

THE COLEOPTERIST'S NEWSLETTER

Number 19

February, 1985

Thank you for your continued support, and may I wish you a rather belated "Happy New Year". (If you are one of the few that have not yet sent your 1985 subscription, please do as no further reminders will be sent).

J.C.

ACCOMODATION on Speyside - recommended for entomologists.

Mrs A. Melvin, The Hermitage, Kingussie, (tel. 05402 501)

"I can thoroughly recommend this accomodation. Entomologists are made very welcome. Kingussie is a convenient base for all the well-known localities on Speyside. Many other classic Scottish localities such as Rannoch (40 miles) are near enough for a day visit"

John Owen.

ACCOUNTS

Expenditure

Postage £89-94

Printer £35-13

Duplicating

£27-00

Bank £ 1-22

£153-29

Deficit for year

8-04

= £145-25p

Income

Subscriptions £145-25p

£145-25p

Balance at 1st Jan, 1984

=

24-09

Balance at 1st Jan 1985

=

16-05

P.J.Hodge.

KENT COLEOPTERIST'S WORKSHOP. The fourth annual meeting will be held at Maidstone Museum on Saturday 16th March from 2pm until 5pm; anyone interested in beetles will be welcome to attend. Exhibits on any aspect of the study of beetles will be most welcome, suggested subjects are the Carabidae (ground beetles) and the Dytiscidae (water beetles). There will be the usual informal discussions plus an opportunity to get specimens identified (or help with the identification of problem species of others), to see the latest publications on beetles and to pick up tips on collecting and preserving techniques. Tea will be available.

Eric Philp, Maidstone Museum.

PLEA FOR HELP. I am currently investigating the possibility that there has been micro-morphological differentiation in selected species of Carabidae in the Shetlands since the last Ice Age. It would be interesting to compare beetles from these Islands with those from other parts of Britain. Could anyone supply examples of Carabus problematicus, Nebria salina, N.gyllenhalii, Patrobus assimilis, P.atrorufus, P.septentrionis, Pterostichus niger, P.nigrita, P.oblongopunctatus, P.strenuus, P.diligens, Calathus fuscipes, and C.melanocephalus. I need 30-50 individuals, preferably in alcohol.

John McKee, 12 North Park, Symbister, Whalsay,
Shetland, ZE2 9AF

SOME INTERESTING BEETLES FROM SCADBURY PARK.

Soadbury Park is situated within the London Borough of Bromley at Chislehurst (TQ 4570). It covers 160 acres of which about half is open country (this was mostly orchard-30 years ago) the remainder consists of several small pockets of woodland and one much larger area making up the western boundary. This area is of special interest as it contains some fine old oaks, relicts of ancient parkland, which have been protected from vandals by strong growths of sycamore and thick bramble. The whole park is a pleasant place to visit, particularly as it is so near to London. The expected rabbits (including a colony of black ones), foxes and squirrels abound, the great crested newt occurs and toads congregate in their hundreds during the spring in the old (tudor) moat. Access is restricted to a central footpath but inevitably poaching and vandalism occurs including the lighting of camp fires, often at the base of fine trees and the riding of motor bikes. The future of the Park is uncertain, many decisions still have to be made by the Council, who appear to favour a country park with conserved areas, in the interim they have asked the Nature Conservancy Council for advice on conservation and help in surveying flora and fauna.

I collected beetles in the Park between August 1983 and May 1984 recording about 350 species, including a few of special interest:

Ampedus cardinalis (Sch.) Det. A.A.Allen - remains of several of this red click beetle were found in one old oak. No living adults were present but lots of Elaterid larvae 27.12.1983, Planeustonus palpalis (Er.) one specimen by tufting rushes in a partly dried up pond, 6.11.1983 with Atheta vilis Er. Atheta taxiceroides Mun. two examples at oak sap, 6.11.1983. Aleochara cunculorum Kr. and Catopidius depressus (Murray) in rabbit burrows 29.8.1983. Also the following: Platycis minutus (F.) 22.8.83, Diplocoelus fagi Guer. 29.8.83, Synbiotes latus Redt. 29.12.1983, Gyrophana joyoides Wust. 22.8.83, Mycetophagus piceus F. 10.9.83.

S.A.Williams, 79 Cedar Drive, Sutton at Hone, Kent.

A REARING CHAMBER FOR BURYING BEETLES.

To investigate the subsocial behaviour shown by burying beetles, it is desirable to cause them to burrow against perspex or glass. In this way an overall picture of the complete life cycle can be obtained.

