

The Coleopterist

Volume 8 Part 1 ♦ April 1999

- 3 Examples of *Pocadius* Erichson (Nitidulidae) from Worcestershire, England, showing features of both British species P. F. Whitehead
7 Riparian beetles on soft sediments by the River Teme, Worcestershire D. A. Lott
11 Records of uncommon wetland beetles from N. Ireland, with particular reference to Biodiversity and RDB list species B. Nelson & R. Anderson
17 The changing status of British Cantharidae K. N. A. Alexander

Notes

- 2 *Grammoptera ruficornis* (Fabricius, 1781) (Cerambycidae) new to the Isle of Arran A. Ramsay
2 *Tychius tibialis* Boheman (Curculionidae) new to Gloucestershire K. N. A. Alexander
6 *Ampedus rufipennis* (Stephens) (Elateridae) new to Gloucestershire K. N. A. Alexander
20 Rare and notable Coleoptera recorded in England, 1995-97 J. S. Denton
22 Observations on *Ocypus ater* (Gravenhorst, 1802) (Staphylinidae) including breeding inside a house P. F. Whitehead
23 Notable Coleoptera records - 4 P. F. Whitehead
28 A new beetle habitat? K. J. Chuter
29 Two *Apions* (Brentidae) new to Cumbria R. W. J. Read
29 An answer to the problem of noxious insects and habitats K. J. Chuter
30 The ecology of *Hypopycna rufula* (Erichson, 1840) (Staphylinidae) P. F. Whitehead
32 A record of *Oxythyrea funesta* (Poda) (Scarabaeidae) in London D. S. Hackett
32 *Saprosites mendax* Blackburn (Scarabaeidae) in a north London woodland D. S. Hackett
33 *Raymondionymus marqueti* (Aubé) (Raymondionymidae) in north London D. S. Hackett
34 *Ilyobates subopacus* Palm, 1935 (Staphylinidae) in Staffordshire J. Webb
35 *Strangalia quadrifasciata* (Linnaeus) (Cerambycidae): an anomalous habitat in Nottinghamshire A. Dutton
35 *Rhizophagus picipes* (Olivier) (Rhizophagidae) new to Cornwall K. N. A. Alexander
36 *Judolia cerambyciformis* (Schränk) (Cerambycidae) in Midlothian D. Hutchins
37 Concerning *Scybalicus oblongiusculus* (Dejean) (Carabidae) A. A. Allen
37 *Laricobius erichsoni* Rosenhauer (Derodontidae) in Herefordshire and Shropshire K. N. A. Alexander
38 The Fern Weevil, *Syagrius intrudens* Waterhouse (Curculionidae) on Guernsey Th. Heijerman
39 *Cymindis axillaris* (Fabricius) (Carabidae) in Wales M. G. Telfer & M. Gurney
40 *Anoplodera rubra* (Linnaeus) (Cerambycidae) new to Cambridgeshire and rediscovered in Lincolnshire A. Colston & R. Key
41 *Cryptophagus populi* Paykull (Cryptophagidae) reared from nests of *Megachile* sp. (Hym.: Megachilidae) J. P. Bowdrey
43 *Amara famelica* Zimmerman (Carabidae) from Warwickshire (VC 38) and Staffordshire (VC 39) heathland S. A. Lane

Letters

- 43 Some thoughts on 'English' names for British Coleoptera J. Cooter
45 The role of standardisation in recording rarities M. Edwards

Review

- 46 *Checked Beetles: illustrated key to the Cleridae and Thanerocleridae of the Western Palearctic*, by Roland Gerstmeier P. J. Hodge

- 1 Editorial
47 Subscribers' Notices
48 Literature Notices

Cover: *Pocadius ferrugineus* (Fabricius) (Nitidulidae) R. S. Key

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Notes ♦ Letters ♦ Review

The Coleopterist

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Editorial

As the twentieth century draws to its close, this is perhaps an appropriate time to take stock of progress and to plan for the future.

Competition for papers and notes remains strong within the entomological publication market, but I believe that *The Coleopterist* has now established itself as the premier journal for students of the beetle fauna of the British Isles. Our readership has grown steadily, albeit slowly, and demand for back issues (including for *Coleopterist's Newsletter*) remains strong. Now that more coleopterists are reading the journal, many of whom are active field workers, so more articles are being submitted and I have a considerable stock of material awaiting publication. The general standard of this material also seems to be improving. Although not every reader will always be happy with the content, I was gratified when the Board of Governors recently wrote to express its satisfaction with the overall mix of articles and generally high standard maintained by your Editorial team.

In a very real sense, however, the journal has been the victim of its own success. Our bank balance is comparatively healthy and we can allow for the occasional extra-large issue with its associated increased costs. This volume starts with a bumper 48-page issue, 50% longer than normal, in order to help clear a substantial backlog of unpublished short notes. Probably one or both of the remaining issues this year will also be longer than the usual 32 pages. While most readers will doubtless welcome this extra content, it unfortunately means that our printing and postage costs also rise in proportion. At only £7.00 for a personal subscription, *The Coleopterist* represents excellent value for money, but if the flow of good-quality material continues and the average issue expands to around 40 or even 48 pages, then we would anticipate having to make a modest increase to the subscription price next year to meet these increased costs. I trust you will understand the reasons for this should it become necessary.

Some modest plans for increasing readership and providing additional services are in hand. This year we hope to send a mailshot to selected museums and individuals, where we feel there is a good chance of obtaining new subscriptions. We also intend to produce the long-awaited list of subscribers, so you can find out who else is active in your area.

Finally, I want to take this opportunity to announce publicly that a team of authors has now been assembled to produce a new multi-volume reference work on the beetles of the British Isles, with myself as general Editor. This will contain new identification keys and will be copiously illustrated throughout, with the aim of enticing a new generation of entomologists to begin the difficult study of beetles. Perhaps the ghost of "Joy" may then finally be laid to rest. Inevitably, the publication schedule for such an ambitious work is a very long-term one, so please don't place your order just yet! We'll keep you posted.

Andrew Duff

Grammoptera ruficornis (Fabricius, 1781) (Cerambycidae) new to the Isle of Arran

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During the course of a collecting trip to Arran on 6th June 1998, several specimens of *Grammoptera ruficornis* (Fabricius) were beaten from hawthorn *Crataegus* blossom in a small hawthorn and *Salix* copse near Bennan Head (NR 992203, VC 100). The copse was extremely isolated at the base of a vegetated south-facing cliff, although further specimens of *G. ruficornis* were located nearby (NR 994204) on flowers of hawthorn and hogweed *Heracleum sphondylium*. Beating of hawthorn in woodland near Kildonan (NS 0121) the same day (and on previous visits to the area) did not reveal any further specimens, but it is likely that colonies here would be more dispersed and hence overlooked. There are no records of this species on Arran in any of Fergusson's (1901, 1910, 1912) Clyde Coleoptera Lists and Uthhoff-Kaufmann (1948) only lists Midlothian, Berwickshire, Roxburghshire, and Lanarkshire as Scottish localities for *G. ruficornis*.

This colony is of particular significance since it is the first record for any Scottish island, and is also the only colony so far discovered on the western seaboard of Scotland, raising the possibility that other colonies may remain undetected in Kintyre (VC 101) and elsewhere. Its presence on Arran is unlikely to be the result of a recent introduction or colonisation since it occurs in a very isolated degraded scrub woodland site, probably the remnants of an overgrazed ancient semi-natural woodland which covered much of the island. The site is highly insolated due to its south-facing aspect on a post-glacial raised beach, providing a warm microclimate for a species reaching its northern distributional limits.

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Tychius tibialis Boheman (Curculionidae) new to Gloucestershire

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Hyman (1992) describes this weevil as primarily coastal, but, more likely, it is one of the many insects of old lowland meadowland which have become increasingly confined to the seaward fringe as a result of the widespread intensification of agriculture inland. This interpretation of its distribution is consistent with its discovery in Gloucestershire: a single individual was swept in one of the county's best remaining unimproved hay meadows, at Hyde Mill (SP 177242), along the River Dikler near Bourton-on-the-Water, 22.vi.1997.

My thanks to Mike Morris for confirming my identification.

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Examples of *Pocadius* Erichson (Nitidulidae) from Worcestershire, England, showing features of both British species

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"Species recognition is an essential feature for the functional organisation of life" - Roger L. Blackman

Introduction

Two species of the genus *Pocadius* Erichson are recognised as British. One of these, *Pocadius adustus* Reitter, 1888, was admitted to the British fauna, as *P. lanuginosus* Franz, 1969, by Johnson (1975), who outlined diagnostic features for its separation from the other British species, *P. ferrugineus* (Fabricius, 1775). Franz (1969) cited other more comparative differences, whilst Borowiec and Kania (1994) provide further illustrations. Audisio, the Italian specialist, who has studied the Nitidulidae in great detail, has confirmed (*pers. comm.*) that, in his experience, *P. ferrugineus* and *P. adustus* can be distinguished throughout their ranges. Allen (1992), Johnson (*op. cit.*) and Nash (1981) show that both species are widespread in Britain, with only *P. ferrugineus* occurring in Ireland.

I have collected *Pocadius* in Britain in small numbers only, the total number of specimens available being 11. Looking at these in detail during 1997, and comparing them in equal detail with the published archive, some difficulty was experienced in reaching a firm conclusion. Surprised by the variation in such a small sample, I decided to look into the matter further.

Discussion

This paper deals only with recognisable skeletal or physical features of the imagines. Although I have examined the superficially similar aedeagi of both species, the primary sexual characters are not discussed here. Generally, and for the purposes of this discussion, the identity of *P. adustus* is established by the length and character of the elytral hairs, especially those fringing the lateral margins of the elytra. These decrease in length from the base to the apex of the elytra, but measured near their mid-point are normally about twice the length of the explanate elytral margin, are generally reminiscent of ciliae, and are recurved near their tips. The corresponding hairs of *P. ferrugineus* are about equal in length to the explanate lateral margins of the elytra, and are uniformly recurved from their bases, which establishes its identity both generally and for the purposes of this discussion. This is the most obvious superficial distinction between the two species, and the one employed in the first instance by Mr A.A. Allen (see also Allen, *op. cit.*) when trying to establish the identity of specimens I asked him to comment on.

In a further effort to identify these specimens, five criteria were selected, viz. 1, length of elytral marginal hairs; 2, head colour; 3, shape of apical edge of protibiae; 4, presence of a spur at the lateral apex of the mesotibiae in both sexes and 5, the shape and sculpture of the male paramere-plate; in this case comparison was limited to single males only of *P. adustus* and *P. ferrugineus*. These features were then compared for constancy with the published record, in accordance with the following scheme:

Criterion	<i>P. adustus</i>	<i>P. ferrugineus</i>
1: marginal hairs of elytra	2x width of elytral margin	1x width of elytral margin
2: head colour	reddish	infusate
3: protibial apex	straight or convex	concave
4: lateral apex of mesotibia	elongate, projecting bicuspid spur	fringed by spines
5: dorsal surface of paramere plate	without transverse line	with transverse line

P. adustus. Five English specimens were available for study. In all cases criteria 1, 2 and 4 agree with the documentary record, whilst in all cases except that of a specimen from Alfrick, Worcestershire (see below), criterion 3 agrees with the documentary record.

P. ferrugineus. Six English specimens were available for study. In four cases criterion 1 agrees with the published record for this species, the two exceptions being females from *Scleroderma verrucosum* (Bull.: Pers.) Pers. from the Malvern Hills, Worcestershire (19.vii.1998, SO 74), in which the lateral hairs are 1.5x the width of the explanate elytral sides at the mid-point. The head colour and arrangement and disposition of the dorsal elytral hairs in these cases are consistent with those of *P. ferrugineus*. Criterion 2 agrees with the published record in all cases but one, a specimen from Broadway, Worcestershire (27.vii.1990, SP 03) having a red head; this specimen, and the two females already mentioned from Malvern also disagree on criterion 3, having the anterior edges of the protibiae convex. Criterion 4 agreed in all cases but two, the specimen from Broadway just mentioned, and a female from Alfrick (see below). The Broadway example has clear *adustus*-like mesotibial spurs. A scrutinised male from Bialowieza, Poland, also has a uniformly red head, and unusual dark elytral maculae.

The structure of the male paramere-plate (criterion 5 above), and its apical hair-fringe, have been referred to by Franz (*op. cit.*) and Johnson (*op. cit.*); Borowiec and Kania (*op. cit.*) depict it. According to these last authors, the paramere-plate of *P. ferrugineus* has a transverse line which crosses the dorsal surface joining both sides at the point where the apical curve begins. They show this line to be absent in *P. adustus*. The writer has found the line to be present in males of both *P. ferrugineus* (Poland) and *P. adustus* (England); a longer series would confirm the suggestion that this feature is suspect as a tool of identification. In addition, the apexes of the paramere-plates of *P. ferrugineus* examined by the writer have a tendency to be rounded, and are certainly not subtruncate.

Three examples representing both species were collected at Alfrick, Worcestershire (SO 75) by Mr S. Corbett from a single spore-body of *Lycoperdon perlatum* Pers. per Pers. on 10.xi.1997, apparently the first evidence for coexistence of both species in one

sporophore in Britain. A male *P. adustus* is broadly typical of that species. An egg-bearing female has the long elytral hairs indicative of *P. adustus*, but the anterior margin of the protibiae are very markedly concave throughout; the mesotibial spurs being rather typical. A second female has the short elytral hair characters of *P. ferrugineus*, but the distal extremities of the mesotibiae are expanded laterally forming subtriangular spine-bearing prominences, bearing some resemblance to those of *P. adustus* in form; additionally in this example, the apical margins of the protibiae are convex.

Conclusions

The variation of these features, previously regarded as diagnostic, particularly the protibial character which reverses conventional wisdom, casts doubt on their universal reliability in species recognition. The occurrence of individuals showing the generally accepted characters of both species, suggests, but does not prove, that hybridisation may occur, especially when both species meet within a single spore-body.

The characters of *P. adustus* referred to here generally agree with existing published descriptions. Examples of *P. ferrugineus* show greater variation than published descriptions admit. However, coexisting examples of both species from Alfrick, Worcestershire, have characters, generally held to be diagnostic, reversed. The nature and length of pubescence, head colour, and the structure of the mesotibiae are tolerably reliable features, the former being the most constant and suggestive of identity, although even this appears not to be absolutely fixed. It is hoped that students of *Pocadius* will in future pay detailed attention to the finer points of their structure, in a further effort to assess their usefulness.

Although breeding experiments may well be required to confirm hybridisation (A.A. Allen, *in litt.*), the evidence provided here demonstrates that the possibility of hybridisation occurring in the wild should not be dismissed. Both species have been shown to coexist within a single small fungal sporophore, suggestive of something more than simple functional convergence. It must also be emphasised that the most variable specimens referred to here, occur centred on the area of the Worcestershire Malvern Hills, where there are locally substantial populations of gasteromycete host-fungi.

Of the published records, it is regrettable that, with the exception of Nash (*op. cit.*), there are so few references to host-plant relationships. The writer aligns with Nash (*op. cit.*) that *P. adustus* is more closely tied to Gasteromycetes than *P. ferrugineus*, although Allen (*op. cit.*) tantalisingly refers to a *P. adustus* "in fungus on apple tree" from Eastnor Hill, Herefordshire (SO 73), during 1936. In contrast, *P. ferrugineus* is more catholic, occurring in Worcestershire also on Basidiomycotina e.g. *Polyporus squamosus* (Huds. Ex Fr.).

Acknowledgements

I wish to express my thanks to Mr A. A. Allen for looking critically at some of the specimens referred to in this paper. I am grateful to Mr D. Green and Mr S. Corbett for the opportunity to see specimens.

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Ampedus rufipennis (Stephens) (Elateridae) new to Gloucestershire

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Like all too many of Britain's saproxylic click beetles, *Ampedus rufipennis* has a very localised distribution. It has only previously been reported from six counties: Kent, Surrey, Berkshire, Norfolk, Herefordshire and Worcestershire (Mendel & Clarke 1996). It is a pleasure therefore to add my home county of Gloucestershire. Adults and larvae were found by Tony Taylor and myself in good numbers in soft white-rotted ash *Fraxinus* trunks in an extensive area of Cotswold hill pasture-woodland at Southam (SO 980260), 10.iv.1997. Many of the ashes concerned are ancient pollards and some of the beetles were found amongst decayed wood on the inside of the hollow trunks, together with a single elytron of another rare saproxylic click beetle, *Procaerus tibialis* (Boisduval & Lacordaire) (Elateridae). The key wood-decay fungus involved in creating the white-rot is *Inonotus hispidus* (Bull. ex Fr.) Karst, a common and widespread species on the Cotswolds. The site is very similar in character to another of the known localities, Bredon Hill (see Whitehead, 1996).

