	lb
Leiopus nebulosus		--	Qu	bt
Euophryum confine		--	Fa	lb
Scolytus intricatus		--	Qu	bt,lb
Leperisinus varius		--	Fr	lb
Tomicus piniperda (r)		--	Pi	lb
Pityogenes bidentatus		--	Pi	bt

IDENTIFYING *OTHIUS MELANOCEPHALUS* (GRAV.) (STAPHYLINIDAE)

J. A. Owen

While looking through *Die Käfer Mitteleuropas* vol. 12 (1989, ed. G. A. Lohse & W. H. Lucht) I noticed that the aedeagus of *Othius melanocephalus* (Grav.) as drawn (p. 160, fig. 82:4), differed in shape from aedeagi of specimens which I had named as that species. I concluded from this that either my specimens were not *melanocephalus* (Grav.) or else the figure, which was stated to be after Uhlig, was incorrect. Alongside the drawing is another drawing (fig. 82:4a) stated to represent the aedeagus of *O. volans* J. Sahlb.

To resolve this problem, some time ago I wrote to Herr Uhlig, sending him some of my specimens. He very kindly looked into the matter and has written back stating that my specimens are *melanocephalus* (Grav.) and that both drawings refer to *O. volans*! The original drawings were his and the two were made to show the range of variation exhibited by that species.

I draw attention to this error so that others will not be similarly confused. Actually, there is an outline drawing of the aedeagus of *melanocephalus* on page 168 of volume 4 of Freude, Harde & Lohse which is reasonably true to life.

I thank Herr Uhlig for resolving this problem for me.

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METOECUS PARADOXUS (L.) (RHIPIPHORIDAE) - A FURTHER NOTE

Ernie Ives

Further to my note in the *Coleopterist's Newsletter* (**44/45**: 9-10) and the paper by Dr M. P. T. Gillett (*Coleopterist*, **1**: 4-5) I can confirm there was a nest of *Vespula vulgaris* in my loft during 1991 - had a plague of queens in the loft October/November 1991 and later found the nest site. During a clean up of the loft area in January 1992 the bodies and remains of a further 10 *Metoecus* were found, equal numbers of males and females. This brings the total number of specimens found to 51. Many others no doubt died in corners that I didn't clean!

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MELOE VIOLACEUS MARSHAM (MELOIDAE)

E. J. Smith

With reference to the note on high-altitude *Meloe* by Prof. J. A. Owen (1992, *Coleopterist*, **1**: 5) my records may be of interest. They are from 13 1km squares in the Peak District of Derbyshire (VC 57) between 240m and 540m; not very high perhaps but there are no lower records yet. They date from 1978 and fall between the 9th of April and the 22nd of June.

Most of the sites are lower moorland or rough high pasture on sheltered *Juncus/Sphagnum* patches where *Meloe* are regularly observed feeding on the leaves of *Ranunculus acris*, *R. omiophyllus* and *R. flammula*, this latter plant being particularly heavily browsed.

However, the two highest sites, Alport Dale (SK128913) at 480m and Outer Edge (SK177970) at 540m are both open exposed moorland, the former *Vaccinium* dominated, the latter *Calluna* dominated. The nearest food plant for *Meloe* is remote.

Most records are of solitary specimens but one colony is known where several can usually be seen on a site at 270m. The maximum number ever seen was 39 individuals on an area of 10 square metres of stream side vegetation on 20th. April 1987.

No host has yet been identified.

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ULEIOTA PLANATA (L.) (CUCUJIDAE) IN N.E. ESSEX

David R. Nash

Whilst exploring a disused, overgrown churchyard in Manningtree, Essex (TM1031) on 6 June 1992, I found a single example of *Uleiota planata* under the bark of a mature, wind-uprooted beech. The tree had evidently been down for several years as the bark was lifting in large dry slabs and almost the only subcortical invertebrates were woodlice and centipedes. The only other beetle seen was a single *Scaphisoma agaricinum* (L.).

