

THE COLEOPTERIST'S NEWSLETTER

Number 27

February, 1987

Much to my surprise, the "Newsletter" begins another year with continued good support. As I type these stencils the country is in the grip of bad weather, but I dare say a few readers are looking forward to a rapid thaw and the chance to get out and collect bags of flood refuse. Personally I'm just looking forward to a thaw!

If you have not yet sent your 1987 subscription and wish to continue receiving the "Newsletter", please do so as soon as possible. If you have not remitted your sub there will be no further copies for you as non-payment is taken to mean "no further interest". Late payers often find it difficult to obtain back numbers and invariably as I no longer duplicate a few extras, these are poorish photocopies.

In this issue you will see Paul Whitehead has organised a visit to the Bialowieza Forest. I am sure this venture will appeal to many readers and I will sound out the possibility of organising a similar foreign trip for 1988. I have in mind the Biogradska National Park near Mojcovac, Yugoslavia. I paid a visit there in June 1985 and was more than very impressed. I will keep readers informed of any progress. J.C.

(Outstanding subscriptions please to Peter Hodge, 8 Harvard Rd., Ringmer, Lewes, East Sussex, BN8 5HJ. Rate = £2-00).

More Meloe rugosus Marsh. In "Newsletter" 26 I recorded (p15) a specimen of this oil-beetle from Broadway, Worcs., on October 3rd 1986. 28 days later I found (what might possibly be) the same beetle dead in short grass under a lime tree some 85m distant from the first sighting. In that time it appeared to have shed its egg load completely. This specimen is now in my collection.

A further specimen, ♀, was encountered at Broadway on December 31st 1986 in the mild spell that also produced the Mottled Umber moth (♂) flying. The beetle was healthy and gravid suggesting hibernal adult stage given suitable conditions but evidence suggests they oviposit rapidly - they seem very responsive to climate.

Paul Whitehead, Moor Leys, Little Comberton, Pershore.

Winter Records. Although finding beetles during the winter is to be expected I think the following three instances are worthy of recording:

January 5th 1987 Apion onopordi Kirby captured in flight at Broadway, Worcestershire.

Also January 5th near Snowhill, Gloucestershire a killed adult Xantholinus linearis in the toxic "web" of a mycetophilid fungus gnat, and partly consumed, between contact of log and ground.

January 12th, 1987 Bredons Hardwick, Worcs., about 1530hrs at the edge of the river Avon flood plain. Temperature about -6'c (ambient temperature at Pershore 1700hrs = -15'c).

Badister bipustulatus, Agonum albipes, A. obscurum, Bembidion aeneum, B. guttula, B. bipunctatum, B. harpaloides - this species being particularly active and running between the ice crystals - Pt erostichus nigrita, P. diligens, and Lathrobium fulvipenne.

Paul Whitehead.

Amendment: Newsletter 26. Dr M.L.Cox has examined the specimen of Otiorrhynchus aropunctatus Gyll. (p10) and determined it as O.nodosus (Müll.). He has also mentioned that whilst it may well agree with characters (eg very horizontally strigose elytra, red legs) shown for aropunctatus in some keys, these are by no means stable. Prof. John Owen has kindly added Aloconota sulcifrons (Stph.) to the fauna from the saturated cliff-face at St.Ives, Cornwall (p13).

Paul Whitehead.

A new host for Glischrochilus ? When I harvested our sweetcorn on August 19th 1986, it came as something of a surprise to find that several ears were infested with Glischrochilus hortensis (Fourc.) feeding on the grains. As a vegetable, sweetcorn has some peculiarities. Up to 5% by weight of its edible matter is sugar, and it is very high in starch; up to 22%. It has practically the highest fat content (2%) and calorific value (100-150 kcals/100g) of almost all vegetables, but is low in iron and astonishingly low in calcium. Happily, it seems, not all Glischrochilus know this!

Paul Whitehead.

Don't forget the offer of free bed and breakfast accommodation for a "car load" of visiting Coleopterists still stands. It is hoped that in return some collecting will be carried out on Herefordshire & Radnorshire Nature Trust's Reserves and a list of captures submitted later. If interested contact J.Cooter, 23 Meyrick St., Hereford, HR4 ODY or tel 0432-268121 working hrs.

Records of Chrysomelidae and Curculionoidea (Coleoptera) from the Eskmeals Dunes Nature Reserve, West Cumbria.