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Tony Taylor for finding the first specimen, to Howard Mendel for confirming my identification, and to Gordon McGlone of the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust for asking me to visit the area.

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Riparian beetles on soft sediments by the River Teme, Worcestershire

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On 14th May 1998, I visited three sites along the lower section of the River Teme, Worcestershire, in order to collect specimens of *Bledius annae* Sharp. In the process 53 species of Coleoptera were recorded by splashing water onto the steep sand and clay river banks which line the deeply incised river in this section. These included several scarce species with habitats closely associated with fine exposed riverine sediments.

The sites visited were:

1. SO 795531-SO 796532; 12 sampling stations upstream of Bransford Bridge on shaded substrates of fine sand which often incorporated coarse particles of organic debris. This site also included a vertical clay cliff with a sparse growth of moss above a flat shelf of sand and clay.
2. SO 730624; 3 sampling stations downstream of New Mill Bridge on shaded fine sand incorporating limited quantities of coarse organic matter.
3. SO 691675; 3 sampling stations near Meadow Mill on fine sand with coarse organic matter.

The species recorded are listed with their abundances in Table 1 together with six further species recorded during previous visits to the Bransford Bridge site on 6th June 1986 and 3rd May 1990.

Notes on individual species

Family CARABIDAE

Bembidion semipunctatum Donovan and *B. monticola* Sturm

B. semipunctatum is widespread and often abundant along large sandy rivers in France, but in Britain it has a very localised distribution principally within the Severn catchment (Luff, 1998). Consequently, it is designated as Nationally Scarce as is the more widespread, but rarely recorded *B. monticola*. Luff (1998) describes *B. monticola* as a river-gravel species, but Hyman (1992) states that it is mainly found in cracks and crevices in clay banks on rivers.

Family HYDROPHILIDAE

Georissus crenulatus (Rossi)

This species was very abundant at site 3. It is designated as Nationally Scarce, but may be under-recorded on account of its small size and habit of covering itself with sand grains for camouflage.

Family STAPHYLINIDAE

Bledius annae Sharp and *B. pallipes* Gravenhorst

These were synonymised by Pope (1977), but they are clearly distinct taxa. I know of no published record of *B. annae* outside southern Scotland and the West Midlands and once its taxonomic distinctness has been established, its conservation status needs to be assessed.

Stenus biguttatus (Linnaeus)

This species is easily confused with *S. comma* LeConte. Although it is not designated as Nationally Scarce, my personal experience of *S. biguttatus* is confined to the River Teme,

<i>Stenus biguttatus</i> (Linnaeus)		xx	+	1	
<i>Stenus bimaculatus</i> Gyllenhal		xx		3	2
<i>Stenus boops</i> Ljungh		xx	>10	1	4
<i>Stenus guttula</i> Muller		xx		2	
<i>Stenus junco</i> (Paykull)		xx		3	
<i>Stenus melanopus</i> (Marsham)		x	+		
<i>Sunius propinquus</i> (Brisout)				1	
<i>Tachyusa coarctata</i> Erichson	N	xx		3	
<i>Tachyusa constricta</i> Erichson		xx	>10	>10	4
<i>Tachyusa leucopus</i> (Marsham)		xx	+		
<i>Tachyusa umbratica</i> Erichson		xx	6	8	3
<i>Thinodromus arcuatus</i> (Stephens)		xx	+		
<i>Xantholinus longiventris</i> Heer			1	1	
Heteroceridae					
<i>Heterocerus marginatus</i> (Fabricius)		xx	+		
Elateridae					
<i>Hypnoidus riparius</i> (Fabricius)		x		1	
Cryptophagidae					
<i>Paramecosoma melanocephalum</i> (Herbst)		xx	+		

Key: N = Nationally Scarce, Na = grade a, Nb = grade b (following Hyman 1992, 1994); xx = high habitat specificity, x = associated with riparian or wetland habitats; + = recorded in 1986 or 1990.

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Records of uncommon wetland beetles from N. Ireland, with particular reference to Biodiversity and RDB list species

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Introduction

The plight of wetland beetles in Britain and Ireland is well documented. Species dependent on a wide variety of wetland habitats figure prominently in the Red Data Book (Shirt, 1987) and Biodiversity lists (UK Steering Group, 1995). These Red Data Book categories (RDB) however only apply to Great Britain. The recent listing of species of conservation concern under Biodiversity initiatives (BAP lists) have taken a U.K. perspective, i.e. including Northern Ireland. A number of the RDB and BAP-listed species occur in N. Ireland, and it is here that some have their strongest U.K. populations. This paper gives details of recent records of a number of wetland or riparian species for which N. Ireland has a significant percentage of the U.K. population.

Recent recording

There has been considerable recording effort in recent years in N. Ireland by the authors and others, covering carabids, aquatic Coleoptera and staphylinids. Distribution maps for the aquatic Coleoptera have been produced (Nelson *et al.*, 1997, 1998) and there are plans for a carabid atlas. Some specific surveys have been undertaken. One of the most extensive is that used to monitor Environmentally Sensitive Areas by pitfall trapping. This has produced many noteworthy records of carabids (McFerran *et al.*, 1995, 1996). A second was a survey of 30 fens in Counties Armagh and Down in 1997 under contract to the Environment and Heritage Service (Nelson, 1998). This involved three sessions of pitfall trapping during April/May, July and August/September with five traps per site.

Full details of all the records are not given in this paper. Details are held on RECORDER software at CEDaR, the biological records centre in the Ulster Museum and can be obtained by contacting the senior author (BN).

GYRINIDAE

Gyrinus distinctus Aubé

This is a common species on lakes of all sizes in Fermanagh, but with no recent records elsewhere in N. Ireland (Nelson *et al.*, 1997). The species is usually found in sparse reed beds. There are a total of 16 recorded sites in N. Ireland, the same total as recorded in the whole of Great Britain (Nelson *et al.*, 1997; G. Foster *pers. comm.*). It is given pRDB3 status in Great Britain.

Gyrinus natator (Linnaeus)

Extinct in Great Britain, having previously been recorded from Cumbria (Foster, 1985). In Ireland it is found widely but in very scattered localities in the central lowlands from Lough Neagh southwards. In N. Ireland *G. natator* has been recorded from 10 sites since 1988 (Nelson *et al.*, 1997). These are mostly shallow pools in cutover bogs and fens.

DYTISCIDAE*Hydroporus scalesianus* Stephens

First recorded in Ireland in 1986 at Scragh Bog, Co. Westmeath (Bilton, 1988) and in N. Ireland in 1991 at Derryleckagh Fen, Co. Down. The distribution up to 1996 is shown in Nelson *et al.* (1997). Four additional records were obtained during the 1997 fen survey extending the distribution into south Armagh and eastern Down. There are now 15 sites in N. Ireland. This compares to a total of 11 post-1950 records from Great Britain (G. Foster *pers. comm.*). The following are the additional 1997 fen survey sites — Armagh (H 37): Brackly Lough (H 820309); Loughaveely (H 956142); Lurgan Lough Upper (H 950156). Down (H 38): Corbally Fen (J 451382).

CARABIDAE*Pelophila borealis* (Paykull)

This is another species which is rare in Britain (RDB3) but not in Ireland. It is common on Lough Neagh, favouring silty or clayey shorelines, with a total of 16 extant sites in the Lough Neagh basin alone (CEDaR database).

Dyschirius obscurus Gyllenhal

This species (British pRDB2) is still widespread around Lough Neagh with 17 extant sites (CEDaR database).

Bembidion argenteolum Ahrens

The only native population of this species in Ireland, and in the British Isles until recently (Mendel, 1991), occurred on the shores of Lough Neagh. Recent surveys have failed to locate any extant populations and the last reliable record was that of O.E. Janson for Shane's Castle Estate in 1923 (Janson, 1924). The species was reported in total from only three fine sand beaches on the north-east, east and south-east shorelines of the Lough.

The habitats around Lough Neagh have been altered considerably in the last 100 years due to the effects of several lowerings and tight control of the lake levels, eutrophication and the huge loss of marginal wetlands and sandy beaches which once supported a unique flora and fauna. The remaining areas of suitable fine sand habitat are under threat from the residual effects of sand extraction, water table management and pollution. Lough Neagh currently has 160 ppb soluble reactive phosphorus (SRP) in the water column compared to 60 ppb for Lake Geneva, one of the more notorious eutrophicated European lakes. This degree of eutrophication leads to abundant algal growth and sometimes damaging accumulations of rotting algae along lake margins which can be a hazard to all wildlife. So far this has not affected other Lough Neagh fine-sand specialists such as *Dyschirius obscurus* Gyllenhal (Carabidae) and *Anthicus scoticus* Rye (Anthicidae).

Pterostichus aterrimus (Herbst)

An RDB1 species in Great Britain and a BAP List 2 species. Formerly found in the East Anglian fens but not recorded there since 1910, and in the New Forest, where it was last recorded in 1973 (Hyman, 1992). In Ireland *P. aterrimus* was first recorded from an unspecified site in Co. Cork in the last century (Johnson & Halbert, 1902). It has since been reported from single localities in Cos. Kerry (Bullock, 1932), Cavan (Nicholson *in* Bullock, 1932), Clare (Mackechnie Jarvis, 1971) and Waterford (RA, unpublished). In N. Ireland it was recorded in 1982 from pitfalls at Brackagh Moss National Nature Reserve (NNR), a rich fen in Co. Armagh (Day, 1987).

The following seven sites represent additional localities discovered in Cos. Armagh and Down during the 1997 fen survey. Armagh (H 37): Brackagh Moss (J 018509); Drumcarn Fen (H 811285); Kiltubbrid Lough (H 769395); Lurgan Lough Upper (H 950156); Moyrourkan Lough (H 984425). Down (H 38): Castle Enigan Fen (J 121322); Derryleckagh (J 118252). *P. aterrimus* specimens were caught in all three trapping sessions during the 1997 fen survey; the maximum number caught on one site was 8 during July at Kiltubbrid Lough. The newly-discovered localities are all intact mesotrophic, poor or base-rich fens, and without exception wet, with little bare ground. One site, Kiltubbrid Lough, is lightly grazed by cattle. The other sites are ungrazed with large areas of floating, moss-dominated fen. Lindroth (1986) says that the species is found mainly in oligotrophic bogs in Fennoscandia on peaty soil with luxuriant vegetation; less often in eutrophic fens. The sites are all amongst the largest of the remaining fens in N. Ireland, which may also be a significant factor in the species' survival.

Lebia cruxminor (Linnaeus)

First reported in Ireland by Bullock (1914) from Muckcross Demesne, Killarney, then from Co. Clare by Mackechnie Jarvis (1971). A British RDB1 species now regularly recorded in Britain only from Ditchling Common, East Sussex (Hyman, 1992). We can add a site in south Fermanagh where it was collected by Keith Alexander in 1992. Fermanagh (H 33): meadow at Derrymacrow, Crom Castle (H 365262).

SILPHIDAE*Thanatophilus dispar* (Herbst)

An RDB1 species in Britain with only one recent record (Hyman, 1992). Widespread but rare around Lough Neagh, more or less in the same areas as Johnson & Halbert (1902) recorded it; also Lough Erne: Armagh (H 37): Ennismore House, L. Neagh (H 939627), 20.iv.1976 (RA); Derrywarragh Island Beach, Lough Neagh (H 929638), 26.vi.1996 (RA). Fermanagh (H 33): Crom Castle, Upper Lough Erne (H 363237), vi.1992 (National Trust Biological Survey Team). Londonderry (H 40): Ballinderry Far Waterfoot Beach, Lough Neagh (H 955811), 9.vi.1996 (RA). Usually found under flood refuse on the Lough Neagh beaches, or, as at Derrywarragh Island, at gull carcasses. The former association with washed up dead fish on Lough Neagh (Johnson & Halbert, 1902) seems rarer now. There is no lack of other carrion on Lough Neagh beaches but the remains of larger herbivores are evidently ignored.

STAPHYLINIDAE*Stenus palposus* Zetterstedt

This sandy-beach specialist is confined to Lough Neagh within the British Isles (List 4 species; Hyman, 1994). The species is considered globally threatened (UK Steering Group, 1995). It now appears to be extinct on Lough Neagh after a special survey failed to find extant populations (RA 1996; internal report of the Environment & Heritage Service, N. Ireland). It was last reported from a fine sand beach at Far Waterfoot, Co. Londonderry (H 970902), on 19.vi.1983.

Philonthus furcifer Renkonen

P. furcifer was introduced to the British Isles fauna by Tottenham (1939) on the basis of specimens collected by Edwin Bullock at Killarney, Co. Kerry. It has since been found widely on calcareous lakeshores across the midlands of Ireland but only very rarely and as single individuals in the north of Ireland. Not yet recorded from Britain (List 4; Hyman 1994). The following are the only N. Ireland sites known to us: Antrim (H 39): 1 only, in lakeshore fen at Massereene, Lough Neagh (J 142851), 23.x.1976. Down (H 38): 1 only, by a semisalinity pool, Harbour Airport runway, Sydenham, Belfast (J 383779), 9.vi.1992.

Atheta strandiella Brundin

Good (1992) introduced this species to the Irish list from single sites in Offaly and Kildare. In the 1997 fen survey *A. strandiella* was taken in pitfalls on the following sites — Armagh (H 37): Brackagh Moss NNR (J 018509); Foughil Etra (J 057198). Antrim (H 39): Montiaghs Moss (J 0965). Down (H 38): Derryleckagh Fen (J 118252). This is classified as Notable in Hyman

(1994). As stated in Good (1992) and Hyman (1994), the ecology of this species is obscure with most records from carrion in wet places. An association with undisturbed mossy fens is supported by the N. Irish records.

Schistoglossa aubei (Brisout)

An RDBK species in Britain (Hyman, 1994), with post-1970 records from Norfolk and Roxburghshire (Sinclair & Owen, 1998). D.A. Lott took a single specimen on a visit to Co. Down in June 1991 (Sinclair & Owen, 1998): Down (H 38): sedge litter, Derryleckagh Fen (J 1125). Staphylinidae, Aleocharinae are definitely under-recorded in N. Irish wetlands, and the recent fen survey produced only a handful of members of this group.

CRYPTOPHAGIDAE

Micrambe bimaculata (Panzer)

Lough Neagh appears to be the principal permanent site for this species in the British Isles. It was first collected there by Halbert at Shane's Castle Estate in 1902 (Halbert, 1910). It has RDBK status in Britain (Hyman, 1994). As Allen (1988) points out, it has been taken on Lough Neagh primarily by sweeping reeds in lakeshore fens (Halbert, 1910) and from the examination of shoreline debris (Janson, 1924), in contrast to its habits elsewhere where it is mainly associated with conifers. Two recent captures are: Antrim (H 37): one, in reed debris, fine sand beach, Shane's Castle Estate (J 132871), 28.iii.1978 (RA). Londonderry (H 40): one, at grass roots; fine sand beach, Moyola Waterfoot (H 970902), 19.v.1998 (RA).

ANTHICIDAE

Anthicus scoticus Rye

This species is rare in Britain (pRDB3) and although confined to the north and west shorelines of Lough Neagh, has been found recently at 13 sites (CEDaR database).

CHRYSOMELIDAE

Donacia aquatica (Linnaeus)

This species has declined considerably in Britain. It is a pRDB3 species and a BAP List 2 species. There are post-1970 records from just four vice-counties in northern England and Scotland (Menzies & Cox, 1996). There are no recent published records from Ireland and just the following post-1988 N. Irish record. Fermanagh (H 33): Inishfendra, Upper Lough Erne (H 3723).

Donacia bicolora Zschach

A pRDB3 and BAP List 2 species. Like *D. aquatica* this species has declined considerably in Britain with post-1970 records only from three vice-counties in southern England (Menzies & Cox, 1996). While it has been recorded from eight counties in Ireland in the past (Johnson & Halbert, 1902), there appear to be no recent published records. Since 1988 *D. bicolora* has been collected at four sites in Fermanagh and one in Co. Armagh. The species appears to be associated with marginal fens around base-rich lakes in N. Ireland. Armagh (H 37): Kiltubbrid Lough (H 769397). Fermanagh (H 33): Corradovar, Upper Lough Erne (H 3029); Crom Estate, Upper Lough Erne (H 358244); Lough Coole (H 255435).