My previous encounter with this species was in Epping Forest, South Essex, in 1985 when several specimens were found under tightly adpressed beech bark (*vide* 1986, *Proc. Trans. Br. ent. nat. Hist. Soc.*, **19**: 53).

The staus of *Uleiota* in this country remains uncertain and enigmatic. It is probably a species which normally maintains itself at a very low density. The significant increase in records of the beetle over the last decade indicates a current, perhaps temporary, population upsurge. It should not be forgotten that the species is, almost certainly, frequently imported into this country with timber. Whitehead (1991, *Entomologist's mon. Mag.*, **127**: 17) has recently made observations upon its biology and has speculated upon its ecological requirements.

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A NEW HOSTPLANT OF *CHRYSOLINA POLITA* (LINNAEUS) (CHRYSOMELIDAE)

R. W. J. Read

On 22 September, 1987 I discovered several adult *Chrysolina polita* feeding on the edges of Ivy leaves (*Hedera helix*) in the Clints Quarry Nature Reserve, near Egremont, West Cumbria (NY0115). In Britain *C. polita* appears to be mainly associated with the family Labiatae and has been recorded feeding on *Lycopus* and various species of *Mentha*. According to Jolivet and Petitpierre (1976) and Marshall (1979) *C. polita* also feeds on *Melissa, Salvia, Origanum, Nepeta* and *Glechoma*.

Dr P. Jolivet (pers. comm.) informs me that this is a new hostplant for *C. polita* and apparently the first known association of the beetle with the family Araliaceae.

I would be interested to hear from anyone who may have also observed this beetle feeding on Ivy or any other plants apart from those listed above.

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QUEDIUS NIGROCAERULEUS FAUVEL (STAPHYLINIDAE) FROM BIRDS' NESTS AND OTHER UNUSUAL HABITATS

R. Colin Welch

It was not until 1905 that N. H. Joy dug up his first mole's nest and discovered the true habitat for a number of species of Coleoptera previously regarded as very rare in Britain. G. C. Champion (*Entomologist's mon. Mag.*, **43**: 63) was the first to collect *Quedius nigrocaeruleus* from a mole's nest, at Woking, Surrey in February 1907. A year later J. H. Keys found two specimens in a mole's nest in Devon and, more significantly, reared 'some score of larvae' from the nest to *Q. nigrocaeruleus* adults. Prior to these discoveries, only 8 British specimens were known. The first record was by W. H. Tuck at Tostock near Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk from the nest of *Bombus hortorum* (L.), possibly in 1893 or 1896. A second specimen was taken beneath a log by a sluice on the beach near a rabbit warren at Kessingland, Suffolk in July 1898 (C. Morley *ibid.* **34**: 267-8). In April 1904 H. C. Dolman found *Q. nigrocaeruleus* in a rabbit warren in Ditchling Sand Pit, Sussex. In September 1905 E. C. Bedwell (*ibid.* **41**: 279) collected four females 'in a woody fungus on an elm in a hedgerow near Oulton Broad', Suffolk and thought that they may have been preying on larvae of *Orchesia micans* (Pz.). An examination of material in the Natural History Museum, London revealed specimens collected by D. Sharp from fungus at Brockenhurst, Hants in April 1909 and by H. C. Dollman from a wasp's nest at Ditchling in September 1909. Of the remaining specimens, all those with data indicated that they had been collected from moles' nests.

On 12 September 1990 I removed a blue tit's nest from a hollow horse chestnut tree in my garden at Hemington, Northants (TL091853). Among the Coleoptera obtained, using a Tullgren-type heat extractor, were 2 male and 3 female *Q. nigrocaeruleus*. Other species, perhaps more typical of this habitat, included :- 3 male, 1 female *Q. cruentus* (Ol.); *Abraeus globosus* (Hoff.); 2 male *Ptenidium gressneri* Er.; 1 male *Acrotrichis montandoni* (Allib.); and 2 larval *Alphitobius diaperinus* (Pz.). E. A. Hicks' *Checklist and Bibliography on the occurrence of insects in birds' nests* (1959, & Supplements 1962, 1971) does not include any records of *Q. nigrocaeruleus*, but S. A. Williams has kindly provided me with details of several specimens which he collected from a nest at St. Ouen's Bay, Jersey on 22 September 1982.