The Eskmeals Dunes Nature Reserve in West Cumbria lies on the south bank of the river Esk, and is situated south of Ravenglass village. It falls within National Grid squares SD 07.94, 08.94 and 08.95. The reserve is an SSSI site and has been managed by the Cumbria Trust for Nature Conservation since 1972. Covering an area of 125 acres the reserve represents one of the few remaining unspoilt sand-dune systems in Britain and contains a wide variety of habitats. They range from sand-dunes with rich herbaceous slacks, damp meadows, raised shingle beaches, dune heath and saltmarsh. The following list of phytophagous beetles is the result of a number of collecting trips made to the reserve during the past few years. To save space, all collecting details have been omitted. Usually species were taken on their respective hostplants, and normal methods of collecting were used to work and sample the vegetation. No permit is required to visit the reserve, but people wishing to collect or carry out survey work are advised to contact the Honorary manager, Mr Anthony Warburton, Monks Moors, Eskmeals, Cumbria.

Notes on particular species:

Hypera dauci. It would appear that this rare species has not been recorded from Cumbria for over fifty years now so its occurrence at Eskmeals is of particular interest. F.H.Day recorded it from Seascale in 1909. Although the foodplant Erodium cicutarium still grows along the Seascale coast, and the habitat would still appear suitable for the weevil, I have searched unsuccessfully for it during the past fifteen years, and it is perhaps locally extinct in this area. The rather striking larva of H.dauci feed externally on the host plant, and they bear some resemblance to the larvae of certain lycaenid butterflies.

Cleopus pulchellus is not usually associated with dune habitats although I have taken it in similar situation on the nearby Ravenglass Reserve. It appears to be very restricted on the Eskmeals Reserve on its foodplant Scrophularia nodosa.

Mesites tardii. This very local wood-boring weevil was discovered some years ago in West Cumbria and added by me to the County List. The weevil is well established in the mixed woods around the river Esk estuary and especially near to the Muncaster estate. The remains of several dead specimens were found in a small decayed log among flood refuse by High Water Mark. The piece of wood presumably arrived on the reserve via the high flood tides, and may have originated from the Ravenglass area.

Species List:

CHRYSOMELIDAE

Cryptocephalus fulvus Goeze
Chrysolina staphylaea (L.)
Gastrophysa viridula (Dg.)
Phaedon concinnus Stph.
Phaedon cochleariae (F.)
Phyllodecta vitellinae (L.)
Galerucella tenella (L.)
Lochmaea caprea (L.)

Longitarsus jacobaeae (Whse.)
Longitarsus luridus (Scop.)
Crepidodera ferruginea (Scop.)
Crepidodera transversa (Marsh.)
Sphaeroderma testaceum (F.)
Psylloides affinis (Pk.)
Psylloides narcida (Ill.)
Cassida rubiginosa MÜLL.

APIONIDAE

Apion apricans Hb.
Apion carduerum Kirby
Apion confluens Kirby
Apion cruentatum Walton
Apion curtirostre Germ.
Apion dichroum Bedel
Apion ervi Kirby
Apion gyllenhali Kirby
Apion loti Kirby.

Apion marchidum Hb.
Apion ononis Kirby
Apion rubens Stph.
Apion spencii Kirby
Apion subulatum Kirby
Apion ulicis (Forster)
Apion viciae (Pk.)
Apion violaceum Kirby

CURCULIONIDAE

<u>Otiorhynchus ovatus</u> (L.)	<u>Cleopus pulchellus</u> (Hb.)
<u>Otiorhynchus sulcatus</u> (F.)	<u>Mesites tardii</u> (Curtis)
<u>Phyllobius argentatus</u> (L.)	<u>Ceuthorrhynchidius troglodytes</u> (F.)
<u>Phyllobius pyri</u> (L.)	<u>Ceutorhynchus hirtulus</u> Germ.
<u>Polydrusus pulchellus</u> Stph.	<u>Ceutorhynchus litura</u> (F.)
<u>Philopodon plagiatus</u> (Sch.)	<u>Ceutorhynchus punctiger</u> (Sahlb.)
<u>Tropiphorus terricola</u> (Newm.)	<u>Ceutorhynchus quadridens</u> (Pz.)
<u>Sitona cambricus</u> Stph.	<u>Rhinoncus castor</u> (F.)
<u>Sitona hispidulus</u> (F.)	<u>Rhinoncus bruchoides</u> (Hb.)
<u>Sitona lineellus</u> (Bonsd.)	<u>Rhinoncus pericarpus</u> (L.)
<u>Sitona suturalis</u> Stph.	<u>Phytobius quadrituberculatus</u> (F.)
<u>Cleonis piger</u> (Scop.)	<u>Ørobitis cyaneus</u> (L.)
<u>Hypera arator</u> (L.)	<u>Limnobaris pilistriata</u> (Stph.)
<u>Hypera cauci</u> (Ol.)	<u>Anthonomus brunnipennis</u> (Curtis)
<u>Hypera nirostris</u> (F.)	<u>Tychius flavicollis</u> Stph.
<u>Hypera plantaginis</u> (Dg.)	<u>Mecinus pyraster</u> (Hb.)
<u>Hypera ramicis</u> (L.)	<u>Gymnetron labile</u> (Hb.)
<u>Hypera suspiciosa</u> (Hb.)	<u>Ramphus pulicarius</u> (Hb.)