CURCULIONIDAE

Bagous collignensis (Herbst)

This species is associated with Water Horsetail *Equisetum fluviatile* Linnaeus, and has only been recorded twice from Ireland (Morris, 1985). Much declined in Britain and now accorded RDB3 status, it has been reported in only one British vice-county since 1970 (Hyman, 1992). *B. collignensis* was found at three sites in the 1997 fen survey. Single adults were recorded at each site, two in April/May and one in August/September. These are the only recent Irish records. Armagh (H 37): Drumlougher Lough Fen (H 895185); Loughaveely (H 954140); Moyourkan Lough (H 984425). No specific habitat links can be ascertained from these records, although all three sites do have *Equisetum fluviatile* at fairly low density. At Drumlougher

B. collignensis was caught in a trap set in wet rushy pasture at the edge of the fen, and in intact mossy fen at the other two sites.

Datonychus arquatus (Herbst)

This weevil has RDBI status in Britain and there are no post-1970 records. It was recorded in some quantity by Halbert (1910) at the Shane's Castle site on Lough Neagh. A recent (1996) visit to Shane's Castle by RA and Prof. M.G. Morris failed to re-find the species there, but it could survive in one of the many other suitable Lough Neagh fens where the foodplant *Lycopus europaeus* Linnaeus flourishes.

Discussion

The N. Irish wetlands are belatedly being appreciated as having considerable conservation significance for their invertebrate populations. It has only been with the introduction of biodiversity action lists and sponsored surveys that populations of some species have been recognised as important. For several species the N. Irish populations now assume considerable significance in a British Isles and even European context.

The challenge to conservation organisations is how to conserve what remains. The most significant suites of species are often those associated with low or medium trophic status waterbodies, or with pools created by peat cutting on raised bogs. The virtual cessation of traditional peat-cutting means that natural succession is operating to infill and destroy surviving pools. Low trophic status habitats are also in decline from the menace of groundwater and airborne nutrients carried from intensive agricultural areas. Nutrient leakage from agriculture also threatens creeping acidification (as distinct from gaseous industrial emissions of oxides of sulphur and nitrogen) which can influence invertebrate survival and may be responsible for mysterious changes such as the virtual disappearance of *Chlaenius* species (Carabidae) from N. Ireland habitats on soils lacking substantial native buffering capacity. *Chlaenius vestitus* (Paykull) is now regarded as extinct there and *C. nigricornis* (Fabricius) is restricted, in declining numbers, to a handful of sites on the Fermanagh limestone.

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The changing status of British Cantharidae

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The Cantharoidea and Buprestoidea Recording Scheme was established as a Biological Records Centre coordinated scheme in 1984 (Eversham & Harding, 1996). It has subsequently amassed a great deal of data on the distribution of these beetles in Britain and Ireland. Although a Provisional Atlas was planned for 1996, it has been delayed. In the meantime however, and in response to the current Biodiversity Action Plans initiative in the U.K. (UK Steering Group, 1995), it was felt that publication of an overview of the current British status of some of these beetles and an exploration of how these data could be used in assessing the extent of change, would be of value.

The most recent published statement of British statuses may be found in Hyman (1992), which was based on assessments made in the late 1980s, in the early years of the Recording Scheme. Only the "scarce and threatened" species were included, as defined by species believed at that time to occur in fewer than 100 10 km squares. Thus more widespread species were not covered. These other species include a range of statuses, from species which are fairly ubiquitous and abundant over large areas, to uncommon and/or localised ones. All of the species are however subject to the well-documented pressures on wildlife habitats and so are likely to be undergoing significant declines in abundance and/or distribution.

It is very much this 'rate of decline' approach which has been highlighted by the current U.K. Biodiversity Initiative and especially by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (Anon., 1996). One of the categories for inclusion in the list of *Globally Threatened/Declining Species* is: "species where numbers or range have declined by more than 25% in the last 25 years". This is obviously virtually impossible to ascertain for the majority of invertebrates other than butterflies, but with the Recording Scheme data it is possible to identify species which have not been recorded in the last 25 years in 25% or more of the 10 km squares where they have been found at some time previously. This isn't quite the same thing as the Biodiversity List category but is probably the closest that is sensible for these beetles.

Only sample datasets were assessed by the official agencies (R.S. Key, *pers. comm.*). Any species which qualified for at least one of the Biodiversity List criteria was considered for the "Long List". There are additionally "Middle" and "Short" lists which contain species which are either globally threatened or are rapidly declining in the U.K. (i.e. by more than 50% in the last 25 years). These lists have been further refined for birds as Red (> 50%) and Amber (25-49%) lists (Anon., 1996). Cantharoidea and Buprestoidea were not among the groups assessed and so do not feature in any of these lists.

Table 1 presents, for each cantharid, the percentage of records which are before 1970, and ranks the species according to the size of that percentage. *Cantharis cryptica* Ashe

and *C. pallida* Goeze are necessarily omitted as they were not distinguished until 1946 (Ashe, 1946-1947). Only British data are included as there are insufficient historic records from Ireland. In the Status columns I have introduced a "decline" category of Red and Amber, in line with the approach used for birds, but using 50% and 25% declines this century rather than the past 25 years (Red List bird species are those of "high conservation" concern, while Amber are of "moderate" concern).

The correlation of percentage with current status is not great, although Nationally Scarce and Red Data Book species do feature prominently in the higher percentages, demonstrating that these species are not only very scarce in the British countryside but are becoming increasingly so. The general association of these particular species with long-established semi-natural habitats readily explains this increasing scarcity. What is especially interesting — and the point that the U.K. Biodiversity Initiative is making — is that some so-called "common" species have actually declined dramatically, notably *Malthodes pumilus* (Brébisson), *M. dispar* (Germar) and *Cantharis livida* Linnaeus, which all lie within the range of 25-50% of records pre-dating 1970.

A 25-year date class approach effectively eliminates most invertebrates from consideration. Whether or not this was intended, it is clearly seriously unrealistic. It is hoped that the analysis presented here will provide a useful contribution to the reformulation of criteria by the statutory agencies. There are many problems which need addressing before this approach can be further developed, however, such as the fact that older records are often imprecisely localised and so difficult to allocate to a 10 km square, and that common species are generally relatively under-recorded. However, a start needs to be made in focusing the minds of entomologists and responding to current initiatives, before invertebrates become sidelined by the nature conservation movement once again.

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Table 1: Pre-1970 compared to 1970-95 records of British Cantharidae, showing rates of decline.

	10 km sqq. pre- 1970 1970 -1995	% sqq. only pre-1970	British Status	Decline Class	
<i>Malthodes maurus</i> (Laporte de Castelnau)	9	5	64%	Nb	Red
<i>Malthodes crassicornis</i> (Mäklin)	7	7	50%	RDB3	Red
<i>Cantharis fusca</i> Linnaeus	24	25	49%	RDB3	Amber
<i>Malthodes pumilus</i> (Brébisson)	49	53	48%		Amber
<i>Malthinus frontalis</i> (Marsham)	42	52	45%	Nb	Amber
<i>Rhagonycha lutea</i> (Müller, O.F.)	29	48	38%	Nb	Amber
<i>Rhagonycha translucida</i> (Krynicky)	22	44	33%	Nb	Amber
<i>Malthodes dispar</i> (Germar)	31	63	33%		Amber
<i>Ancistronycha abdominalis</i> Fabricius	9	19	32%	Nb	Amber
<i>Cantharis obscura</i> Linnaeus	14	30	32%	Nb	Amber
<i>Malthodes fibulatus</i> Kiesenwetter	14	39	26%	Nb	Amber
<i>Cantharis livida</i> Linnaeus	71	210	25%		Amber
<i>Podabrus alpinus</i> (Paykull)	39	127	23%		
<i>Malthinus balteatus</i> Suffrian	18	59	23%	Nb	
<i>Malthodes guttifer</i> Kiesenwetter	19	63	23%	Nb	
<i>Rhagonycha elongata</i> (Fallén)	3	10	23%	Na	
<i>Malthodes fuscus</i> (Waltl)	23	82	22%		
<i>Malthodes flavoguttatus</i> Kiesenwetter	21	81	21%		
<i>Cantharis rufa</i> Linnaeus	65	265	20%		
<i>Malthodes marginatus</i> (Latreille)	56	284	16%		
<i>Silis ruficollis</i> (Fabricius)	12	63	16%	Nb	
<i>Malthinus seriepunctatus</i> Kiesenwetter	33	183	15%		
<i>Cantharis thoracica</i> (Olivier)	27	149	15%		
<i>Cantharis figurata</i> Mannerheim	17	96	15%		
<i>Cantharis paludosa</i> Fallén	18	110	14%		
<i>Malthodes minimus</i> (Linnaeus)	39	254	13%		
<i>Malthodes mysticus</i> Kiesenwetter	16	113	12%		
<i>Cantharis rustica</i> Fallén	43	307	12%		
<i>Cantharis lateralis</i> Linnaeus	28	220	11%		
<i>Malthinus flaveolus</i> (Herbst)	32	272	11%		
<i>Rhagonycha testacea</i> (Linnaeus)	25	232	10%		
<i>Cantharis nigra</i> (De Geer)	40	412	9%		
<i>Rhagonycha limbata</i> Thomson, C.G.	47	501	9%		
<i>Cantharis nigricans</i> (Müller, O.F.)	48	513	9%		
<i>Cantharis pellucida</i> Fabricius	34	411	8%		
<i>Cantharis decipiens</i> Baudi	34	416	8%		
<i>Rhagonycha lignosa</i> (Müller, O.F.)	31	501	6%		
<i>Rhagonycha fulva</i> (Scopoli)	24	861	3%		

Rare and notable Coleoptera recorded in England, 1995-97

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This note lists more records of Nationally Notable and Red Data Book species, made in the past three years. All captures were made by the author, except the initialled records made by Ray Fry (RMF) & Peter LeBrocq (PFL). The status categories and vice-county listings follow Hyman (1992, 1994). All dead-wood indicator species are given the scores ascribed by Harding & Rose (1986), listed as Ancient Woodland (AW1-3) species.

NORTH WILTSHIRE (VC 7). Dytiscidae: *Ilybius fenestratus* (Fabricius) (Nb); Hydrophilidae: *Helophorus griseus* Herbst and *Helochares lividus* (Forster) (both Nb); Chrysomelidae: *Donacia cinerea* Herbst (Nb), on *Typha* — all Ashton Keynes (SU 0395), 30.v.1997.

SOUTH HAMPSHIRE (VC 11). Hydrophilidae: *Cercyon depressus* Stephens (N), Farlington Marshes (SU 6803), abundant in rotting seaweed 6.ix.1997. Lucanidae: *Lucanus cervus* (Linnaeus) (Nb), Petersfield (SU 7422), several in vi.1997 (PFL). Cerambycidae: *Strangalia aurulenta* (Fabricius) (Na, AW3), Old Winchester Hill (SU 6420), dead specimen in log pile on chalk downland, 10.x.1997.

NORTH HAMPSHIRE (VC 12). Staphylinidae: *Omalium rugatum* Mulsant & Rey (N), Woolmer Forest (SU 7830), in rotting fungi 13.x.1997; *Paederus fuscipes* Curtis (Nb), Woolmer Forest (SU 7830), 1995-7; *Placusa tachyporoides* (Waltl) (N) and *Proteinus crenulatus* Pandellé (Nb) — both Chawton Park Wood (SU 6837), at sap on freshly cut beech *Fagus* 19.vi.1996; *Platydracus latebricola* (Gravenhorst) (Nb), Alton (SU 7138), in my garden vi.1996; *Stenus fuscicornis* Erichson (Nb), Rotherfield Park (SU 6931), abundant in moss and debris accumulated on loose scree in a chalk pit 21.iii & 18.x.1997. Cerambycidae: *Prionus coriarius* (Linnaeus) (Na, AW3), Woolmer Forest (SU 7830), dead specimen in rotten pine 19.x.1997 [known from the forest since the 1950s].

WEST SUSSEX (VC 13). Dytiscidae: *Agabus chalconatus* (Panzer) and Hydraenidae: *Hydraena testacea* Curtis, (both Nb) — both Sparr's Rough (TQ 0426), shallow woodland pools 6.iii.1997. Biphylidae: *Diplocoelus fagi* Guérin-Ménéville (Nb, AW2), Red Copse (SU 9111), on dead beech 13.vi.1997.

WEST KENT (VC 14). Buprestidae: *Trachys scrobiculatus* Kiesenwetter (Na), several knocked off Ground-ivy *Glechoma hederacea* growing on a roadside bank; Mordellidae: *Mordellistena neuwaldeggiana* (Panzer) (RDBK), one swept — both Oaken Wood (TQ 7154), 16.vii.1997.

EAST KENT (VC 15). Carabidae: *Masoreus wetterhalli* (Gyllenhal) (Na), Sandwich Bay (TR 3658), 21.vii.1997. Melyridae: *Malachius vulneratus* Abeille (RDB3), Harty Ferry, Isle of Sheppey (TR 0165), 23.vii.1997. Tenebrionidae: *Crypticus quisquilius* (Linnaeus) (Nb), Sandwich Bay (TR 3658), 21.vii.1997. Apionidae: *Apion limonii* Kirby (Nb) and Curculionidae: *Baris scolopacea* Germar (RDB3) — both Harty Ferry, Isle of Sheppey (TR 0165), 23.vii.1997.

SURREY (VC 17). Carabidae: *Agonum sexpunctatum* (Linnaeus) (Na), Brentmoor Common (SU 9261), v.1997; *Amara consularis* (Duftschmid) (Nb), Chobham Common (SU 9665), viii.1996; *Amara praetermissa* (Sahlberg) (Nb), Brentmoor Common (SU 9261), 8.viii.1997; *Pterostichus angustatus* (Duftschmid) (Nb), Blackheath (TQ 0345), five under log in area of recently burnt heath 13.vii.1997. Staphylinidae: *Aleochara verna* Say (RDBK), Eashing Valley (SU 9443), 4.ix.1995. Cryptophagidae: *Cryptophagus ruficornis* Stephens (N), Red Road (SU 9261), 24.vi.1997 and Farnham Park (SU 8449), 15.vi.1997 — found in the fungus *Daldinia concentrica* at both sites. Leiodidae: *Choleva cisteloides* (Frölich) (RDBI), Eashing (SU 9343), one male in riverside debris beside the River Wey (apparently the first post-1970 record for Surrey and only the third modern vice-county record) 5.iv.1995. Buprestidae: *Agrilus laticornis* (Illiger) (Nb), Mare Hill (SU 9340), 5.viii.1997. Cantharidae: *Rhagonycha*

lutea (Müller) (Nb), Dockenfield (SU 8241), 15.vi.1997. Erotylidae: *Tritoma bipustulata* Fabricius (Na, AW3), Red Road (SU 9261), a male found on a birch *Betula* stump covered in fungoid growth, 24.vi.1997. Coccinellidae: *Adonia variegata* (Goeze) (Nb), Mare Hill (SU 9340), 5.viii.1997; *Coccinella magnifica* Redtenbacher (Na), Cuckoo Hill (SU 9361), vi-ix.1997; *Scymnus femoralis* (Gyllenhal) (Nb), Thursley National Nature Reserve (NNR) (SU 9040), 17.viii.1997; *Scymnus schmidtii* Fuersch (Nb), Crooksbury Common (SU 8945), 4.vii.1995 and Eashing Valley (SU 9343), 5.vi.1995. Colydiidae: *Synchita humeralis* (Fabricius) (Nb, AW3), Thundry Meadows (SU 8944), beaten from dead alder *Alnus* 16.vi.1997 and Thursley NNR (SU 9140), 21.v.1995. Melandryidae: *Abdera biflexuosa* Curtis (Nb, AW3) and *Conopalpus testaceus* (Olivier) (Nb, AW3) — both Bealeswood Common, Dockenfield (SU 8241), 15.vi.1997; *Abdera quadrifasciata* (Curtis) (Na, AW1), Thundry Meadows (SU 8944), on rotten oak *Quercus* branches 16.vi.1997; *Hallomenus binotatus* (Quensel) (Nb, AW3), Thursley NNR (SU 9140), inside a rotten pine *Pinus* log 28.viii.1997. Cerambycidae: *Anaglyptus mysticus* (Linnaeus) (Nb), Thursley NNR (SU 9040), 30.v.1997 (RMF) and Dockenfield (SU 8241), beaten from hawthorn *Crataegus* 15.vi.1997. Chrysomelidae: *Cassida hemisphaerica* Herbst (Na), Thursley NNR (SU 9040), beaten from oak (first post-1970 record from Surrey?) 8.viii.1997 (RMF); *Cryptocephalus bipunctatus* (Linnaeus) (Nb), Cuckoo Hill (SU 9361), abundant on small birch trees vi-ix.1997. Anthribidae: *Anthribus nebulosus* Forster (Nb), Cuckoo Hill (SU 9361), vii.1997. Curculionidae: *Coeliodes ruber* (Marsham) (Nb) and *Magdalis cerasi* (Linnaeus) (Nb) — both Dockenfield (SU 8241), 15.vi.1997; *Acalles pinoides* (Marsham) (Nb), Churt Flashes (SU 8639), 2 in pitfall traps viii.1996 and Cuckoo Hill (SU 9361), 8.viii.1997; *Smicronyx jungermanniae* (Reich) (Nb), Red Road (SU 9261), on Common Dodder 15.vi.1997; *Rhynchaenus iota* (Fabricius) (Nb), Folly Bog (SU 9261), abundant on *Myrica gale* 22.vii.1997.