Horace Last confirmed their identity. The nest, which he describes as about the size of a crow's, was perhaps 10 feet up in a tree on grassy sand dunes. The nest was old and rather flattened and used as a daytime roost for a barn owl. It contained a lot of owl pellets which may have attracted the *Quedius*. Moles were present beneath the nest and nearby. I know of no other instance of *Q. nigrocaeruleus* being recorded from a bird's nest but would be interested to learn of any.

In February 1991 Dr M. L. Luff asked me to confirm the identity of a specimen of *Q. nigrocaeruleus* from another unusual habitat. In January 1991 he received a quantity of adults and larvae from the folds of a tufted carpet discarded some 2 years earlier in the garden of a back-to-back house at Prudhoe, Northumberland (NZ0962). No moles have been seen in the garden but it is possible that the infestation may have arisen from the run of some other small mammal which had tunnelled beneath the carpet. What was really unusual was that the carpet had been extensively chewed and the *Quedius* adults and larvae were the only obvious culprits. Attempts to rear the larvae failed as a result of cannibalism.

Preparation of this note reminded Howard Mendel of an earlier unusual capture of this species. On 23 July 1980 he beat a single specimen from an oak tree on Thetford Heath National Nature Reserve, Suffolk (TL8479). He recalls that it was a hot still day with many insects on the wing, and that he beat a number of other non-arboreal species of Coleoptera from the oak.

My thanks go to my good friends Alex Williams, Martin Luff and Howard Mendel for readily providing me with details of their captures and permission to include them in this note.

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SUBSCRIBERS NOTICE

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ON THE TIBIAL BAND CHARACTER OF *PHYTOBIUS QUADRITUBERCULATUS* (FABRICIUS) (CURCULIONIDAE)

Magnus Sinclair

In *Col. Newsl.* **44/45**: 3-4 (1991), John Owen wrote that he found the dark tibial band the most useful character in separating this species from *P. zumpti* Wagner in which species the tibiae are entirely flavous. My series of eight *quadrituberculatus* shows a very wide range of variation in this character. While the dark band is very obvious in some specimens, there are others in which it is so barely discernible as to make it difficult to see without very careful examination. I found a similar variability in a fair number of specimens in a batch of beetles from Ayrshire that I had occasion to examine recently. Unlike John Owen (*loc. cit.*), I found the third funicular joint to be shorter than the second in all the specimens examined. With one exception (Box Hill) all my specimens are from southern Scotland and Cumberland.

In my series I found a single male *P. zumpti*. It seems to be the sole survivor from a day with John Owen on Roudsea N. N. R., Westmorland, 2 May 1990. It was warm and sunny, and the *Phytobius* were numerous, crawling around on the sand of the upper beach and on the short vegetation nearby. I cannot now tell if they were all the same species. *Glaux maritima* L. was plentiful there. I note that the aedeagus of my specimen is more lightly sclerotised than those of *quadrituberculatus* but the beetle shows no other signs of possible immaturity. I wonder if other male *P. zumpti* show this characteristic?

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CATCHING BEETLES WITH A SIMPLE FLIGHT-INTERCEPTION TRAP

J.A.Owen

Flight-interception traps work on the principle that many flying insects meeting a vertical obstruction do not rebound but travel up or down the obstruction or simply fall towards the ground. The design of such traps takes two main forms - traps in which the intercepted insect goes upwards and is trapped by a hood containing a collecting device, as in the conventional Malaise trap (Malaise, 1937), and traps in which the intercepted

insect goes downwards and gets caught in preserving liquid placed below. Flying beetles hitting a vertical obstruction go in both directions but many go downwards which means that the second type of trap provides a useful means for their collection.

