

THE COLEOPTERIST'S NEWSLETTER

November 1983

Number 14

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 1984 ARE DUE NOW. THERE WILL BE NO INCREASE (1) THE SUBSCRIPTION REMAINS AT £1.20p PLEASE SEND CHEQUES OR POSTAL ORDERS TO: MR P. HODGE, 8 HARVARD ROAD, RINGMER, nr LEWES, EAST SUSSEX, BN8 5HJ

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KENT COLEOPTERISTS' WORKSHOP.

24 people attended this second meeting on 22nd January 1983 with a few absent friends and several new faces from the first meeting. The meeting again was very informal with a range of special exhibits particularly relating to Haliphus and Bagous. A box from John Parry showing species very rare or new to the British List provoked much comment. Garth Foster, on behalf of the Balfour-Browne Club has sent an exhibit of dissected specimens of Enochrus affinis, coarctatus and isotae which was much appreciated by 'bog-stompers' present.

A demonstration of various methods of setting and dissecting specimens was put on by Lawrence Clemons and E.G.P. whilst others were involved in naming, or getting specimens named. A serious error from the first meeting was corrected and this time tea was provided. Much informal discussion followed and the problems of getting everybody out so that the Museum could be locked up on time suggested that perhaps further such meetings are called for.

E.G. Philp

Anornatus duodecimstriatus (Mull.) from faggots - Although the topic of collecting from faggots has been quite extensively received in recent issues of this "Newsletter", it would seem worthwhile recording that I took a single example of Anornatus duodecimstriatus on September 24th last by beating the garden faggots at Little Blakenham described in my earlier note (Col. Newsletter 9:2-3). I also took a single female of what is almost certainly Corticaria alleni Johnson, a species which I have collected in the same general area. Both species are noteworthy additions to my original list and the habitat is typical for C.alleni.

D.R.Nash.

Some beetles from Duncombe Pk. Yorkshire - On June 18th 1983 the Entomology Section of the Yorkshire Naturalists' Union held a field meeting at the Duncombe Park Estate, near Helmsley, North Yorkshire. The area comprises long established parkland with many mature and over mature deciduous trees. A very extensive list of Coleoptera was recorded including the following which are very local to quite rare in the region:-

Carabidae - Benbidion litorale (Ol.) on sandy parts of the river bank; B. genei (Kuster) many on the bank of the river Rye among stones.

Staphylinidae - Philonthus rubripennis Stph. many among bare stones by the water's edge.

Helyridae - Dasytes aeratus Stph. by beating hawthorn.

Lynxylidae - Hylecoetus dernestoides (L.) several seen around dead wood and on sappy stumps (and from Fraxinus - P. Skidmore).

Pyrochroidae - Pyrochroa serraticornis (Scop.) and its congener P. coccinea (Pk.) in some numbers, both species occurring together around dead wood.

Melandryidae - Orchesia undulata (Kr.) and Melandrya caraboides (L.) under loose bark of dead wood.

Cantharidae - Podabrus alpinus (Pk.) - on hawthorn.

Oedemeridae - Ischnomera caerulea (L.) and I. sanguinicollis (F.) in plenty by beating hawthorn, and also I. cinerascens Pand. the latter being found again here after its discovery in Britain* by Skidmore & Hunter (1979, Entomologist's mon. Mag. 116: 129-132). Also present were many Oedemera virescens (L.), again

on hawthorn and umbellifers.

Chrysomelidae - Osodacne cerasi (L.) was beaten from Hawthorn and oak.

Cerambycidae - Stenostola dubia Laich. was taken by general sweeping.

R.J.Marsh (with comments by
P.Skidmore).

(* The first example of *I.cinerascens* was found in Moccas Park N.N.R., Herefordshire during the 1960's), J.C.

THE BRITISH INSECTS RED DATA BOOK. Readers of the "Newsletter" will probably be aware, either from the pages of "EMM" or from the grapevine, that an "Insects Red Data Book" is in preparation. The aim of the RDB is to provide practical conservationists with an accurate account of the insect species and their habitats which are threatened in Great Britain, particularly by land-use changes. As a result of this information being available it should be possible to be very much more positive than hitherto in the conservation of endangered and vulnerable species.

The small committee preparing data sheets for these threatened species is very much aware that its RDB might be used in a negative way. It hopes that the RDB will not be used merely to list species to be "protected" by legislative or other bans on collecting and study. Listing species is meaningless unless used for practical conservation. Despite experience with the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) the Committee is confident that the RDB will be used in this positive sense.

The committee has taken the advice of many eminent coleopterists in producing its account of threatened beetles. However, it has not always been possible to consult every coleopterist who may have views to express. The committee hopes that all coleopterists will appreciate that a considerable time has already been spent in preparing the data sheets and that in this context the perfect may be the enemy of the good.

I would be happy to answer any questions about the RDB, or pass enquiries on to the appropriate person. M.G.MORRIS.