EAST GLOUCESTERSHIRE (VC 33). Dytiscidae: *Hydroglyphus geminus* (Fabricius) and *Ilybius fenestratus* (Fabricius); Hydrophilidae: *Helophorus griseus* Herbst and *Helochares lividus* (Forster); Chrysomelidae: *Donacia cinerea* Herbst (all Nb) — all Somerford Keynes (SU 02945), 30.v.1997.

WESTMORLAND (VC 69). Staphylinidae: *Erichsonius signaticornis* (Mulsant & Rey) (Nb) and *Hydrosmeeta thinobioides* (Kraatz) (N), Swindale (NY 5215), 20.ix.1996 and Bampton (NY 5014), viii.1997, at both places abundant amongst river shingle; *Hydrosmeeta delicatula* (Sharp) (RDBK), River Lowther, Bampton (NY 5217), 3 in river shingle (new for VC 69 and for Cumbria) 25.ix.1995; *Myllaena elongata* (Matthews) (N), Bampton, Haweswater Beck (NY 5217), on shingle 14.viii.1997; *Gabrius bishopi* Sharp (Nb), Bampton (NY 5218), on dry shingle beside Haweswater Beck 19.viii.1997; *Lesteva hanseni* Lohse (N) and *Quedius auricomus* Kiesenwetter (Nb), Mardale Beck, Haweswater (NY 4811), in moss by waterfall with *Stenus guynemeri* Jacquelin du Val and *Dianous coerulecens* Gyllenhal, 25.ix.1995; *Stenus niveus* Fauvel (Nb), Lingy Fell (NY 5513), several in *Sphagnum* moss on raised mire, 27.ix.1995. Derodontidae: *Laricobius erichsoni* Rosenhauer, Burnbanks (NY 5016), several beaten from a large fir tree (first record from VC 69?), 14.viii.1997. Curculionidae: *Orthochaetes setiger* (Beck) (Nb), Burnbanks, (NY 5016), dozens of teneral and mature adults swept from bracken *Pteridium* and grass beneath oak trees, 13.viii.1997. Scolytidae: *Scolytus ratzeburgi* Janson (Nb), Burnbanks, Haweswater Beck (NY 5115), the distinctive vertical lines of holes were abundant on several large, moribund or dead birch trees, however only long dead specimens were found within the bark, 14.viii.1997 [Hyman (1992) fails to mention records of this species from Cumbria (Read, 1989)].

Acknowledgement

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Observations on *Ocypus ater* (Gravenhorst, 1802) (Staphylinidae) including breeding inside a house

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Moor Leys, Little Comberton, Pershore, Worcestershire WR10 3EH

The inland spread in Britain, and subsequent colonisation of urban, suburban, and rural habitats by *Ocypus ater* (Gravenhorst) is a noteworthy entomological phenomenon of the second half of this century (Whitehead, 1986). Previously *O. ater* was stenotopic to coastal bluffs and cliffs (and evidently still is on the Atlantic and Mediterranean seaboard of Europe), with a strong preference for hard rock, sea-washed shingle, or other firm substrates of the littoral. *O. ater* has now completely accepted the built environment of English towns; in Cheltenham Spa, Gloucestershire, it can be found running on pavements by heavily-polluted major-road intersections. Its more recent ability to develop arboreal populations in the dry, hollowed trunkwood of senile hardwood trees is arguably even more remarkable; the author recognises this from a number of sites in midland England, and has records of teneral imagines from high inside a trunk of *Prunus avium* Linnaeus, during July 1997, near Bewdley, north Worcestershire (SO 77).

The first confirmed instance of *O. ater* breeding inside a house (perhaps anticipated by Duff, 1993) can now be reported, second-instar larvae having been observed in the bathroom at this address during October 1998. The larvae appear during the day from crevices beneath skirting-boards, and are believed to consume isopods living in small spaces between the plaster work and block insulation. The British urban populations undoubtedly exploit similar niches in buildings or outbuildings (Whitehead, *pers. obs.*).

Like some of its closer relatives (Whitehead, 1995), *O. ater* is a confirmed predator of isopods. In rural Worcestershire (SO 94), first-instar larvae have been recorded between the dry faces of stacked engineering bricks, often in groups of up to three, consuming minute *Porcellio scaber* Latreille (Isopoda), and surrounded by comminuted fragments of them (Whitehead, *pers. obs.*). First-instar and second-instar larvae have been recorded in September and October, imagines in spring and then regularly in the period from July to September, but periodicity may vary with prevailing conditions. Imagines have recently been found in sheltered situations in south Worcestershire (SO 94) throughout October and into November.

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Notable Coleoptera records - 4

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This note follows on from Whitehead (1996b), and conforms to the same format and objectives. These records represent a significant selection of species which I have either encountered (unaccredited here) or identified for the period up to 7.vii.1998, and which may not otherwise fall within my publication programme. I thank S. Corbett (SC), Tina Corbett (TC), A. Fraser (AF), D.M. Green (DMG), G.H. Green (GHG), K. McGee (KM), J.W. Meiklejohn (JWM), Dr P. Skidmore (PS) and W. Watson (WW) for permission to publish records accredited to them as well as English Nature (EN), in particular Dr P. Holmes (PH) and Dr R.S. Key, and Kemerton Trustees Ltd (KT), in particular D. Offer, for permission to publish records arising from their own research programmes. Mr A.A. Allen (AAA) and Mr J. Cooter (JC) kindly confirmed the identity of *Atomaria strandi* Johnson and *Leiodes flavescens* (Schmidt) respectively. Records marked * are new to the vice-county, with the usual proviso that unknown archive records may exist, and that it is now somewhat difficult to confirm records new to a particular geographical area due to the increasing number of field workers; those marked (!) (!! etc., are sensitive species with conservation of their biotopes an increasingly important priority. Note that some widespread species are of high conservation significance, fulfilling key roles in the maintenance of biotopes. The national and ancient woodland statuses are those of British literature at the present time. Apionidae, rather than Brentidae, is employed, pending further specialist comment on this and other perhaps contentious taxonomic recommendations (see Anderson, Nash and O'Connor, 1997). References have been reduced to a minimum. Records refer to single specimens unless stated.

NORTH DEVON (VC 4), all Northham Burrows (SS 43) [see Cooter, 1990, for further details of this site of high conservation status] except where stated. Staphylinidae: *Ochtheophilum fracticorne* (Paykull) (!), litter on short turf, 1.iv.1997; **Aleochara verna* Say (?Nb), 30 at dog faeces, 1.iv.1997. Scarabaeidae: *Onthophagus nuchicornis* (Linnaeus) (!! Na), at dog faeces 1.iv.1997, horse faeces, 3.iv.1997; *Onthophagus similis* (Scriba) (!!), 2 at dog faeces, 1.iv.1997. Apionidae: *Apion laevicolle* Kirby (!! Na), Morthoe Point (SS 44), thin grazed turf with exposed bedrock, 2.iv.1997. Curculionidae: *Tychius squamulatus* Gyllenhal (Nb), foredune, 1.iv.1997; *Sibinia arenariae* Stephens (Nb), litter on short turf, 1.iv.1997; *Mecinus circulatus* (Marshall) (Nb), 2, 1.iv.1997.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE (VC 24). Leiodidae: *Agathidium seminulum* (Linnaeus) (!), Burnham Beeches (SU 98), in soil 15 cm deep under log, 19.viii.1996.

EAST GLOUCESTERSHIRE (VC 33). Carabidae: *Pterostichus macer* (Marshall) (!!), Ashchurch (SO 93), 40, riparian flood litter, 10.iv.1998. Staphylinidae: *Phloeonomus punctipennis* Thomson, Saintbury (SP 03), 7, with *Nudobius lentus* (Gravenhorst), amongst sawn logs of Scots Pine *Pinus sylvestris*, 5.vi.1998 [breaking the general oft-stated affinity of *P. punctipennis* with Magnoliiflorae]; **Lathrobium pallidum* von Nordmann (!! RDBK), Ashchurch (SO 93), riparian flood litter, 10.iv.1998; *Achenium humile* (Nicolai) (!! Nb), Ashchurch (SO 93), 22, riparian flood litter, 10.iv.1998; *Sunius propinquus* (Brisout), Ashchurch (SO 93), 54, riparian flood litter, 10.iv.1998; *Philonthus concinnus* (Gravenhorst) ab. *ochripennis* Gerhardt, Purton (SO 60), swept, estuarine grassland, 23.vi.1996; *Ocypus ater* Gravenhorst, Dumbleton (SP 03), 2 m up decayed bole of beech *Fagus sylvatica*, 5.x.1995; **Atheta aegra* (Heer) (N), Longdon Marsh (SO 83), male, flood litter, 16.i.1998 (DMG vide PFW). Elateridae: *Ampedus cinnabarinus* (Eschscholtz) (!! RDB3 AW1), Stanway (SP 03), 4 larvae and fragments of imago in beech, 3.ii.1997; *Procrocerus tibialis* (Boisduval & Lacordaire) (!! RDB3 AW1), Tewkesbury (SO 93), small breeding population in decayed heartwood of pollarded willow *Salix fragilis*, 17.iii.1997. Eucnemidae: *Epiphanius cornutus* (Eschscholtz), (!! ?N), Stanway (SP 03), imago, dead in pupal cell, *Larix kaempferi* (Lindley)

Carrière [new host-tree species], 3.ii.1997. Mycetophagidae: *Mycetophagus populi* Fabricius (! Na), Snowhill (SP 03), delignified ash *Fraxinus excelsior* wood, 12.iii.1997. Melandryidae: *Orchesia undulata* Kraatz (! AW3), Broadway (SP 13), amongst sawn oak wood, 26.ii.1997. Anthribidae: *Platyrhinus resinus* (Scopoli) (! Nb AW3), Snowhill (SP 03), 2, pollarded ash, 12.iii.1997 [*P. resinus* is now known to be widely dispersed on the Cotswold scarp slopes].

WEST GLOUCESTERSHIRE (VC 34). Oedemeridae: *Oedemera (Oncomera) femorata* (Fabricius) (!), Wye Gorge, Tidenham Chase (ST 59), dead in shed, 22.ix.1995, 18.ix.1996 (see Whitehead, 1989).

WORCESTERSHIRE (VC 37). Carabidae: *Carabus monilis* Fabricius (!!! Nb), Alfrick (SO 75), female, ancient grassland/woodland habitat mosaic, 21.vii.1997 (TC det. PFW); **Bembidion fumigatum* (Dufschmid) (! Nb), North Littleton (SP 04), riparian flood litter, 17.iii.1998; *Pterostichus (Poecilus) cupreus* (Linnaeus) (!), Bredon (SO 93), 40, flood litter, 24.ii.1998 [regional, ?short-term, climatically-induced decline, absent amongst 1750 flood-assembled beetles, Nafford (SO 94), 11.iv.1998]; *Pterostichus anthracinus* (Panzer) (! Nb), Pershore (SO 94), depauperate female, 8.5 mm in length, flood litter, 10.iv.1998 (DMG vide PFW); *Calathus cinctus* Motschulsky (regional !!), Devil's Spittleful (SO 87), heathland, 2.viii.1997 (DMG det. PFW) [second modern VC record]; *Amara anthobia* Villa (!), Worcester (SO 85), flood litter (GHG vide PFW) [second modern VC record]; **Amara praetermissa* (Sahlberg) (regional !! Nb), Devil's Spittleful (SO 87), heathland, 2.viii.1997 (DMG det. PFW); *Harpalus ardosiacus* Lutschnik (! Nb), Little Comberton (SO 94), Tungsten filament light, 2345 hrs. 19.vii.1996; M.V. light, 2, 8.vii.1997, 9.vii.1997 [increasingly frequent]; *Acupalpus exiguus* Dejean (! Nb), Bredon (SO 93), 28, riparian flood litter, 24.ii.1998; *Badister sodalis* (Dufschmid), Defford (SO 94), 46, riparian flood litter, 13.iv.1998; *Microlestes maurus* (Sturm), Great Comberton (SO 94), 10 in pores of detached sporophore of *Inonotus hispidus* (Bull. ex Fr.) P. Karst., under ash, 11.iii.1996.

Leiodidae: **Leiodes flavescens* (Schmidt) (!!! RDBI), Bredon's Norton (SO 93), female, Malaise Trap, 5.vi.1997 (EN per PH det. PFW conf. JC) (see Collier, 1997); **Leiodes gyllenhalii* (Stephens) (!!! RDBK), Bredon's Norton (SO 93), Malaise Trap, 26.vi.1997 (EN per PH det. PFW); *Colon dentipes* (Sahlberg) (! RDBK), Bredon's Norton (SO 93), 2, Malaise Trap, (EN per PH det. PS vide PFW); **Colon zebei* Kraatz (!!! RDBK), Beckford (SO 93), on disturbed sparsely vegetated colluvial sands, 12.vii.1991 (vide JC); **Sogda suturalis* (Zetterstedt) (!!! RDBK), Bredon's Norton (SO 93), Malaise Trap, 26.vi.1997 (EN per PH det. PS vide PFW); *Agathidium marginatum* Sturm (! N), Little Comberton (SO 94), amongst wet detritus under mat of *Silene maritima* With. on rockery, 12.vi.1998; *Agathidium nigrinum* Sturm (!), Tiddesley Wood, Pershore (SO 94), male, pitfall trap in woodland, 24.xii.1996 (DMG); *Choleva spadicea* (Sturm), Tiddesley Wood, Pershore (SO 94), pitfall in woodland, 24.xii.1996. Silphidae: *Dendroxena quadrimaculata* (Scopoli) (!!! Nb), near Worcester (SO 86), 4.v.1998. Staphylinidae: *Coprophilus striatulus* (Fabricius) (!!!), Defford (SO 94), riparian flood litter, 13.iv.1998; *Oxyporus rufus* (Linnaeus) (!), Little Comberton (SO 94), sunning on forsythia leaf, 12.viii.1996, [apparently increasingly scarce]; *Lathrobium ripicola* Czwalińska (N), Nafford (SO 94) riparian flood litter, 11.iv.1998; *Lathrobium pallidum* von Nordmann (! RDBK), Kinsham (SO 93), riparian flood litter, 10.iv.1998; *Astenus lyonesis* (Joy), North Littleton (SP 04), 28 at one spot, riparian flood litter, 17.iii.1998; *Philonthus jurgans* Tottenham (?), Tiddesley Wood, Pershore (SO 94), pitfall trap, 11.iv.1997, 18.iv.1997 (DMG det. PFW); *Ocyopus ater* Gravenhorst, Elmley Castle (SO 94), head capsule in wood mould high in bole of oak *Quercus robur*, 7.iii.1997; Wyre Forest (SO 77), dead under bark of *Prunus* "Early Rivers", 9.vii.1997 (EN) 1997 (see Whitehead, 1997, for discussion of *O. ater* as an arboreal species); *Quedius puncticollis* (Thomson) (Nb), Marsh Common, Defford (SO 94), swept, species-rich grassland, 12.vi.1996; *Sepedophilus bipunctatus*

(Gravenhorst) (! Nb), Wyre Forest (SO 77), in heartwood of moribund cherry tree *Prunus* "Early Rivers", 9.vii.1997 (EN); *Atheta obfuscata* (Gravenhorst) (!! N), Nafford (SO 94), male in flood litter, 13.iv.1998; *Atheta hypnorum* (Kiesenwetter), Shrawley Wood (SO 86), leaf litter, 10.xi.1997 (DMG det. PFW); *Zyras laticollis* (Märkel), Wick (SO 94), 2, flooded out of nests of the ant *Lasius fuliginosus* (Latreille), 10.iv.1998; *Oxyopoda spectabilis* Märkel (N), Tiddesley Wood, Pershore, (SO 94) pitfall trap, 7.i.1997, 4.ii.1997 (DMG); **Oxyopoda vittata* Märkel (!), Tiddesley Wood, Pershore (SO 94), pitfall trap, 11.iii.1997 (DMG); *Aleochara brevipennis* (Gravenhorst) (!! N), Defford (SO 94), flood litter, 13.iv.1998; *Aleochara ruficornis* Gravenhorst (! N), Tiddesley Wood, Pershore (SO 94), pitfall trap, 8.iv.1997, 20.v.1997 (DMG); Defford (SO 94), 2, riparian flood litter, 13.iv.1998; *Aleochara verna* Say (?Nb), North Littleton (SP 04), calcareous grassland tussock, 6.iv.1998. Scarabaeidae: *Aphodius ictericus* (Laicharting) (!), Little Comberton (SO 94), at Tungsten filament light, 2300 hrs, 18°C, 16.viii.1997; *Amphimallon solstitialis* (Linnaeus) (!), Alfrick (SO 75), c. 250 flying around oak trees, 7.vii.1997 (SC) [such periodically high populations play an important natural role in regulating the structure of vegetation]; *Gnorimus nobilis* (Linnaeus) (!!! RDB2), Pershore, 7.vii.1998 (KM) (see Meiklejohn, 1987; Whitehead, 1990).