The form of trap without a hood has been termed a window trap from the use of a pane of glass as an obstruction in the original design (Chapman & Kinghorn, 1955). The use of fine netting instead of glass as an obstruction (Peck & Davies, 1980) allows the use of a much larger "window" and makes the window trap much more easily transported. Many workers now call such traps 'flight-interception' traps, referring to the hooded type as Malaise traps.

This note describes the operation of a netting window trap which has been used by the author for a number of years.

Setting up the trap

The trap comprises a piece of fine netting 3.0 m long by 1.0 m high, held vertically between two poles (dia c. 25mm) above a series of plastic dishes containing preserving liquid. The material is a piece of black terylene netting (mesh approximately 0.2 x 0.6 mm) such as is obtainable from Marris House Nets (54 Richmond Park Avenue, Bournemouth BH8 9DR). For strength, the borders of the netting are hemmed round with black cotton tape, with a loop of tape at each corner.

The netting is attached to the poles by means of key-rings threaded onto the tape loops at each corner and the key-rings fastened to the poles by means of four jubilee clips - one on each pole for the loops at the top of the netting and one on each pole for the loops at the bottom. These clips allow vertical adjustment of the netting so that its lower edge can be positioned just above the rims of the collecting dishes. Each supporting pole is held upright by two guy-lines and the taut netting.

The collecting trays are high density-polythene microwave trays or equivalent. The ones used by the author (Thorpac Microwave Medium Trays) are 200mm long, 106 mm wide and 45mm deep, with a flat rim 8 mm wide all round and a capacity of about 600ml but these dimensions are not critical. The trays are arranged below the netting with their lengths at right angles to the netting and with touching rims overlapping. Where the ground on which the trap is to operate is uneven, the trays are best set out below the netting on a long plank. The use of plastic trays in this way

is much more convenient than using specially constucted troughs, as described by Peck and Davies (1980), which require the use of small nets to scoop out trapped insects.

The preserving liquid used is tap water containing approximately 2 % acetic acid (B.P. glacial acetic acid) to which is added a few drops/litre of household detergent. Sufficient liquid is poured into the dishes to give usually a depth of about 25 mm but, if hot drying conditions are anticipated, the depth is increased to 35mm. In exceptionally hot weather, the trays may require to be topped up between collections.

Servicing the trap and extracting the beetles

The trap is serviced on a weekly or fortnightly basis. This is done by emptying the trays one by one into a plastic kitchen sieve (dia. 150 mm) holding, as a re-useable filter, a piece of white terylene netting (mesh approx. 0.35 x 0.35 mm) sufficiently large to overlap the edges of the sieve by a few cm. If necessary, the tray is rinsed out into the filter. No attempt is made in the field to remove vegetable debris such as leaves, small twigs or bud scales before filtering. At times of heavy leaf fall, the amount of the leaves in the trap may require the filtering to be done in three sections. When filtering is complete, the edges of the filtering material are than carefully-folded over the residue containing the trapped insects and the whole taken home.

For extraction of the trapped beetles, the contents of the filter are tipped carefully into a white tray - approx. 250 x 300 mm containing tap water to a depth of about 15 mm, the filter rinsed carefully and the washings added to the contents of the dish. Before picking out beetles, as much plant debris as possible and any large insects such as lepidoptera and bumble bees are removed with forceps to make easier the detection of small beetles. The dish is then placed under a good light and the beetles picked out with fine forceps or a small paint brush, preferably with the aid of magnifying spectacles. This is a tedious operation taking several hours for a large collection and must not be rushed.

It is best to extract beetles from the filtered residue immediately after the material is collected but, if necessary, the residue, still wrapped in the filter, can be stored in 50% alcohol at 5°C for weeks or months. Usually, the alcohol in which the filtered residue is stored extracts material which makes it

cloudy when added to water so that as much as possible should be poured off before the residues are resuspended in water for extraction of the beetles. Sometimes the resuspended residues need to be refiltered to get rid of the cloudiness.