Hemicoelus fulvicornis (Sturm) in numbers on live birch - On June 25th last, I beat over a score of Hemicoelus fulvicornis from a single mature birch on Icklingham Plain, Suffolk (TL7573). They had probably bred in some young dead elm saplings about 100m away, but what attracted them in numbers to the tree I cannot say. A few examples were also found on pines nearby. Apion simile Kirby and Rhynchites nanus (Pk.) were also present in numbers on the birch. In my experience, H. fulvicornis usually tends to occur as odd specimens - frequently by sweeping under mature trees (especially Sweet Chestnut) especially with dead branches, or else whilst it is walking on such trees after emergence.

D.R. Nash.

CAN ANY ONE HELP ? Does anyone have an alternative method to storage boxes for storing Coleoptera ? (not a cabinet I presume ! J.C.). Manufactured boxes are becoming too expensive to purchase - any suggestions would be welcome,
N.Redgate, 3 The Cottages, Myles Farm, Tranent, E.Loathian
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SOUTH WALES MEETING, SEPTEMBER 1983.

Alas, I was unable to take part in the field work, but know the weather was ideal and about twenty people turned up. It is hoped that a more detailed report by one of those that actually went will appear in the next "Newsletter".

I did attend the dinner - an excellent meal, very good value for money (oh! that the "Verrall" could be so good, though to be fair the numbers attending the latter are, to date, still greater than those attending Coleopterist functions).

Many thanks to David Edwards for organising the event (even if the Juke Box was a bit too loud!!!!). J.C.

THE GENUS HYLASTES Erichson (Col., SCOLYTIDAE).

Several Coleopterists have commented that they have difficulty in naming some of our species of Hylastes. To try to rectify this problem, I have produced a key freely based upon that of Duffy (RES Handbook). I have deliberately tried not to redesign Duffy's key in order that the people using this Handbook will be able to cross-refer to it to see where I have, hopefully, clarified or corrected what is stated therein. Additional information has been incorporated from Freude, Harde & Lohse (Die Kafer Mitteleuropas, 10).

I am grateful to Mr A.A.Allen for the loan of a specimen of H.angustatus and valuable comments; to Mr Colin Johnson for allowing me to examine the Hylastes in the Manchester Museum collections.

Key to the British species of Hylastes Er.

- 1 Forehead with a well developed longitudinal keel. Larger species, usually well in excess of 3.2mm 2
- Forehead without a well developed longitudinal keel. Smaller species, length between 2.0 and 3.5mm 4
- 2 Pronotum quadrate or slightly transverse, 1.12x as long as broad, widest before middle. Elytra stout, 1.70-1.84 times as long as broad, interstices densely reticulate. Length 3.2 - 4.5mm cunicularius Erichson
- Pronotum elongate, plainly longer than broad 3
- 3 Elytral interstices clearly microscopically reticulate between punctures (view at about x50). Elytra noticeably duller at about x20 than in the next species. Length 3.5-5.0mm ater (Paykull)
- Elytral interstices smooth and shining (obsidian-like) between punctures when viewed at x50. Length, as ater brunneus Erichson

- 4 Elytral interstices with a single row of granules accompanied by a single row of well developed, obliquely set setae for their entire length. Interstices plainly narrower than striae. Elytra 1.74 - 1.84 times as long as broad. Forehead usually with more or less clearly visible smooth longitudinal stripe. Length 2.0 - 3.0mm
..... attenuatus Erichson
- Elytral interstices with setae arranged in double rows in most places 5
- 5 Forehead with a clearly defined, shining, short linear sulcus. Pronotum 1.03 - 1.15 times as long as broad. Elytra 1.80 - 1.91 times as long as broad, interstices as broad as striae with two rows of granules, clothed with short setae in irregular double rows. Length 2.5 - 3.5mm
..... angustatus (Herbst)
- Forehead without clearly defined sulcus, with only a median shining, punctiform spot and/or short, unpunctured stripe. Pronotum more or less as long as broad. Elytra 1.65 - 1.78 times as long as broad; interstices wider than the striae, transversely wrinkled; clothing consisting of a single row of longer setae irregularly accompanied (especially at sides of the elytra) by shorter, hair-like setae, the latter often arranged one on either side of a long seta. Length 2.5 - 3.5mm opacus Erichson

NOTES -

1. Colour has deliberately not been used as pale forms or teneral specimens are commonly taken.
2. H. brunneus is still considered synonymous with ater by some authors (eg Schedl in Die Käfer Mitteleuropas) despite the evidence of R.A. Beaver (1970, Entomologist, 103:198-206). The only reliable character to separate the two species externally is given in the key.
3. H. brunneus is not a purely northern species as intimated by Duffy and is of rare occurrence in southern England; ater appears to be confined to the south.