Elateridae: *Ampedus pomorum* (Herbst) (!! Nb), Defford (SO 94), 3, riparian flood litter, 13.iv.1998; *Paraphotistus nigricornis* (Panzer) (!! RDB3), Upton-on-Severn (SO 83), 196 swept, floodplain grassland, 12.vi.1996 (see Whitehead, 1996b). Dermestidae: *Globicornis nigripes* (Fabricius) (!!! RDB1 AW2), Wyre Forest (SO 77), larva under bark of cherry *Prunus avium*, 9.vii.1997 (EN). Anobiidae: *Xestobium rufillosum* (DeGeer) (!! AW3), Wyre Forest (SO 77), breeding in dead pollarded oak *Quercus petraea*, 23.vii.1997 (EN); *Gastrallus immarginatus* (Müller) (!!! RDB1 AW1), Great Comberton (SO 94) single larval gallery in bark parenchyma of large Field Maple, *Acer campestre*, 11.iii.1996 [the ability of this species to form very small non-persistent populations has been confirmed in *West Gloucester (VC 33) during 1998, PFW]. Dasytidae: **Dasytes flavicollis* (Olivier) (syn. *Dasytes puncticollis* Reitter) (! Nb), Worcester (SO 85), town garden on minerogenic sediments, 1.vii.1997; Melyridae: *Axinotarsus ruficollis* (Olivier) (!), Wyre Forest (SO 77), 3 on *Prunus avium*, almost certainly host tree, 9.vii.1997 [*A. ruficollis* oviposits in bark crevices on tree trunks] (EN); **Troglops cephalotes* (Olivier) var. *cruentus* Kiesenwetter (naturalised), Little Comberton (SO 94), in house at night, 30.vi.1997 (DMG det. PFW) (see Key, 1983; James, 1998). Rhizophagidae: *Monotoma brevicollis* Aubé, Bredon's Norton (SO 93), swept, alluvial grassland, 30.v.1996. Cryptophagidae: *Atomaria strandi* Johnson (! N), Wyre Forest (SO 77), teneral, on *Malus* "Keswick Codling", 21.vii.1997 (EN det. PFW conf. AAA). Coccinellidae: *Anatis ocellata* (Linnaeus), Little Comberton (SO 94), at flowers of *Prunus* "Ama-no-gawa", 4.v.1998. Endomychidae: *Lycoperdina bovistae* (Fabricius) (regional !!! RDB3), Alfrick (SO 75), pair in *Gastrum striatum* DC., 23.x.1997, in *Gastrum fimbriatum* Fr., 25.x.1997, several in *Gastrum triplex* Jungh., 30.x.1997 [new host-genus in the Lycoperdidae], in *Lycoperdon perlatum* Pers. per Pers. and *Lycoperdon pyriforme* Schaeff. per Pers., 30.x.1997 (DMG, SC, PFW). Tenebrionidae: *Alphitobius diaperinus* (Panzer), Little Comberton, (SO 94), at Tungsten filament bulb, 23.vii.1996; Wyre Forest (SO 77), breeding (imagines and fragments), wood mould in *Malus* bole, 9.vii.1997 (EN); *Prionychus ater* (Fabricius) (! Nb), Wyre Forest (SO 77), 65 larvae and fragments of 35 imagines in organic fill under nest of Jackdaw *Corvus monedula* in decayed cherry tree *Prunus* "Waterloo", 10.vii.1997 (EN). Melandryidae: *Melandrya caraboides* (Linnaeus) (! Nb AW3), Wyre Forest (SO 77), under bark of cherry tree, *Prunus* "Waterloo", 10.vii.1997 (EN); Pershore (SO 94), running on woodland path, 27.v.1998 (KM det. PFW from high-quality transparency); *Osphya bipunctata* (Fabricius) (! RDB3), Pershore (SO 94), pair on flowers of hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, 2.vi.1996 (GHG). Scaptiidae: *Anaspis maculata* Fourcroy, Evesham town (SP 04), larvae in "forsythia galls", 7.v.1998. Oedemeridae: *Ischnomera sanguinicollis* (Fabricius) (! Nb AW1), Little

Comberton (SO 94), at flowers of *Robinia pseudoacacia* "Tortuosa", 17.vi.1996; *Oedemera (Oncomera) femorata* (Fabricius) (! Nb), Malvern Wells, (SO 74), female at light, 1.viii.1996, presumably early emergent (PH vide PFW). Aderidae: *Aderus populneus* (Creutzer in Panzer) (! Nb), Great Comberton (SO 94), recently dead in fissure in trunk of oak *Quercus robur*, amongst dried fragments of *Fistulina hepatica* (Schaeff.) ex Fr., 11.iii.1996. Cerambycidae: *Pachytodes cerambyciformis* (Schrank) (!), near Worcester (SO 86), 2 on flowers of Hogweed *Heracleum sphondylium*, 1.vi.1998; 20.vi.1998; Alfrick (SO 75), 12.vi.1998 (KM); **Corymbia rubra* (Linnaeus) (regional !!! naturalised; *Urwaldrelikt* in pristine habitats in continental Europe), Pershore (SO 94), 19.vii.1997 (KM vide PFW) (see Uthoff-Kaufmann, 1987); *Leptura quadrifasciata* (Linnaeus) (! AW3), near Worcester (SO 86), on flowers of Hogweed, 27.vii.1997 (KM); *Aromia moschata* (Linnaeus) (! Nb), Pershore (SO 94), 4.vii.1998 (KM) [modern record for lower Avon catchment]; *Pogonocherus hispidus* (Linnaeus), Tiddesley Wood, Pershore (SO 94), depauperate male 3.6 mm long, pitfall trap, 8.iv.1997 (DMG det. PFW); *Agapanthia villosoides* (DeGeer) (!), Upton Warren (SO 96), breeding population on Hogweed, 21.vi.1998, 2nd VC record (KM) [see Lane, 1996, for details of the contiguous and presently expansive Warwickshire population]; *Stenostola dubia* (Laicharting) (! Nb), Shrawley Wood (SO 86), second half of 19th Century [Victoria County History of Worcestershire, 1901, as *S. ferrea* (Schrank)], extant, on *Thelypteris limbosperma* (Bellardi ex All.) H.P. Fuchs, 17.v.1993 (GHG, PFW); near Worcester (SO 86), 1.vi.1998 (KM det. PFW) [emphasising especially that the elytra of this example were burnished black, without any trace of metallic coloration, creating some identification difficulties, prior to its on-site release].

Chrysomelidae: *Donacia vulgaris* Zschach (!), Abbey Meadow Fishpool, Redditch (SP 06), pitfall trap, 19.v.1998 (WW), near Worcester (SO 86), 1.vi.1998 (KM det. PFW) [only 1 previous VC record in 1982]; *Cryptocephalus bipunctatus* (Linnaeus) (! Nb), Martley (SO 76), in cop., 30.v.1997 (KM det. PFW); *Galeruca tanacetii* (Linnaeus) (!), Romsley (SO 97), outbreak, literally thousands on ancient pasture (AF vide PFW), e.g. 32 clustered on one plant of *Centaurea nigra* L. [*G. tanacetii* is distinctly localised in VC 37, and such outbreaks are likely to be of regular occasional occurrence in optimal conditions in good habitat, and probably help regulate the structure and composition of the vegetation]; *Chrysolina oricalcia* (Müller) (! Nb), Worcester (SO 85), 3, riparian flood litter, 6.i.1998 (JWM). Anthribidae: *Platyrhinus resinosa* (Scopoli) (! Nb AW3), Kinsham (SO 93), several imagines in Field Maple *Acer campestre* infested with *Hypoxyton rubiginosum* (Pers.) Fr. (Ascomycotina: Sphaerales: Xylariaceae), 26.iv.1994, probably breeding population [previously unrecorded fungal host, see also Whitehead, 1991a] (KT); Little Comberton (SO 94), in flight, 9.vi.1997; Alfrick (SO 75), 15.iii.1998 (KM); *Platystomos albinus* (Linnaeus) (! Nb AW3), near Worcester (SO 86), 24.v.1998 (KM det. PFW). Attelabidae: *Apoderus coryli* (Linnaeus), Wyre Forest (SO 77), rolling leaves of alder *Alnus glutinosa*, 16.vii.1997 (EN). Apionidae: *Exapion ulicis* (Forster), Bredon (SO 93), Upstones Meadow, on flower of *Rhinanthus minor* L., 20.v.1992 [not rarely on flowers other than *Ulex*; see Cheshire (VC 58)] (KT). Curculionidae: *Strophosoma faber* (Herbst) (! Nb), Upton-on-Severn (SO 83), 8, floodplain grassland, 8.vi.1996 [increasingly scarce]; *Tropiphorus terricola* (Newman) (! Nb), Wyre Forest (SO 77), species-rich grassland, 16.vii.1997 (EN); **Tanymecus palliatus* (Fabricius) (! Nb), Upton-on-Severn, (SO 83) 3, floodplain grassland, 8.vi.1996; *Plinthus caliginosus* (Fabricius) (! Na), Pershore (SO 94), woodland edge, 27.ix.1996 [increasingly scarce]; *Phloeophagus lignarius* (Marsham) (!), Bredon's Norton (SO 93), in feeble flight, high humidity, 26°C, 8.vii.1997; *Stereocorynes truncorum* (Germar) (! Na AW1), Great Comberton (SO 94), in decayed heartwood of ash, 11.iii.1996; *Sitophilus oryzae* (Linnaeus) (introduced), Little Comberton (SO 94), on flower of cultivated *Centaurea cineraria*, 30.vi.1997 [increasingly observed in VC 37]; *Notaris scirpi* (Fabricius) (! Nb), Upton-on-Severn (SO 83),

2, floodplain grassland, 12.vi.1996; *Coeliodes ruber* (Marsham) (! Nb), Wyre Forest (SO 77), on oak *Quercus petraea*, 16.vii.1997 (EN); *Baris lepidii* Germar (! Na), Upton-on-Severn (SO 83), floodplain grassland, 8.vi.1996; Evesham town (SP 04), in compost heap, 8.vii.1997 [see Whitehead, 1991b]. Scolytidae: *Pteleobius vittatus* Bedel (!), Little Comberton (SO 94), substantial breeding population in high crown of moribund elm *Ulmus procera*, 10.i.1996; 102 imagines emerged from logged cordwood, 2.iv.1996.

WARWICKSHIRE (VC 38), all Drayton (SP 15), pitfalls on arable (SC det. PFW). Leiodidae: *Choleva oblonga* Latreille (! N), 18.xi.1993; 2.xii.1993; 3, 23.xii.1993. Staphylinidae: *Zyras funestus* (Gravenhorst) (!), 19.v.1994; 2, 9.vi.1994; *Ilyobates subopacus* (Palm) (! N), 24.vi.1993; 14.vii.1993; 29.vii.1993; 19.viii.1993; 6, 12.v.1994; 4, 19.v.1994; 3, 26.v.1994; 2.vi.1994; 9.vi.1994 [increasingly localised and scarce generally]; *Oxygona tarda* Sharp (*sensu* Zerche *in litt.*), 14.vii.1993; 29.vii.1993; 2, 5.viii.1993; 12.viii.1993; 2, 12.v.1994; 19.v.1994; 4, 2.vi.1994; 2, 9.vi.1994; 4.viii.1994; 7, 25.v.1995; 1.vi.1995; 4, 8.vi.1995 [according to Whitehead, 1996a, this taxon requires specialist whole-range taxonomic review]. Pselaphidae: *Pselaphus heisei* (Herbst) (!), 31.iii.1994. Cryptophagidae: *Atomaria nigriventris* Stephens (N), 18.xi.1993, 2.xii.1993, 23.xii.1993, 27.i.1994, 10.iii.1994, 31.iii.1994, 21.iv.1994, 7.vii.1994 [apparently third VC site].

SHROPSHIRE (VC 40). Colydiidae: *Bitoma crenata* (Fabricius), Stiperstones (SO 30), ancient Holly *Ilex aquifolium* woodland (exposed site at 515 m altitude), under bark of *Ilex*, new host tree, 16.x.1996.

CARDIGANSHIRE (VC 46). Staphylinidae: **Lathrobium ripicola* Czwalina (N), Aberystwyth (SN 58), gravel braid, Afon Ystwyth, 6.ix.1996.

CAERNARVONSHIRE (VC 49), all Great Orme (Y Gogarth) (SH 87). Nitidulidae: *Meligethes brevis* Sturm (! RDBK), on *Helianthemum nummularium* (L.) Miller, 9.viii.1997 [see Kirk-Spriggs, 1991]; *Meligethes exilis* Sturm (! Nb), on *Campanula rotundifolia* L., 9.viii.1997.

CHESHIRE (VC 58), all Hoylake (SJ 28), 19.vii.1996. Apionidae: *Perapion affine* Kirby (! Na); *Exapion ulicis* (Forster), both on *Anthyllis vulneraria* L. on fore-dunes. Curculionidae: *Grypus equiseti* (Fabricius) (Nb), brackish tall-herb fen; **Pelenomus zumpti* (Wagner) (! Na), 2, amongst *Glaux maritima* L., saltings.

ANGUS (VC 90). Cantharidae: *Cantharis obscura* Linnaeus (Nb), Glen Esk, Gannochy (NO 57), frequent, 23.v.1998 (JWM vide PFW).

Exotica

WORCESTERSHIRE (VC 37). Scarabaeidae: **Anomala cupripes* (Hope), Pershore (SO 93), dead in television imported from eastern Asia, x.1997 (per PH det. M.L. Cox). Bostrichidae: **Bostrychoplites cornutus* (Olivier), Malvern (SO 74), emerged x.1997, from wooden bowl originating in Kenya during iv.1996 (PH det. PFW). Cerambycidae: **Chlorophorus annularis* (Fabricius), Alfrick (SO 75), emerged x.1995, from furniture originating in Bali, Indonesia (SC det. PFW).

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A new beetle habitat?

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On 3rd March 1998 I was working an area of waste ground near Maidstone (TQ 75J) which is mainly used for dumping building rubbish. I found a pile of decaying chipboard, about 20 mm thick roofing grade material, some of which was bitumen coated on one side. The pile was some 20 cm deep and covered about a square metre. The inner parts of the material were moist, dark brown with decay, and with a few white fungal hyphae. It broke up easily in the hand, although it was not crumbly, and was of even condition throughout.

On examination I found an adult *Endomychus coccineus* (Linnaeus) (Endomychidae) and one *Acrilus nigricornis* (Hoffmann) (Histeridae), both of them between the outer layers. One of the pieces of board broke on removal and to my surprise there was a large gallery 8-10 mm wide. More galleries were found containing twelve larvae 7-8 mm in diameter and 3 cm long. I initially thought that they were Stag Beetle larvae *Lucanus cervus* (Linnaeus) (Lucanidae), which I have recorded from nearby. However, on showing some to Mr Eric Philp he thought them more likely to be the Lesser Stag Beetle *Dorcus parallelipedus* (Linnaeus) (Lucanidae) due to their size.

It is interesting that the beetles had colonised a man-made product, although of a mainly natural material, and the wood content must be sufficiently nutritious and the glue and other contaminants sufficiently degraded or harmless to support this colony. The level of decay and humidity must be quite important, and perhaps could be reproduced for captive breeding and conservation purposes. This habitat may prove useful to Coleoptera and other invertebrates as a source of food and not just as shelter, and would warrant further investigation on field trips.

Further observation of this colony has unfortunately been curtailed by the site being entirely bulldozed, no doubt to enhance the landscape.

Acknowledgement

I would like to thank Eric Philp for his help in identifying the larvae.

Two *Apions* (Brentidae) new to Cumbria

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The following beetles were found during 1998 and appear to be new to Cumbria and VC 70 (Cumberland). A check in the local collections of Coleoptera in the Tullie House Museum at Carlisle revealed no specimens from the county and they were not recorded by Day (1923).