Comments

Optimal siting of a flight-interception trap for catching beetles is something which requires further study. An open site in a natural corridor with many insects flying in sunshine may seem obviously better than a more enclosed site lacking sunshine because of heavy tree canopy, but this is not necessarily reflected in the catch. A shaded site is certainly unlikely to have beetles which fly only in sunshine, e.g. buprestids, but, being more sheltered, may be warmer during the hours of darkness and may well have a lower average air flows, encouraging more small beetles to fly. Optimal siting may well turn out to depend on which groups are of most interest. Wherever the trap is sited, it would appear best to orientate the netting to be at right angles to the prevailing wind.

The possibilty of vandalism of the trap or damage by farm animals is another factor which has to be considered in siting a trap. The presence of deer, however, does not seem to matter, which is just as well for it would be very difficult to find a piece of woodland in much of Britain which does not have deer. In one site in which the author had a trap for many months without-trouble, the vegetation around the trap was heavily browsed by deer. Deer must go right up to the trap, perhaps to investigate the possibility of a drink, for, on several occasions, the author has found pellets of deer dung in the collecting trays.

A plastic hood lengthwise along the trap is advocated by some workers to avoid heavy rainfall from flooding the collecting trays. The trap used by the author in a Surrey wood for a period of three years did not have a hood and no flooding of the trays was experienced. In wetter areas, a hood is probably desirable.

As far as performance goes, the author's experience is that a trap like the one described will catch in Southern England between 3,000 and 10,000 specimens a year. One operated in a deciduous wood in Surrey trapped over 10,000 beetles comprising nearly 500 species in three years of continuous operation. Users of such traps should be aware that many factors influence the catch. Some beetles fly long distances, especially if aided by wind, and the presence of a beetle in a flight-interception trap

does not necessarily mean that the beetle has bred nearby. Widespread experience with Malaise traps has shown that a significant proportion of beetles, e.g. many longhorns, intercepted in flight by a vertical obstruction travel upwards. This means that some beetles coming in contact with the vertical netting will travel upwards to the top and then fly off again. Clearly this introduces bias into the catch. Some of the beetles which appear in simple flight-interception traps are flightless; presumably they get into the collecting trays simply by crawling, in some cases perhaps via the pole supporting the netting or possibly even by ascending trees overhanging the trap and falling from branches. Flea-beetles may hop into the trays.

I thank Mr Peter Hammond, The Natural History Museum, London for introducing me to this form of beetle catching.

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IN THE JOURNALS

M. J. Collier

ENTOMOLOGIST'S GAZETTE, VOLUME 42 (1991)

[No beetle records in Nos. 1 and 3].

No.2

Mordellistena pygmeola Ermisch, 1956 (Mordellidae) new to Britain. Cooter, J. 87-8

Coleoptera of Merioneth, North Wales: a second supplement to Skidmore & Johnson's list, 1969. Johnson, C. 107-45

No.4

A taxonomic checklist of the British Ceutorhynchinae, with notes, particularly on host plant relationships (Curculionidae). Morris, M.G. 255-65

The larvae of the British *Phaedon* (Chrysomelidae, Chrysomelinae). Cox, M.L. 267-80

NEW BARK BEETLE RECODING SCHEME (SCOLYTIDAE & PLATYPODIDAE)