4. Duffy's figure of the head of angustatus (Handbook, p.8) is in reality more like that of opacus since it appears to depict a punctiform spot rather than a sulcus.
5. I have insufficient data to comment upon the status of the individual species but it would appear to me that ater is the most common, opacus fairly common, attenuatus local, whilst angustatus and brunneus are truly rare. I have not encountered cunicularis.

Hopefully other Coleopterists will now comment in these pages upon their own findings and experience with our Hylastes species.

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A NEW BIOLOGICAL SUPPLIER - Natural History equipment, books and microscopes etc = Bio-Science, 4 Long Mill North, Wednesfield, Wolverhampton, WV11 1JD

A POOR YEAR ?

Whilst repeating an invertebrate survey at the St. Fergus sand dune system in the north east of Scotland, I was aware of the very low numbers of Coleoptera. I believe this paucity of numbers could well be a result of the long wet spring which possibly delayed the emergence of adults. The survey was restricted to July (for comparative purposes with previous surveys) and thus I do not know if numbers regained their level later on.

I would be interested to hear from other readers about their observations and impressions on the impact the weather had on their local coleopterous fauna.

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Myles Farm, Tranent, E.Loathian.

On a recent visit to my parents at Stoneleigh, Surrey, I read in a local newspaper that Hylotrupes bajulus (L.) "The House Longhorn" was infesting so many buildings in parts of Surrey that the authorities were expressing some concern. Alas, I have been unable to follow this matter up - was the incident exaggerated by the Press? / what were the true numbers or degree of damage and so on. If any reader has any information I for one would be interested to hear.

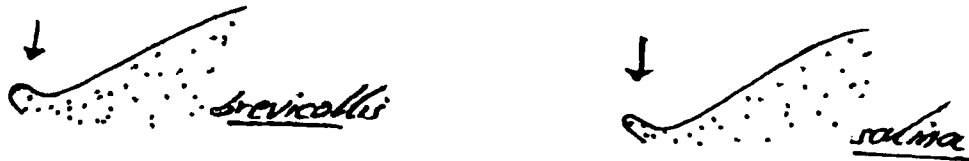
H.bajulus, today, seems quite uncommon (as does Callidium violaceum (L.) for example).

J.Cooter.

(The following note should have been included in "Newsletter No.5, but I unfortunately mislaid the original - better late than never!). J.C.

NEBRIA BREVICOLLIS/SALINA. A character I find especially useful for the separation of these species is the shape of the marginal bead, or in the case of salina the rim, of the pronotum.

The difference is difficult to describe in words, and is indeed mentioned in Lindroth's "Handbook". If you can imagine a vertical transverse section through the pronotum, just behind the middle, the rim of salina and bead of brevicollis would look something like the following illustrations:



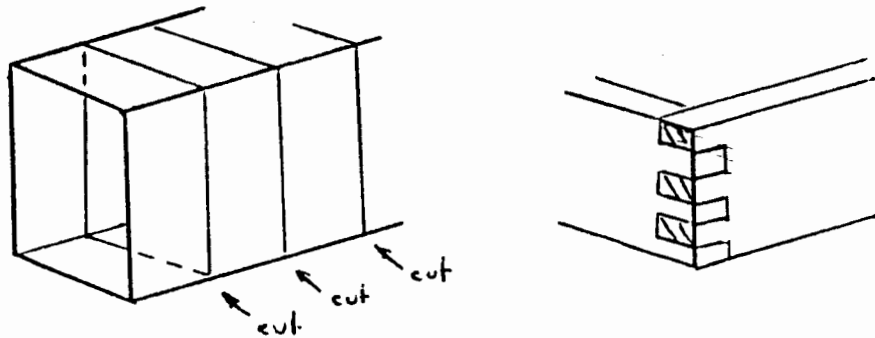
The difference can be seen quite clearly in dorsal aspect without taking sections!!

Perhaps it is also worth mentioning, that in my experience, it is the antepenultimate segment of the ~~max~~illary palp of salina that is usually infuscated, and not the penultimate as stated in the "Handbook".

H.Mendel, c/o Ipswich Museum.

Store boxes. A cheap alternative is, of course, to make these yourself. If thinking of attempting this, I would venture to suggest the following tips:

1. If not too confident, join an evening class.
2. Use a jig or power tool to cut the corner joints; this can be done by a cooperative small joinery company at a small cost.
3. Use a good quality 12mm ply-wood.
4. Do not make one at a time, but build a prism, and cut this into store-box sized sections, then each of these in half. The cutting can be accurately done, after carefully marking out, using power tools available at evening school.
5. Line with plastozote, not polystyrene.



Editorial. I must apologise for the worse than usual typing of recent issues. I do all this myself, but have to borrow a typewriter. The electric model I used to use is no longer available, and after trying a flashy "golf-ball" type (sorry!) settled for the present manual machine. This needs great pressure to cut stencils, but does have a ♂, ♀, +, =, * and ! key. Alas, "m" and "w" seem poor on stencilling. Please sympathise!

J. C.

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