Apion (*Omphalapion*) *hookerorum* Kirby: one specimen was tapped from Scentless Mayweed *Tripleurospermum inodorum* (Linnaeus) C.H. Schultz-Bip, growing along the upper shore-line just south of Ravenglass (SD 0895) on 12th June. According to Morris (1990) *A. hookerorum* is widely distributed throughout England and Wales, but is rarer in the north where it has been recorded from Chester and parts of Yorkshire. In a recent work on the Brentidae of Northern Europe, Gøngset (1998) states that the larvae of *A. hookerorum* develop inside the flower heads of *T. perforatum* where they feed on the ripening seeds. Two larvae of *A. hookerorum* were found inside two flower heads of *T. inodorum* in a small sample of heads collected from the Ravenglass site on 9th September. The two larvae were removed from the individual flower heads and placed on damp filter paper and kept in a plastic container. One larva pupated on 20th September and the adult emerged during the first week of October. The second larva did not reach maturity and died on 12th September.

Apion (*Protapion*) *onoidis* Gyllenhal: this weevil was found at two sites in West Cumbria; Maryport (NY 0235) on 1st July and Parton, near Whitehaven (NX 9720) on 3rd July. In each case several males and females were tapped from flowering plants of Spiny Restharrow *Ononis spinosa* Linnaeus growing in well-vegetated areas along the upper shore. According to Morris (1990) *A. onoidis* is widely distributed in England and Wales as far north as Yorkshire. It has also been recorded from Scotland, but the records require confirmation.

Acknowledgement

I wish to thank Stephen Hewitt, Keeper of Natural Sciences at Carlisle Museum, for kindly allowing me access to the Coleoptera collections.

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An answer to the problem of noxious insects and habitats

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The entomological pooter is a very useful collecting aid, but it does have one major drawback. When collecting such creatures as ants, some species of bugs, and a few beetle species, amounts of defence chemicals of varying types and unpleasantness can be drawn into the collector's lungs. My answer to this problem is an in-line fuel filter from your local car spares shop; the type supplied by my local shop has a paper filter element in a plastic case with inlet and outlets of stepped diameter to fit a range of tubes. I just push the filter into the end of the pooter tube and use the other end as the mouthpiece. It is important to use the filter in the same direction each time to prevent contamination. These filters were under £3.00 when last bought and at that price, are disposable. Other uses will include collection from carrion, fungi and other unwholesome habitats.

The ecology of *Hypopycna rufula* (Erichson, 1840) (Staphylinidae)

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Introduction

The ecology of *Hypopycna rufula* (Erichson) has not been clarified; it is a rather rare and elusive beetle, which may be benefiting from recent human culture-effects. This paper throws new light on, and overviews, its ecology.

Geography and ecology of *H. rufula* in Britain and Europe

Allen (1959), as part of an interesting and extensive account of the Coleoptera of a suburban garden at Blackheath, London, found *H. rufula* between September and November "in vegetable refuse, especially grass litter, under bricks and boards in damp places, rarely by sweeping, in dead leaves, and in loamy soil". The record by Eustace from Colyton, South Devon, on 30.x.1947, apparently lacks detailed supporting data, but Williams' (1979) specimen was swept from short-turf downland at Otford, West Kent, on 14.x.1979. Owen (1993) reviewed these records and mapped the British distribution of *H. rufula* at that time.

Lohse (1964) regarded *H. rufula* as very rare in Central Europe, occurring especially in the southern part of the area. Schülke *et al.* (1992), in their Brandenburg staphylinid "Red List", placed *H. rufula* in their most endangered category, giving the habitat as "moos und rinde" in forests. At the same time, *H. rufula* was recorded (Assing, 1992) from islands of trees and shrubs (actually amenity plantings) in urban Hannover, where it occurred in relatively small numbers. It is unknown in some Central European countries, but this should not be regarded as proof of absence. It is also found in southern Europe, including on some of the larger Mediterranean Sea islands.

On 29.i.1993, an example of *H. rufula* was found on a fungoid Sycamore *Acer* log at Westmancote, Worcestershire (SO 93; 110 m O.D.) (cited by Owen, *op. cit.*), 150 km N.W. of the nearest record at that time. This log was colonised by the fungi *Cylindrobasidium laeve* (Pers.) Chamuris and *Flammulina velutipes* (Curt. ex Fr.) Karst. The niche is comparable to that of the specimen mentioned by Owen (*op. cit.*), found under the fungoid bark of a fallen trunk of beech *Fagus sylvatica* in Surrey. On the basis of these combined records, there is a suggestion that *H. rufula* may have an affinity with fallen trees, fallen wood or timber, in a reasonably advanced state of fungal colonisation.

English records of *H. rufula* with first confirmation of diet

Two further Worcestershire records of *H. rufula* can now be provided, one of which confirms these indications for its diet and ecology. One was found on 4.x.1995 at Broadway (SP 13, 104 m O.D.), the present northernmost British record, under a mat of windblown ivy *Hedera* on a flagstone adjacent to a compost heap. On 14.xi.1995, a specimen was discovered at Beggar Boys Wetland, Westmancote (SO 93, 38 m O.D.) (Whitehead, 1996), under the loose bark of a log of Crack Willow, *Salix fragilis*, in wet carr. This example was wallowing in the sooty spores of a hyphomycete fungus, *Cladosporium* species indet., and was collected. The gut contents were expressed and examined under a high-power binocular microscope, and were found to be composed entirely of identical fungal spores. In their overview, Hammond & Lawrence (1989) make no reference to mycophagy in omaliine Staphylinidae.

An affinity with fungal spore-masses, on or close to the ground, could explain the habitat observations which Allen (*op. cit.*) and Owen (*op. cit.*) provided for *H. rufula*. Although it cannot yet be maintained that *H. rufula* is exclusively mycophagous, the evidence from Beggar Boys Wetland is suggestive for the diet of certain other omaliine staphylinids. From the very large number of records of *Omalius*, for example, associated with a wide variety of fungi, it would be difficult not to infer some mycophagy.

The relationship of *H. rufula* to the ancient woodland biotope

A further question which might be asked is whether *H. rufula* should be considered as an Ancient Woodland Indicator (AWI) species, bearing in mind the likelihood that humid woodland may have been its ancestral niche. The associated invertebrates on the Westmancote Sycamore logs during early 1993 formed a facies diagnostic of both subcortical fungal processes, and fungal processes on wood in contact with the ground. These included (maximum count of imagines in parentheses, * = breeding confirmed): **Aradus depressus* (Fabricius) (Hemiptera, Aradidae) (2 nymphs); Histeridae: *Paromalus flavicornis* (Herbst) (1). Staphylinidae: *Dropephylla ioptera* (Stephens) (1); **Siagonium quadricorne* Kirby (12); *Habrocerus capillaricornis* (Gravenhorst) (1); **Homalota plana* (Gyllenhal) (44). Rhizophagidae: *Rhizophagus perforatus* Erichson (6). Silvanidae: *Uleiota planata* (Linnaeus) (Na) (2). Biphyllidae: *Diplocoelus fagi* Guérin-Méneville (Nb) (1). Endomychidae: **Endomychus coccineus* (Linnaeus) (6, 10 larvae). Colydiidae: *Bitoma crenata* (Fabricius) (1). Tenebrionidae: *Scaphidema metallicum* (Fabricius) (Nb) (1). Pyrochroidae: **Pyrochroa serraticornis* (Scopoli) (2 larvae). Of these, *U. planata*, *D. fagi* and *B. crenata* are presently regarded as AWI species.

It may be inferred (the complete absence of a fossil record is unhelpful) that *H. rufula* was originally more closely tied to damp, possibly riparian forests, but is now best placed (Allen, *op. cit.*, Assing, *op. cit.*) amongst those numerous species of beetle which have become more curytropic, especially in recent decades, very largely as a consequence of human culture-effects. *H. rufula* may be indicative of ancient woodland biotopes, but cannot now be regarded as everywhere diagnostic of them.

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A record of *Oxythyrea funesta* (Poda) (Scarabaeidae) in London

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Whilst collecting insects on a small, sunny railway embankment nature reserve in the London borough of Camden, Middlesex, near Regent's Park, on 5th August 1998, I spotted an almost black object buried in the flower head of a Creeping Thistle *Cirsium arvense* (Linnaeus). A worker bumble bee *Bombus pascuorum* (Scopoli) was trying to forage over the top of this object which I at first took to be a blackened gall or a large bird dropping. The bee soon left and I quickly investigated and collected the object into a tube. It was clearly a chafer, but not one I had seen before. At home it keyed easily to *Oxythyrea* in Jessop (1986), only *O. funesta* being recorded before in Britain as a vagrant or accidental.

Darren Mann, national Scarabaeoidea recorder, checked that this was not one of the other European species and informed me that there have been no more records in the U.K. other than those given in Allen (1967), i.e. for the late 1950s in rural Cheshire; Allen tended to think that the species might have been breeding there.

A map of records in France (DuChatenet, 1986; no. 509) shows that this species occurs immediately on the other side of the English Channel. It is thus plausible that the specimen I collected was a migrant individual or had bred from beetles flying across the Channel. The alternative explanation, that it was imported on flowers, could also be correct. Only further records in the wild away from markets and florists will confirm whether this insect is established in the area. London has a warm climate and there is enough dead wood to support larvae and flowers for the adults are plentiful. Allen (1967) notes this species occurring on *Rhododendron* flowers and since these flower in April-May, readers may look out for this species from early in the season onwards.

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank Darren Mann, national Scarabaeoidea recorder at Oxford University Museum of Natural History, for confirming my identification and suggesting that the record was worth publishing. I also wish to thank Trevor James, Hertfordshire beetle recorder, for drawing my attention to the French reference.

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Saprosites mendax Blackburn (Scarabaeidae) in a north London woodland

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This naturalised scarabaeid does not seem to have been recorded previously from north of the River Thames, as the records given in Jessop (1986) for Arundel, Sussex, Richmond Park, Surrey and west London, still stand as the known distribution (D. Mann, *pers. comm.*). Recently, Richard Jones (*pers. comm.*) found it under logs in Battersea Park, Wandsworth, this site being situated in central London south of the Thames. It was something of a surprise, therefore, to find a single adult behind dead oak *Quercus* bark at Queen's Wood, Haringey, in north London (TQ 288886), approx. 12 km north of Battersea, on 10th January 1994. The beetle

was in a damp situation low down, the bark being quite loose with woodlice present. The under surface of dead oak bark in this area tends to be riddled with the workings of *Dryocoetinus villosus* (Fabricius) (Scolytidae).

Tottenham's observations of *Saprosites* in the workings of *Dorcus parallelipipedus* (Linnaeus) and *Sinodendron cylindricum* (Linnaeus) (Lucanidae) at Arundel Park in 1930 (Jessop, *ibid.*) suggest a possible commensal relationship between these species. I was not aware of *Dorcus* being present in the same tree, although it is present at Queen's Wood and elsewhere in the area.

I also took a second specimen of *Saprosites* in a low-level, black curtain-netting design, flight-interception trap (made by Marris House Nets), on 26th June 1998, at Highgate Wood (TQ 283887) which is almost contiguous with Queen's Wood. It would be interesting to obtain records of this species' continued spread in Middlesex and from there, perhaps, into Hertfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire or Essex.

Acknowledgement

I wish to thank Darren Mann, national Scarabaeoidea recorder at Oxford University Museum of Natural History, for confirming my identification and suggesting that the records were worth publishing.

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Raymondionymus marqueti (Aubé) (Raymondionymidae) in north London

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While looking for beetles under some black polythene mulch, used to suppress weeds in a willow *Salix* planted area around a pond in Waterlow Park, Highgate, London Borough of Camden (TQ 286872) on 23rd April 1998, I came across what I at first thought was a reddish, teneral *Euophryum confine* (Broun) (Curculionidae). There are no available beetle records for even this ubiquitous species in many London parks, so I took the specimen home as I was suspicious about its identity and to make sure it ended up on my list! On closer examination I could see that the specimen had no eyes and had markedly emarginate tibiae. I showed the mounted specimen to Max Barclay, who is doing a Ph.D. on weevil taxonomy at the Natural History Museum, London, and who immediately recognised it as *Raymondionymus marqueti*.

John Owen has been trying to encourage recording of this species (Owen, 1997), and other soil-dwelling beetles, by placing hypogean traps (Owen, 1995) in various sites. The above record appears to be the first from north of the Thames. The beetle is flightless and slow-moving. Waterlow Park certainly contains Lawson's Cypress, mentioned in Owen (1997) as a hostplant, and many other ornamental plants, shrubs and trees, so introduction with plants or soil has undoubtedly been the transport mechanism to the site in this case. It is interesting to note that the original British record of *Raymondionymus* was of one walking on the surface of the soil at Kew Gardens, which Owen (1997) stated was uncharacteristic behaviour. All records since then have been in hypogean traps or in well-rotted tree roots at 50 cm depth. The above record at the surface (albeit under black polythene) suggests that, at times, the adults are active at or near the surface.

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank Max Barclay for identifying the specimen and Richard Thompson for confirming that this is the only species of the genus known in Britain. I would also like to thank John Owen for his encouragement and for providing copies of his papers.

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Ilyobates subopacus Palm, 1935 (Staphylinidae) in Staffordshire

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A survey of Oakwood Pastures, Staffordshire (SK 160212), was undertaken by the author on behalf of the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust in 1997. Oakwood Pastures is a small area of wood-pasture managed by the Trust. It is surrounded by further areas of wood-pasture, coniferous woodland and broad-leaved plantation. The pasture beneath the trees consists mainly of improved grassland and semi-improved acidic grassland, with a sandy substrate on the more strongly sloping areas.

A specimen of *Ilyobates subopacus* was pooted from a sandy path in acidic grassland on 1st May 1997. By examination of the genitalia this was identified using Lohse (1974) and later confirmed by D. Lott at a British Entomological & Natural History Society meeting. Using data held by M. Waterhouse, this species was confirmed as a new county record. *Hemicoelus fulvicornis* (Sturm) (Anobiidae) was also caught on site and confirmed as also being a new county record; maps sent to me by Keith Alexander suggest that this species is more common in the south of England.

In 1998 an honours project was undertaken by Mr P. Savage within Burnt Wood Site of Special Scientific Interest (SJ 738353). The project mainly consisted of pitfall trapping within coniferous woodland, semi-natural broadleaved woodland and heathy glades. A number of specimens were sent to the author for identification: one female *Ilyobates* sp. was trapped between 20th and 27th July in established broadleaved woodland consisting of oak *Quercus* and birch *Betula* with a bilberry *Vaccinium* and bramble *Rubus* understorey; one male *Ilyobates subopacus*, confirmed by examination of the aedeagus, was trapped between 14th and 21st June in a young oak plantation with a bracken *Pteridium* and bramble understorey.

It is interesting to note that neither of these sites fit the description given in Hyman (1994) of the beetle's usual habitats. Both were dry sites, not particularly close to any wetlands. There also seems to be little similarity between the two areas, i.e. one in dry grassland under scant tree cover and the other in woodland. Is this beetle perhaps more common than previously thought, and not habitat-specific?

Acknowledgements

Thanks to D. Lott for confirming the original record, to M. Waterhouse for the use of his Staffordshire records and to K. Alexander for information on *Hemicoelus fulvicornis*.

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Strangalia quadrifasciata (Linnaeus) (Cerambycidae): an anomalous habitat in Nottinghamshire

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Strangalia quadrifasciata is an insect commonly encountered in Nottinghamshire in and around Sherwood Forest where I have, on occasion, found it emerging from large fallen ancient oaks *Quercus*. However in this brief note I record its presence, over a period of several years, in an area that may at first glance seem rather transient in nature.

The site, near the village of Shelford, Nottinghamshire (SK 651413), is adjacent to the River Trent and regularly floods. These floods in turn bring with them large amounts of debris ranging from twigs to railway sleepers and on occasion whole tree stumps of some considerable size. This refuse accumulates at the site, which consists of a semi-permanent pool (dependant on regular flooding) and contains large quantities of dead wood. The pool and dead wood are surrounded by old *Salix* and hawthorn *Crataegus*. A predominantly ash *Fraxinus* wood is within 200 m.

S. quadrifasciata was first found on 4.vii.1996 when one individual was sighted running over a rotten oak stump. In 1997 I observed several specimens on 12.vii.1997, and again in 1998 both larvae and pre-emergent pupae were discovered in well-rotted and at times waterlogged oak. My fears as to their loss down the Trent and into the North Sea due to new floods have however been unfounded; the floods of Christmas 1997 and again at Easter 1998 failed to remove the larvae-containing dead wood. It has also become apparent from observations during these floods that *S. quadrifasciata* larvae can withstand periods of several weeks immersion. With the ability of *S. quadrifasciata* to utilise well rotten wood for several years and the likely advent of further floods bringing new pabulum, I believe that this non-woodland habitat should be able to continue to support this attractive beetle for several years to come.