Tim Winter

The Scolytidae are a small group of beetles that have been largely ignored by coleopterists in the past, probably because of an often ephemeral presence on their host plants which, combined with their specialised breeding behaviour, makes some species difficult to obtain as adults. Most scolytids in Britian and Ireland breed under bark and will be found only on trees and bushes that are in extremely poor health, are very recently dead, or have been felled but are still green. The group includes some species that are pests in forestry or affect amenity trees, but other scolytids occur on host plants such as *Hedera*, *Clematis*, *Cytisus* and *Ulex* where they can be difficult to find. One species, *Ernoporus causasicus*, is listed in the British Red Data Book as 'Endangered', with another twelve species (20% of the national fauna) listed in the 'Rare' category. Little is known of the distribution or biology of many species, although a few such as *Hylesinus varius*, which sometimes emerges in large numbers from ash logs cut for firewood, and *Scolytus scolytus*, one of the vectors of Dutch elm disease fungus, are perhaps better known. There are several other species of economic importance including, *Tomicus piniperda*, known to foresters as the pine shoot beetle, and the recently introduced *Dendroctonus micans*, a serious pest of spruce plantations. Since 1945 four scolytids have been added to the list for mainland Britain, *D. micans* on spruce and occasionally other conifers, *Scolytus laevis* on elm, *Ips cembrae* on larch and *Crypturgus subcribrosus*, a tiny species found in spruce bark where it uses existing galleries of species, such as *Polygraphus poligraphus*, to enter the bark. Another species, *Liparthrum mandibulare*, was found in 1981 on Guernsey in the Channel Islands (see following). In spite of rigorously applied plant health regulations there is always the possibility that other European or even North American scolytids may find their way here and become established. *Ips typographus*, a serious pest of spruce plantations in northern Europe, has been found on imported timber and wood products many times, but, fortunately for the forest industy, has not become established as a breeding species in this country.

The sole British representative of the Platypodidae, the oak pinhole borer, *Platypus cylindrus*, comes under this recording scheme as it has been included with the Scolytidae in the past,

both families having comparable life cycles in that all platypodids and some scolytids utilise 'ambrosia fungi' growing on the walls of tunnels in wood for nutrition of their larvae.

You can help with the Bark Beetle Recording Scheme by recording all scolytids and platypodids on the new SCOLYTIDAE RECORDING CARD RA73 - free supplies of these cards are available from the Biological Records Centre, Monks Wood Experimental Station, Abbots Ripton, Huntingdon, Cambs PE17 2LS. Notes on identification and current nomenclature together with a checklist will be included with the instructions for completing the cards. Any further queries, including help with identification, should be addressed to me.

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LIPARTHRUM MANDIBULARE WOLLASTON (SCOLYTIDAE) IN GUERNSEY

Tim Winter

Although there has been no formal announcement of *Liparthrum mandibulare* being found in the Channel Islands, it is included on the new BRC Scolytidae recording card. It was discovered in 1981 by researchers from Salford University (Paul Atkins, Colin Fairhurst, Steve Kirby and Dealga O'Callaghan) while working on Dutch elm disease in Guernsey. The species was either taken on sticky traps, or possibly from elm twigs, and was determined in 1982 by Gunnar Israelson from Lund, Sweden. This scolytid is known from Madeira, one or two of the Canary Islands and possibly from Spain. It is polyphagous, but Israelson believes that in Guernsey it may be expected on *Rubus* (the most frequent host plant in Macaronesia) and *Salix*, among other ligneous plants. He also states that *L. mandibulare* is a strong flyer. It should be watched out for on any of the Channel Islands.

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FROM RARITY TO PEST?

Tim Winter

The oak pinhole borer *Platypus cylindrus* is listed under the 'Rare' category in the *British Red Data Books, 2. Insects* published by the former NCC in 1987. The 'Rare' category is defined as taxa with small populations that are not at present endangered or vunerable but are at risk. They are usually localised within restricted geographical areas or habitats or are thinly scattered over a more extensive range. The criterion used is that the species exists in only 15 or fewer 10 km squares in the UK.

However, during the autumn of 1991 the Entomology Branch of the Forestry Commission Research Station at Alice Holt Lodge received a number of reports of damage to hardwood logs by *Platypus* in Southern England. This insect is one of the very few ambrosia beetles found in Britain; so-called because the larvae feed on ambrosia fungi which grow on the walls of tunnels bored into 'green timber' by the adults. Ambrosia beetles include species in two families, the Scolytidae, more familiar to many of us as bark beetles rather than wood borers, and the Platypodidae, far more common in the tropics, of which *P. cylindrus* is the only British species. The tunnels of ambrosia beetles in the Scolytidae such as *Trypodendron lineatum* (the striped or conifer ambrosia beetle) do not extend beyond the sapwood, but *Platypus* has the ability to tunnel deep into the heartwood, making holes about 1.6mm diameter, and forming a branched gallery system up to a maximum recorded length of 1.8 metres. This penetration of the heartwood does not, however, normally occur during the first year. Timber with pinholes caused by *Platypus* is not weakened significantly but the appearance of the final products will be spoiled, especially in the case of veneers and high quality structural timbers.