I have devised a "T" shaped chamber, the top being about 30cm long by 10cm square. The "upright" of the "T", has two perspex sides and measures 3 or 4cm wide and 10cm front/back, its depth will vary according to species (see Linssen). The top of this "upright" meets the "top" midway, the top of the upright being open to the "top". Unless stated, wood 10cm x 1cm x 150cm is suitable, and can be varnished for protection. If the perspex cannot be cut to size at the supplier, a hack-saw or similar small toothed saw is suitable. The base of the "upright" should be set in plaster of paris. If the construction is screwed together, it can be readily dis-assembled.

The behaviour of burying beetles shows several interesting aspects which could be studied:

1. Are there variations in the behaviour of burying beetles, reflected in the structure of the burrow ("upright") and mortuary chamber ("top"). Are these variations interspecific or intraspecific ?

2. What evolutionary pathways could conceivably have lead to complex and plastic behaviour burying beetles demonstrate ?

3. What is the significance of larval hypermetamorphosis in burying beetles ?

4. The larvae of burying beetles seem to be dependent on a parent or both, as regards feeding, after hatching and after each moult.

5. A significant symbiotic relationship exists or appears to exist between burying beetles and the parasitic mites which occur on them.

I have built a rearing chamber along these lines but have not yet attempted rearing experiments. Pit-fall trapping in suitable areas would yield burying beetles in plenty from April or May.

Reference: E.F.Linssen, Beetles of the British Isles, 1:161-169.

Martin Henderson, 49 Colchester Ave., Penylan, CF3 7AX

LEIODINI

In a recently published study of the Palaearctic Leiodini (= Leiodinae pars of Kloet & Hincks, 1977) by H. Daffner (Daffner, H., 1982 Revision der palaarktischen der Tribus Leiodini Leach (Coleoptera, Leiodidae) Folia Ent Hung. 44(2): 9-163), the following changes effect the British List:

Trichohydnobius suturalis (Zetterstedt, 1828)

= perrisii Fairmaire, 1855

Hydnobius latifrons (Marshan, 1802)

= strigosus Schmidt, W.L.E., 1841

Leiodes polita (Marshan, 1802)

= calcarata (Erichson, 1845)

L. rufipennis (Paykull, 1798)

= clavicornis (Rye, 1875)

= dauidiana (Joy, 1911)

L. longipes (Schmidt, 1841)

= curta (Fairmaire & Laboulbene, 1856)

L. ferruginea (Fabricius, 1787)

= ovalis (Schmidt, 1841)

= scita (Erichson, 1845)

L. gyllenhali Stephens, 1829

= parvula (Sahlberg, C.R., 1832)

Our two members of g. Cyrtusa Er. have been transferred to Liocyrtusa Daffner, 1982.

Liocyrtusa minuta (Ahrens, 1812)

Liocyrtusa vittata (Curtis, 1840)

= pauxilla (Schmidt, W.L.E., 1841)

J. Cooter.

AGATHIDIUM - It should be noted that Agathidium nigripenne F has been transferred from Agathidium s.str. to sub-genus Neoceble. (Fernando Angelini (in press) Contributo allo studio degli Anisotomini. Note sinonimiche e diverse (Coleoptera; Leiodidae) Bulletin Soc. ent. Ital. Many other synonyms have been established in this paper, but only the above effects our List.

J.C.

FIELD MEETING Weekend of June 22nd - 23rd based at Monks Wood Experimental Station Hostel, visiting Woodwalton Fen (22nd) and Bedford Purieus (23rd). Further details from the leader: Alan Stubbs, Nature Conservancy Council, Northminster House, Northminster, Peterborough, PE1 1UA (Those requiring accomodation contact Brian Eversham, I.T.E., Monks Wood Experimental Station, Abbots Ripton, Huntingdon, PE17 2LS).

JOBS

The NCC has several post on offer at the time of writing. Anyone interested write to or phone Alan Stubbs at the above address (tel 0733 40345)

5 entomologists for the Invertebrate Site Register including one Coleopterist (= 2 year contract)

2 bibliographers to search British entomological literature (= 2 year contract).

Assistant Regional Officers (permanent posts) required and hopefully some entomologists will apply.

Full details of all these can be obtained from Alan, if interested enquire now to beat the application closing date.

J.C.

The "Coleopterist's Newsletter: Secretary/Editor = J.Cooter, 222 Whittern Way, Hereford, HR1 1QP; Treasurer = P.J.Hodge, 8 Harvard Road Ringmer, Lewes, East Sussex, BN8 5HJ