Rhizophagus picipes (Olivier) (Rhizophagidae) new to Cornwall

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A single specimen of this rare beetle was found beneath sappy bark on a recently fallen oak *Quercus* branch in Greystone Wood (SX 364788), E. Cornwall, 28.iii.1991. The oaks along the narrow alluvial flat of the River Tamar here are large old standards unlike the relict old oak coppice of the steep slopes above.

This may be the first record for S.W. England — although Hyman (1992) includes South Devon in its distribution, Peacock (1977) gives this vice-county record as questionable. A review of records of saproxylic beetles held by the Cornish Biological Records Unit (CBRU) revealed no local records (Alexander, 1991).

Acknowledgement

My thanks to Stella Turk for access to the CBRU database.

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***Judolia cerambyciformis* (Schrank) (Cerambycidae) in Midlothian**

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Along a trackway leading from Manse Road, Roslin (VC 83; NT 281645), on the 15th June 1996, I observed an unfamiliar flying insect hovering over a hawthorn *Crataegus* hedge and settling on the blossom. I was able to secure a specimen and identified it as *Judolia cerambyciformis* using the keys in Hickin (1963) and the illustrations in Harde (1984) and Lyneborg (1977). On visiting the site the next day I observed the beetles flying about in the vicinity of an uprooted mature beech *Fagus* tree opposite the hawthorn hedge. I found the beetles active again at the same site on the 30th May 1997, confirming the persistence of a small, possibly breeding, colony.

Although Uthhoff-Kaufmann (1989) has described *J. cerambyciformis* as "not uncommon and very occasionally locally abundant", in Scotland it has been regarded as a scarce insect. The early local collectors Wilson & Duncan (1834) failed to record it in their book, although 43 Roslin beetle records are included in the total list of 634 species. Murray (1853) and Sharp (1880) quoted only Hardy's old record for Berwickshire and William Evans (1916) described it as a rarity, having captured his single specimen at Saltoun Wood in East Lothian. He quoted the Hardy record but knew of "no other Scottish records". Both William Evans and T. Hudson Beare collected in the area, but it seems unlikely that such a conspicuous insect, if present, would have eluded all these gentlemen. Crowson (1962) mentions specimens taken at Lanark in the Fergusson collection but his quotation of a record from Midlothian is an error since the Uthhoff-Kaufmann (1948) paper cited records only the four vice counties BW(81), EI(96+96b), HD(82) and LA(77). Uthhoff-Kaufmann's (1936) earlier account of Scottish longicorns states the species as being "Evidently very uncommon in Scotland" and his updated 1989 paper adds only AS(92) and WT(74) as records for Scotland. The most recent Scottish record, by Hancock (1995), again in Lanark, was brought to my attention by Alex Ramsay.

Acknowledgements

Andy Whittington of the National Scottish Museum, Chambers Street, Edinburgh, kindly checked the Scottish Insect Record Index for the species and showed me specimens (all of English origin). I deposited a specimen in the Museum collection.

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Concerning *Scybalicus oblongiusculus* (Dejean) (Carabidae)

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My friend Keith Lewis informed me recently that in his copy of Joy (1932), which had belonged to the late Joseph Cribb and bore the latter's very brief pencil annotations, *Scybalicus oblongiusculus* was marked "Hollingbury 1945". The name of the place is not perfectly legible, but we are both satisfied that it must refer to Hollingbury Hill, two miles north of Brighton. No such specimen is to be found (as Peter Hodge informs me) in Cribb's collection or any of the Sussex collections in the Booth Museum, Brighton; but the record, though tantalizingly minimal, may perhaps be accepted with due reserve. The locality is on the South Downs and to that extent agrees well enough in its calcareous soil with the one-time headquarters of the species in south Dorset. It seems unlikely that Cribb himself was the captor, or the beetle would almost surely have remained in his collection.

This, if genuine, is not the sole relatively modern find of *S. oblongiusculus* in Britain, Mr Lewis having lately taken an example (female) in the Wild Garden at Kew, Surrey (19.vi.1998), which I have examined. It is, however, in a different class from the above Sussex record, in that it cannot be regarded as anything but an import into Kew with plants, probably from southern Europe, like certain other beetles in the same collection.

That is not to assert, however, that the Dorset colonies were necessarily derived from an introduction, as is now commonly assumed; they may, possibly, have been the remnant of an indigenous population. The following notes, from an MS of the late H. Donisthorpe, may slightly augment the published records: "Ringstead and Osmington Mills (O. Pickard Cambridge); under big stones at various points between St. Alban's Head and Weymouth, about ten in twenty days' good work (A. Pickard Cambridge)". In August 1937 I made a search for the beetle at the two first-mentioned of these places, without success. The reputed capture of a series in August 1951 at Portland Bill by a local collector remains unconfirmed.

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***Laricobius erichsoni* Rosenhauer (Derodontidae) in Herefordshire and Shropshire**

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Single specimens of this distinctive beetle have been found in two new counties: the first was swept beneath an ancient oak *Quercus* on the edge of the extensive conifer plantations of School Wood (SO 436652), Croft Castle Park, Herefordshire, 10.v.1995; the other in the mixed woodlands of Long Covert (SO 747873), Dudmaston Estate, Bridgnorth, Shropshire, 9.viii.1996. The only other west-country record I am aware of is Whitehead's (1996) from Worcestershire, in 1994. Jon Cooter of Hereford Museum (*pers. comm.*) knows of no previous record in that county. Peacock (1993) mentions only Suffolk and Scottish records. It would be interesting to know of other recent records as it is important to document the spread of expanding species such as this.

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The Fern Weevil, *Syagrius intrudens* Waterhouse (Curculionidae) on Guernsey

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Some 20 years ago, while staying in England for several months, someone presented me with a weevil, which I didn't know and which I was unable to identify. The specimen, which was labelled "Path to Fermain Bay, 25-9-77, Under Rocks, In undergrowth", disappeared in my collection. Many years later I ran into the specimen again and I still could not identify it. Also I had no idea where in England Fermain Bay could be situated, so, for the second time, the specimen was put away.

The short description of the Fern Weevil *Syagrius intrudens* Waterhouse given by Hackett (1998) reminded me of my unknown weevil, and indeed, it matched the coloured illustration of *S. intrudens* in Blair (1948) and the original description of this species by Waterhouse (1903). Now it became interesting to know where Fermain Bay could be found. However, I could not find it on any map or atlas I consulted. Finally I turned to the Internet, and it took only a matter of seconds to find out that Fermain Bay lies on Guernsey — I could even have a look at a picture of the Bay itself.

The genus *Syagrius* is of Australian origin (Waterhouse, 1903) but *S. intrudens* was described by Waterhouse on specimens from greenhouses in Dublin. Morris (1991) wrote that *S. intrudens* probably originates from New Zealand, but this was in error (Thompson, 1998). Hackett (1998) summarises the few sites in England where *S. intrudens* was found so far. Apparently the species is also able to live out-of-doors, where it is found on Bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* (Philp, 1963; Hodge & Jones, 1995; Hackett, 1998). *S. intrudens* is a flightless weevil and Hackett (*loc. cit.*) suggests that it can only travel large distances when people lend it a hand by moving Bracken or by transporting garden ferns. The localities mentioned by Hackett (*loc. cit.*) — in Ireland, West Sussex, Kent, Glamorgan and Cornwall — are rather far apart from each other and also the 'new' locality on Guernsey is a very isolated one. Of course it would be interesting to know whether the beetle is still to be found on Guernsey. Also, Guernsey being an island, I wonder if it would be possible to find information on possible 'dispersal routes' of ferns and Bracken to and from this locality.

S. intrudens was not afforded conservation status by Hyman (1992) because it is assumed to be introduced and "has yet to be discovered" in its original region. However, in earlier Red Data Books (Hyman, 1986; Shirt, 1987) it was classified as an RDB3 (= RARE) species. It is not sure that the species will ever be discovered in the Australian region or elsewhere in the world; it is certain that so far the species is only known from Great Britain. Therefore I think we should give the species the benefit of the doubt and classify it as an RDB5 (= ENDEMIC) species as well as include it in the RARE category (RDB3). At the same time however, I am very pessimistic about the effects of giving conservation status to this or any other insect species (possibly with the exception of some butterflies and dragonflies). In my opinion it still remains to be seen whether allocating species to a Red Data Book category will contribute to the survival chances of rare and threatened species at all.

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Cymindis axillaris (Fabricius) (Carabidae) in Wales

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C. axillaris is a rare carabid accorded Notable A status by Hyman (1992) and mapped for 24 British 10-km squares in Luff (1998). English records are scattered around the coast from South Devon to East Norfolk. Inland occurrences are in Breckland, North Lincolnshire (Risby Warren) and Surrey. Since 1970, it has been recorded from only nine 10-km squares, suggesting a contraction in range.

On 4th April 1998, a male and gravid female *C. axillaris* were found under stones on cliff-top calcareous grassland between Mewslade Bay and Fall Bay on the Gower peninsula, Glamorgan (VC 41; SS 4187). The only previous Welsh record is of several having been taken on Crwmllyn (= Crymlyn) Burrows (SS 79). The original record is reported by Tomlin (1912) from unpublished manuscripts by L.W. Dillwyn of 1829 and 1848. Thus there appears to have been no Welsh record since 1848 at the latest. The male specimen was retained and identified using the excellent Hurka (1996) which includes all three known British *Cymindis* species as well as *C. humeralis* (Fourcroy) which Hammond (1982) tipped as a possible future addition to the British list.

The habitat of the species on the Gower seems to be at odds to MGT's previous experience of the species in very dry sandy grass-heaths at Risby Warren, various Breckland heaths, and on sparsely vegetated coastal gravel at Landguard Point, East Suffolk (TM 2831).

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Anoplodera rubra (Linnaeus) (Cerambycidae) new to Cambridgeshire and rediscovered in Lincolnshire

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On the early evening of 16th August 1998, AC found a single male *Anoplodera rubra* feeding on a flower head of Wild Angelica *Angelica sylvestris* adjacent to a brick pit at Wicken Fen National Nature Reserve (NNR) (TL 560708). Dr Tony Drane, the Fen's Coleoptera recorder, confirmed that this was a new record for the reserve and Dr Mark Telfer and Mr Paul Harding at the Biological Records Centre confirmed that this was the first record for VC 29 (Cambridgeshire).

Coincidentally, on the morning of the same date, RK found a single male specimen of *A. rubra* feeding at the blossom of Angelica in a narrow ride in Rose's Plantation, a plantation of Corsican Pine *Pinus nigra* var. *maritima*, part of Laughton Forest, North Lincolnshire (VC 54; SK 876997). In the afternoon he found a further four males and four females (one pair *in cop.*) on flowers of Angelica in a recently cleared area of Corsican Pine within the same forest (SK 865990). These are the first and only other records of this species in Lincolnshire since 14th August 1948, when Peter Gooseman found the species at Ashbyville (SE 9208) (Riggall, 1949), an area of heathland just south of Scunthorpe, since destroyed by development.



Fig. 1: *Anoplodera rubra* (Linnaeus) (Cerambycidae) R. S. Key

This species lives as larvae in dead and decaying stumps of conifers, particularly pine *Pinus*, spruce *Picea*, fir *Abies* and larch *Larix* but has also been recorded exceptionally from oak *Quercus* in mainland Europe (Bense 1995; Bily & Mehl 1989; Joy 1932). There is a single Scots Pine *Pinus sylvestris* on Wicken Fen NNR in St. Edmunds Fen, 600 m from where the specimen was caught. In addition there is a row of 12 Scots Pine trees off the Fen in AC's garden 400 m away. No specimens were found on or around the pines at Laughton, and the numerous stumps in the cleared area only had the long oval exit holes of *Arhopalus rusticus* (Linnaeus), a species which is common there.

In Britain the stronghold of *A. rubra* is in the Scots Pines of the East Anglian Breckland, with other recent records from a single 10 km square in East Norfolk and two 10 km squares in Surrey (Twinn & Harding, in prep.; Paul Harding *pers. comm.*). The Wicken Fen record may represent a vagrant individual which has come in from Breckland around 18 km to the north east.

Shirt (1987) classified the species as RDB3 (Rare) but in Hyman (1992) the decision was made to exclude from the analysis of scarcity those species of beetle associated with plants considered not to be native in the area in which the beetle is found in Britain. While there has been some debate about the continuity of pine in the Brecks since immediately postglacial times, the consensus is that pine was exterminated and then reintroduced by man there.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Tony Drane, Mark Telfer, Paul Harding and Brian Eversham for providing information for this note and to Andrew Powers of Forest Enterprise for providing access to Laughton Forest.

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Cryptophagus populi Paykull (Cryptophagidae) reared from nests of *Megachile* sp. (Hym.: Megachilidae)

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On November 18th 1997 some nests of what appeared to be leaf-cutter bees (*Megachile* sp.) were brought into Colchester Natural History Museum by Mr and Mrs T. White of Bradwell-on-Sea, Essex. The nests had been collected from inside a security light attached to a weatherboard garage wall at the White's property at Mill End (TL 9905). The nest cells were covered in a layer of yellow plant material, assumed to be petals of hollyhock *Althea* which grew in the nearby garden. There was also a mass of silken material which appeared to be the spinings of parasitoid hymenopterans together with fragmentary remains of adult parasitoids (Hym.: ?Pteromalidae).

The cells were kept in a cool room over the winter and in the first week of May 1998 several small, brownish beetles were noticed in the container. These were identified as *Cryptophagus populi* Paykull, the largest British species in the genus (Coombs & Woodroffe, 1955). Beetles continued to emerge throughout May, effecting their escape by biting a ragged hole about 1 mm in diameter in the cell walls. By the beginning of June 1998, 50 *C. populi* had emerged from the leaf nests. Further examination of the bee cells revealed an inner lining of rounded pieces of rose *Rosa* leaves typical of the nests of *Megachile* spp. There being no remains of the original hymenopteran occupants, identification to species was not possible, however, with the exception of *M. lapponica* Thomson, all of the British species of *Megachile* have been recorded recently in Essex (Harvey & Plant, 1996).

Several *Cryptophagus* species are known from aculeate hymenopteran nests, especially nests of the social wasps *Vespula* spp., the Hornet *Vespa crabro* Linnaeus (Hym.: Vespidae) and bumble-bees *Bombus* spp. (Hym.: Apidae) (Newstead, 1891; Tuck, 1896, 1897). *C. populi*, however, has been recorded from nests of the ground-nesting solitary bee *Colletes daviesianus* Smith (Hym.: Colletidae) (Champion, 1875) and Joy (1904) took one example in a sand pit where many species of bee occurred but he was unable to find further examples by digging up some of the burrows a few days later. In contrast, Allen (1952) suggests an association with fungus growths infesting fruit trees, arguing that most occurrences of *C. populi* associated with Hymenoptera are in the vicinity of the burrows, rather than actually in them. In the present case there is no doubt that the beetles emerged from within the nests and Crowson (1981) suggests that Cryptophagidae act as scavengers on debris and nest materials; perhaps it is fungi growing on the various nest substrates as well as those found on dead wood that are attractive to *C. populi*.

Examples of both *C. populi* and the *Megachile* nests are preserved in the collections of Colchester Museums.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank Mr and Mrs White for collecting the *Megachile* nests, and David Lampard of Ipswich Museum for assistance with the literature.

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Amara famelica Zimmerman (Carabidae) from Warwickshire (VC 38) and Staffordshire (VC 39) heathland

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Whilst checking the identification of specimens in the H.W. Daltry collection housed at the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum, a male and female of this Nationally Rare (RDB3) ground-beetle were discovered standing as *Amara lunicollis* Schiödt. Identity was confirmed using a combination of characters cited by Lindroth (1974), but apt to be overlooked are the flat elytral striae, which recall those of *A. aenea* (Degeer), *A. eurynota* (Panzer) and *A. spreta* Dejean, and the presence of two relatively widely spaced preapical elytral punctures. In *A. lunicollis*, which is superficially similar in size and habitus, there are clearly three preapical elytral punctures and the striae are deepened towards the elytral apices, causing the interstices here to appear slightly convex. Daltry's specimens were collected under stones near the Seven Springs site at Cannock Chase, Staffordshire on April 16th 1949. Further Cannock Chase specimens, obtained by W.G. Blatch at the turn of the century, are found in the Ellis collection at York Museum and have been confirmed by Mike Denton (*pers. comm.*). Data for these are not included in Luff (1998) or Hyman (1992).

A further specimen of *A. famelica* was later discovered in my own material from Sutton Park, Warwickshire. The specimen, a female, was found under a stone on dry sandy *Calluna* heath, near Rowington Bank (SP 088964) on March 31st 1997 (SL). It is recommended that specimens of *A. lunicollis* from heathland sites are re-examined because of the close similarity between these two species.