Platypus is known to be present in Southern England north to Norfolk, Oxfordshire, the Forest of Dean, and in Wales and the Welsh Border Counties north to Shropshire. The adult beetles are about 6 to 8 mm long, shaped rather like a punt, and pitchy-brown to almost black in colour. They can be further distinguished from wood-boring Scolytidae such as *Trypodendron* spp. by the very elongate first tarsal segment. The flight period of *Platypus* extends from June to the end of September, but they are most active from mid-July to mid-September when the males can be found

boring into logs and stumps to which they appear to be strongly attracted by the smell of fermenting sap; some logs seem more attractive than others. Once the initial borings have been made by the male beetles, the females can be seen actively searching the bark surface seeking fresh entrance holes. If a female encounters a suitable hole, she will enter, and then re-emerge together with the male. After mating on the bark surface, the two beetles then re-enter the log; this time the female goes first, the male following behind. It is his job to push out the bore dust which from now on is all produced by the female and subsequently her offspring. The females can live for up to two years during which time they continue to extend the gallery system. The life cycle, egg to adult, usually takes two years but it is sometimes completed in one. More than one generation of *Platypus* may be reared from a single gallery system.

Attacks by *Platypus* can be readily differentiated from those of *Trypodendron* spp. (which are only in the sapwood) by the bore dust produced. *Platypus* pushes out a fibrous type of dust, pale in colour and composed of many short pieces about 0.15 - 0.18 mm long. These fibres have the appearance of wood wool when heaped in bark fissures. *Trypodendron* spp. also produce accumulations of pale coloured dust in crevices but this is entirely granular and contains no fibrous matter. However, when a *Platypus* tunnel system has been established for some time, bore-dust of a granular type is produced. This is believed to be due to the larvae extending the tunnels and ingesting the fresh material before it is pushed out from the gallery system by the adults.

In spite of its common name of oak pinhole borer, *Platypus* also attacks the timber of several other hardwoods. After oak they are most often found in sweet chestnut and beech, which, from limited observation in 1991, are more commonly attacked when some fissuring of the bark has developed. It is also known to breed in ash, elm and walnut.

The increase in *Platypus* attacks appears to be a consequence of a glut of suitable breeding material available since the storm of October 1987, which was then supplemented with more windblown timber by the gales in January 1990. It was suggested in Forestry Commission Research Information Note No. 133, *'Insects and storm-damaged broadleaved trees'*, issued in May 1988, and has since been borne out, that *Platypus*, regarded as a rare beetle until now may respond in this way to abundant breeding material.

What is surprising about this 'epidemic' is the apparent rapid

response that *Platypus* has made to a sudden massive increase in suitable breeding material. It will be interesting to record the progress of the species; all records of bore dust seen on logs will be a help in monitoring *Platypus* populations during the next few years. Samples can be collected from August to October on clear sticky tape, stuck to a piece of paper, together with a note of the tree species, date, locality and grid reference. It has been suggested that *Hylecoetus dermestoides* also produces a fibrous bore dust, rather coarser that that of *P. cylindrus* due to its larger size, and therefore some caution will be needed where both species occur in the western counties of England and Wales. I will be very pleased to receive any samples at Alice Holt. Records can then be transferred to the Biological Records Centre recording cards mentioned elsewhere in this issue of the *Coleopterist*.

Thank you in anticipation of all the records you send.

Tim Winter

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COLEOPTERA FIELD MEETING, 1993

SOUTH CUMBRIA / NORTH LANCASHIRE

(based at Grange-over-Sands)

Roger Key (tel. 0733-3182313) is now taking bookings for the 1993 Coleoptera Field Meeting to be held from 25th - 27th June 1993. The estimated cost is £19.00 per day (full board). Laboratory facilities will be available. Early booking for the 30 available places is recommended.