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Letters

Some thoughts on 'English' names for British Coleoptera

Jon Cooter

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Several years ago I received a phone call from English Nature. *Hypebaeus flavipes* (Fabricius) was to be added to the Schedule of protected insects and therefore required an English name.

After realising I had been asked a serious question, I suggested '*The yellow-legged Hypebaeus*' thinking it fitted the vernacular style so liked by lepidopterists. Alas, it was not English enough as it still contained a Scientific Word. Discussion took place during which I was told that *Hypebaeus* does not have yellow legs. '*Soft-bodied flower beetle*' was then suggested, but I pointed out that it apparently does not frequent flowers and thought, not wishing to appear negative, in that case '*anomalous soft-bodied flower beetle*' might be more appropriate. And so it went on, with my final suggestion, '*The-not-really-yellow-legged-despite-its-name-strikingly-sexually-dimorphic-anomalous-soft-bodied-flower-beetle*' which, sad to say, was not accepted. Be that as it may, this name, to me, really sums up the futility of trying to give every beetle (doubtless every insect) on the British List a "noddy-name." I have

chosen the term "noddy-name" on purpose despite denigrating Enid Blyton's little wooden-headed character. Many of the names now being given to British insects are not English, but American names (witness the wholesale application of American vernacular names in the English Nature Recorder software with, for example, the Histeridae being referred to as *Carrion Beetles*, a vernacular name traditionally applied to the Silphidae by British and European elementary texts).

I am not against 'English' names as such: I freely refer to ladybirds, ground beetles, weevils, chafers, Stag Beetle, Glow worm and so on; there is a place for such names. What I dislike is the present day necessity in all branches of science to trivialise, oversimplify and present information as 'sound-bites' which does nothing, or at best very little, to promote science.

During May 1998 I attended a symposium on Parkland Management and the use of "noddy-names" was raised during one session. A botanist explained how a group of naturalists could not cope with the botanical name of a plant they saw in France (presumably a non-British taxon) so they thought up one of their own. I would think it a safe bet that those very people have no problem referring to *Iris*, *Mango*, *Hyacinth*, *Narcissus*, *Mesembryanthemum*, *Antirrhinum* and *Veronica*. It might be that it is simply unfamiliarity with a newly heard name that people find difficult: many years ago newsreaders seemed unable to cope with the pronunciation of the name of the African politician Abubakaturafawabelaywa.

A serious and overlooked consequence of promoting "noddy-names" is that it will leave the users of those names isolated and frustrated. None of the standard texts use them, so how will it be possible for anyone brought up on these meaningless constructions to be able to find information about life-history, distribution or even identify the taxa? A cynic might suggest it is all part of an English Nature plot to spread misinformation; promote the use of "noddy-names" and create a natural history community incapable of finding out any information at all about entomology, other than from English Nature sources. I am sure there is no truth in that, but it might be as well to remember we are dealing with a Government agency here; remember the Belgrano? What's more, English Nature appears keen to replace accepted British vernacular names with American ones, Histeridae have already been mentioned — why does our statutory conservation agency want us to think that *Plegaderus dissectus*, *Microlophus flavicornis*, *Abraeus globosus* and others eat and/or breed in carrion? The *Flower Beetles* are another case in point, as this is used for the cetoniid chafers in America and for the Melyridae in Europe. English Nature call *Pyrrhidium sanguineum* the 'Cardinal longhorn' in an apparent effort to confuse Cermabycidae with Pyrochroidae; why not derive the "noddy-name" from the proper name and call it the 'Blood-red longhorn'? The built-in element of confusion is of no help to non-entomologists.

Creeping Americanisation of our biota apart, I am sure English Nature will devote much time and huge sums of money to solving the problem, that is, if they ever perceive it as a problem. They certainly have the arrogance to think up and promote a new, even if it is draft, system of names without reference to any other interested party. My understanding is that Cynfor Cefn Gwlad Cymru, like so many Welsh institutions, is bilingual. Will we see Welsh reports citing names in triplicate? Should a committee be set up to decide if beetles not known from Wales must have only their real and one "noddy-name" whilst those also found in Wales must have their proper name, as well as the English and the Welsh "noddy-name"? (Cynfor Cefn Gwlad Cymru even has its own "noddy-name" - the Countryside Council for Wales).

In order for a dual system to work, the entomologists and the lay natural historians must each become familiar with the nomenclature their opposite numbers use. Under this two-tier system being devised by English Nature it would be as pointless for a layperson to ask an entomologist about the 'small black willow guest weevil' as it would be for the entomologist to ask the layperson if they are familiar with *Melanapion minimum*. Why not short-circuit the system and promote the universally accepted Scientific name more widely and in a

user-friendly way; surely thinking up a separate system, and one so flawed, is ducking the issue?

Years ago whilst working at Birmingham University, we had a book in the Quaternary Entomology Laboratory (possibly by Stainton) in which English names were given to a number of familiar beetles. One of these again exemplifies the futility - *Oedemera nobilis* thus became the 'Swollen-thighed swollen thigh'. Last week at the Parkland symposium I learned of the 'Hog-weed bonking beetle' which (and this knocks a huge hole in my argument) is instantly recognisable to entomologists as *Rhagonycha fulva*. I once won a competition set up by Garth Foster for the daftest English name for a beetle - my winning entry was 'The aquatic pile beetle' (= *Copelatus haemorrhoidalis*) which I hope goes some way to reducing the size of the hole I made earlier. I can think up plenty more silly names, doubtless you can too, unless you work for English Nature in which case you will take the matter of misinformation and silly name selection very seriously indeed, after all, it's what you are employed to do. They have thought up 'the greater crucifix beetle' for *Panagaeus crux-major*; reference to the Oxford English Dictionary gives three meanings for the word 'crux' and one of these encapsulates the whole noddy-name philosophy - "A difficulty which it torments or troubles one greatly to interpret or explain, a thing that puzzles ingenuity." And there we have it, English Nature promoting something we cannot interpret or explain and which defies reason.

The day will come when I can let go and really enter into the spirit of things and supply English Nature with a commissioned survey report using the names they promote and understand so well. It will start with 25 entries for 'a ground beetle' followed by 120 or so 'a rove beetle' and so on with a few of my own thrown in for good measure such as - 'the brown unknown large intestine beetle' (= *Colon brunneum*) and 'the roving rove beetle' (= *Atheta immigrans*). On second thoughts I'll stick with proper names as it is obvious that my efforts are so good that they will, including my earlier prize-winner the 'aquatic pile beetle', be taken on wholesale by English Nature. What is forgotten is that the Victorian lepidopterists gave all the micromoths a vernacular name; very few of these survive. The system failed because from the start it was flawed: why bother learning a new set of names when those you already know are internationally accepted and understood? Why indeed.

The role of standardisation in recording rarities

Mike Edwards

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Whilst reading the article by Eyre *et al.* (1998), I was intrigued to read that "it is likely that a number of rare and notable species will be recorded if standardised methods of sampling and approach are employed". I take basic issue with the implication that the undoubted increases are due to standardisation. It is the relatively increased level of sampling inherent in standardised approaches, compared with most amateur recording, which leads to the greater number of individuals and species recorded for a site. Similar results can be obtained by equivalent sampling using equal effort, without the standardisation.

Standardisation is something which we, as experimenters, may attempt to do with our recording (with varying success) in order to be able to compare different sample sites. It must be remembered that no collecting method is completely standardised, requiring human intervention in order to be employed, although it may lend itself to standardisation to a greater or lesser extent. It is well known that certain species are better found by specific sampling methods; it should therefore be no surprise that some, hitherto difficult-to-find, species should be found if: (a) an appropriate trapping method is used; and (b) sufficient recording effort is employed. Neither of these factors is necessarily caused by standardisation, as apparently claimed in the article, although they may be inherent in a standardised procedure.

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Whilst reading the article by Eyre *et al.* (1998), I was intrigued to read that "it is likely that a number of rare and notable species will be recorded if standardised methods of sampling and approach are employed". I take basic issue with the implication that the undoubted increases are due to standardisation. It is the relatively increased level of sampling inherent in standardised approaches, compared with most amateur recording, which leads to the greater number of individuals and species recorded for a site. Similar results can be obtained by equivalent sampling using equal effort, without the standardisation.

Standardisation is something which we, as experimenters, may attempt to do with our recording (with varying success) in order to be able to compare different sample sites. It must be remembered that no collecting method is completely standardised, requiring human intervention in order to be employed, although it may lend itself to standardisation to a greater or lesser extent. It is well known that certain species are better found by specific sampling methods; it should therefore be no surprise that some, hitherto difficult-to-find, species should be found if: (a) an appropriate trapping method is used; and (b) sufficient recording effort is employed. Neither of these factors is necessarily caused by standardisation, as apparently claimed in the article, although they may be inherent in a standardised procedure.

However, I agree most strongly with the authors that our ideas of what constitutes a rare or notable species is in need of review. The current limits on conservation statuses are purely arbitrary, defined as a series of numbers of 10 km squares, which appeal to our wish to make our statements appear to have rigour, but are without any very rigorous backing. I am dismayed to see the extent to which conservation and planning decisions are made upon the presence or absence of specific species, rather than species communities. These lead to legalistic arguments based upon decimal-place interpretation of currently fashionable Species Quality Indices, where the variability due to the experience and collecting inclination of the surveyor introduces far greater errors into the whole procedure than are implicit in the level of accuracy being argued over — indeed, how often are the confidence limits for any of these indices quoted in such arguments? In this context, I question whether we have the level of knowledge about the distribution of most insect species to make more than informed guesses concerning their status; this state of affairs should be openly acknowledged, instead of hiding behind spurious numbers. As a general case it is worth considering whether the pooled knowledge of a relatively large number of collectors does not constitute as good an *index* of rarity as can be obtained at the present (leaving aside the question of local abundance but restricted distribution, which is another can of worms).

What is needed is an agreed method and protocol whereby results such as those reported in the paper can be considered against the state of knowledge of a particular species or groups of species, and the appropriate species accounts and statuses in the published reviews be updated accordingly at regular intervals. The JNCC reviews are the (imperfect) yardstick by which we judge our success at recording and sometimes protecting our natural heritage; a standardised, systematic method of reviewing the review is long overdue.

Reference

EYRE, M.D., LUFF, M.L. & LOTT, D.A. 1998. Rare and notable beetles from Scottish pitfall traps, 1992-1996. *Coleopterist* 7(3): 81-90.

Review

Checkered Beetles: illustrated key to the Cleridae and Thanerocleridae of the Western Palearctic. by Roland Gerstmeier. Weikersheim: Margraf Verlag, 1998. 241 pp., 8 col. pl., 331 figs., 52 distribution maps. Hard cover 155 x 215 mm. Price DM 93.00 (+7% VAT) plus p.&p. Copies are obtainable from Margraf Verlag, Laudnbacher Str. 9, 97990 Weikersheim, Germany.

For a group of beetles that are both easily recognisable and attractively coloured, often with boldly patterned elytra, clerids are surprisingly poorly known, apart from perhaps in the mid-European area. There are still many parts of the world with no recently published monograph and the author admits that this work is merely a statement of current knowledge, with further revisions likely in the future. Although many clerids are known to be predators of other insects (e.g. *Trichius* spp. on the early stages of bees and *Thanasimus* spp. on bark beetles), much work remains to be done, both on life histories and taxonomy, so there is plenty of scope for those contemplating serious study of these fascinating beetles.

This is the third volume in this excellent series of bilingual books, printed in German and English on alternate columns or pages. Two families are dealt with: Thanocleridae (one species) and Cleridae (124 species), with almost one-third of the text devoted to the genus *Trichodes* (49 species). All 125 species of western Palearctic clerid beetles are included, several of which are illustrated for the first time. There are eight colour plates, placed at the end of the book, each consisting of 16 high-quality enlarged photographs of carded or pinned specimens. A total

of 107 taxa are figured in colour, including all 14 species recorded from Britain. There are over 300 high-quality figures that are printed alongside the relevant couplets in the text. The distributions of 97 western Palearctic species are illustrated on 66 maps and there is a useful Bibliography, most of which refers to post-1950 papers [references in the world catalogue to clerids (Corporaal, J.B. 1950. Cleridae. *Coleopterorum Catalogus, Supplementa* pars 23) are deliberately excluded].

The keys were tested on two species of south European *Trichodes* and it is reassuring to report that, with little previous knowledge of this genus, positive identifications were obtained within five minutes. There are very few valid criticisms on any aspect of this book but, like almost every key to beetles, many of the couplets are somewhat comparative. However, where confusion is thought likely to occur, there is a complementary figure placed alongside the text. There is no key to the two species of *Thanasimus*, but since there are clear descriptions, with genitalia figures of each sex and a coloured photograph of both species, confusion is not likely to occur. In the key to *Trichodes*, a group of three species is split off at couplet 4 (pp. 118-119) purely on statements describing their known geographical range; whilst this may be perfectly correct, it does not allow for either casual introductions or natural changes in distribution.

For those either living abroad or planning to study beetles in continental Europe, north Africa or the Middle East, this book is an absolutely essential tool, but *everyone* interested in clerids should seriously consider acquiring it for their library.

Peter J. Hodge

Subscribers' Notices

This section is for subscribers to advertise requests for information, specimens wanted for loan, or entomological items wanted or for sale. **Notices of specimens for sale or exchange will not be accepted.** Notices will be repeated with each issue while space is available (or until withdrawn), newer ones appearing first, and may be edited for brevity.

Records of *Pselactus spadix* wanted: As part of my Ph.D. project on *Pselactus spadix* Herbst (Curculionidae: Cossoninae), I am studying the distribution of this species in the U.K. The weevil inhabits timber structures extending into the intertidal zone. I would be very grateful to receive records of this beetle, especially from S.W. and N.E. England and Wales. Please send voucher specimens where identification is in doubt; these will be returned. Your help will be very much appreciated and all contributors will be acknowledged. P. Oevering, Forest Products Research Centre, Buckinghamshire College, High Wycombe, Bucks. HP11 2JZ.

Beetle photos wanted: Good-quality prints or transparencies (including SEMs) of British beetles are always wanted to illustrate *The Coleopterist*. We can't pay you, but you will get to see your work in print and the photographer is always acknowledged. Please write to the Editor.

Copy of 'Fowler' wanted: Fowler's *Coleoptera of the British Islands* (the unillustrated brown-cover version) is sought in order to obtain the set originally owned by my mentor, the late T.R. Eagles, which is of great sentimental value to me. The present owner has kindly agreed to let me have Eagles' volumes provided I replace them with an identical set. John Rudge, Wayfarers, Haglands Lane, West Chiltington, West Sussex RH20 2QS Tel.: 01798 812476.

New Scirtidae recording scheme: A recording scheme for British and Irish Scirtidae is to be run in conjunction with the current aquatic Coleoptera scheme. Please send records and problem specimens to me, or add records to water beetle record cards sent to Prof. Garth Foster, 3 Eglinton Terrace, Ayr KA7 1JJ. Dr Jonty Denton, 26 Bow Street, Alton, Hants. GU34 1NY.

Woodland beetle lists wanted: In *The Coleopterist* 6: 61-66 a new system for assessing the importance of wooded habitats for conservation was proposed. Since then attempts have been

made to develop the necessary evaluation index and significant progress has been made. The system now needs testing against a wide range of woodlands and parklands and I would be grateful if any coleopterists with beetle lists (either from single visits or collations of records) from such habitats would kindly send me copies. *Adrian Fowles* Countryside Council for Wales, Plas Penrhos, Bangor, Gwynedd LL57 2LQ.

Wanted: I would like to purchase the following Royal Entomological Society Handbooks: Vol. 4(8a) Staphylinidae (part) by C.E. Tottenham; Vol. 5(9) Lagriidae to Meloidae by F.D. Buck; and Vol. 5(15) Scolytidae and Platypodidae by E.A.J. Duffy. *Adrian Dutton* 59 Southdale Road, Carlton, Notts. NG4 1EU.

Provisional atlas of ground beetles in the London Area: On behalf of the London Natural History Society, I would welcome all records of Carabidae from the London Area. This area is defined as a circle with radius 20 miles centred on St Paul's Cathedral. Please give precise grid references and habitat description where possible, along with the usual data (date, name of identifier, etc.). I shall be pleased to receive multiple records for the same species over several years as possible indication of spread or decline. Rough indications of population numbers are also helpful. Records on computer disk or by e-mail (fax by arrangement) are acceptable. *Paul Mabbott* 49 Endowood Road, Sheffield S7 2LY Tel.: (0114) 201 4504. E-mail: PRMabbott@aol.com.

Literature Notices

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