Leaders: Roger Key and Roger Morris.

Roger Key

English Nature, Northminster House, Peterborough PE1 1UA.

REVIEW

A catalogue of the historic and recent collections of Tiger Beetles (Coleoptera : Cicindelidae) in the National Museum of Wales. A. H. Kirk-Spriggs & Jurgen Wiesner. 16 pp, 1992.

A catalogue of British Hydraenidae (Coleoptera) in the National Museum of Wales. A. H. Kirk-Spriggs & G. N. Foster. 9 pp, 1992.

Published by the National Museum of Wales as volumes 1 and 2, respectively, of their Entomology Series. Price £3 each, plus 40p p & p. Avaliable from The Bookshop Manager, National Museum of Wales, Cathays Park, Cardiff CF1 3NP.

These catalogues list the museum's holdings of Cicindelidae (minus British material except that in the R. H. F. Rippon Collection) and British Hydraenidae. In both cases the material has been re-identified by the second (specialist) author. The number of specimens held is given for each species as well as the precise data with each specimen or series. Literature references to specimens with associated published information are provided in the text. Vice-county references have been added for the hydraenids. The A4-size catalogues are well-printed on good quality paper with card covers and the front of each depicts a representative of the family catalogued. The authors and museum are to be congratulated upon making available, at reasonable cost, the kind of detailed information which specialists would previously have had to laboriously extract for themselves by a museum visit or inter-museum loan.

David R. Nash
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LATEST NEWS

Hyman, P. S., 1992. *A review of the scarce and threatened Coleoptera of Great Britain*. Part 1. Peterbrourough: UK Joint Nature Conservation Committee. (Revised and updated by M. S. Parsons)

This long-awaited volume is now available from the Natural History Book Service, 2 Wills Road, Totnes, Devon TQ9 5XN. Price £18.00 plus £3.00 p. & p. It will be reviewed in the next issue of *The Coleopterist*.

Editorial Policy

Short notes and longer papers about the species of Coleoptera recorded from, or likely to occur in, the British Isles are eligible for publication in *The Coleopterist*. In addition, the Editor invites more general articles and news items which are of relevance to British coleopterists. Authors who intend submitting papers which are longer than 3,000 words should consult the Editor. Selected papers will be submitted to a referee. Subject areas within the scope of *The Coleopterist* include: identification, species new to Britain, 1st county records, recording schemes, conservation, ecology, biology, behaviour, sampling and collecting techniques, rearing, specimen preparation, curation, field meeting news and book reviews.

There will be three issues of *The Coleopterist* each year, in April, August and November. Material accepted for publication will appear in the next issue of the journal, provided that it reaches the Editor before the stated copy date. In this way the majority of submissions will be published within 4 months of receipt. Exceptionally, a paper will be carried over to the subsequent issue. Opinions expressed in *The Coleopterist* are not necessarily shared by the Editor or the Editorial Panel.

Instructions to Contributors

Manuscripts for publication should be typewritten, double-spaced with 3 cm margins on one side only of white A4 sized paper. Footnotes should be avoided and pages should be numbered. Only names of species and genera should be underlined.

Illustrations (figures) should be in black ink, boldly drawn and scaled to allow for a reduction to about 50% of original size. They must be the originals and not photocopies. The ideal position of figures should be indicated in the text. Every effort will be made to care for original artwork but the Editor cannot be held responsible for loss or damage. Material submitted on computer disc should be in ASCII format and accompanied by hard copy. Most disc sizes can be accommodated.

References to journals and books should be in the form:

Heal, N.F., 1992. The discovery of *Lixus scabricollis* Bohe. (Curculionidae) in Britain. *Coleopterist*, 1: 2-3.

Joy, N.H., 1932. *A practical handbook of British beetles*. 2 volumes. London: H.F. & G. Witherby.