R.W.J.Read, 43 Holly Terrace, Hensingham, Cumbria,
CA28 8RF

Microscydmus minimus and M.nanus: a correction. - Dr R.Colin Welch, in his highly interesting report of single specimens of two very rare Scydmaenids from an ancient oak at Staverton Park, Suffolk in the January of 1986 ("Newsletter" number 23), states that one of them, Microscydmus minimus, was previously known to British coleopterists as M.nanus; the implication being that these two names are synonymous. I think it should be pointed out that they infact relate to different species, both of them British, though nothing to that effect has, to my knowledge, yet appeared in print - a deficiency which will (one must hope) soon be made good. Meanwhile, suffice it to say that M.minimus, the

smaller of the two (indeed a veritable pygmy), is an old-forest relict living in the wood-mould of ancient oaks, known at present from Sherwood Forest, Bagot's Park (Staffs.), Windsor and Richmond Parks (information from Mr. P.M.Hammond, who found both species amongst British Museum material), and now Staverton Park. M.minimus was first recorded under its correct name by Prof. J.A.Owen in 1981 (Entomol.Mag., 117:96) as one of six beetles apparently new to Windsor Forest; it has been met with in most years since then, at times rather freely, in the Great Park. It must surely have been extremely rare there in earlier days to have been missed by Donisthorpe.

M.nanus, on the other hand, would seem to live in damp dead leaves, moss, etc., and to be known with us only from near Scarborough, Bradfield (Berks.), Ayr Gorge and Rannoch (lex unpublished). I have it from the first named locality, where it must have occurred in considerable numbers last century. I need hardly add that when I wrote on this and other Scydmaenidae in 1969, the fact that we had two species confused under the name Euconnus nanus had not been discovered.

Regarding E.pragensis, the other rarity noted from Staverton Park by Dr. Welch, in the absence of its usual ant host Lasius brunneus, he remarks that its last known occurrence at Windsor was in 1940. Only two years ago (7.v.84) my friend John Owen was so fortunate as to take an example there, which I have seen, in a felled oak that had earlier held a nest of L.brunneus.

A.A.Allen, 49 Montcalm Road, Charlton, London, SE7 8QG

Kent Coleopterists' Workshop 14th MARCH 1987. The sixth annual meeting will be held at Maidstone Museum on Saturday 14th March 1987 from 2pm until 5pm; anyone interested in beetles will be welcome. Suggested groups for particular study will be Scarabaeidae, Dryopidae, Cantharidae and Mordellidae, but exhibits or displays on any other groups of interest or collecting techniques will be welcome. There will be a short formal session with the opportunity for anyone to address the meeting as a whole, with the rest of the time left for informal discussion and with the chance to name or have named any problem specimen. Tea will be available. Eric Philp, Maidstone Museum.

Can anybody help?

The B.B.C. Natural History Unit would like to film the egg laying behaviour and larval strategies of the oil-beetle (Meloe spp.). They would also like to obtain a supply of adults and/or larvae to attempt to elicit breeding under controlled conditions. Filming will be undertaken in the spring and summer of 1987 and the series will be screened on B.B.C.1 at the end of the year.

They would appreciate contact with any readers who have experience with Meloe and could offer advice or specimens.

Please contact Nigel Marven at Bristol on (0272) 732211 extension 2269 or during the evenings on (0272) 20595. Or write to the B.B.C. (Natural History Unit), Whiteladies Road, Bristol, BS8 2LR

J.C.

Provisional Atlas of the ELATEROIDEA of the British Isles.

The first "provisional atlas" of the Elateroidea (Elateridae, Throscidae and Eucnemidae) will be published this year. The recording scheme was launched in 1982 and a "provisional atlas" is the best possible way of recognising contributors' efforts over the years, and stimulating further interest.

Although distribution patterns are beginning to emerge, there is still a tremendous amount of work to be done, and it will probably be another five years before the "final" atlas can be produced. Even then, it will be final only in the sense that I shall probably never want to see another click beetle ever again!

All records sent to me by MARCH 31st 1987 will be included in the "provisional atlas". YOU ARE STILL IN TIME TO SEND THEM TO ME. Most collectors find the "Gen 7" or "Gen 13" cards, produced by the Biological Records Centre, the easiest and quickest to complete but lists or storeboxes of insects

are equally acceptable providing that the records/specimens have basic data: locality (preferably with a 4-figure O.S. reference), date and name of collector. Additional notes about habitat, collection method and behaviour are always most welcome.

Please send records and requests for recording cards to:
HOWARD MENDEL, ELATEROIDEA RECORDING SCHEME, C/O THE
MUSEUM, HIGH STREET, ISWICH, SUFFOLK, IP1 3QH.

Field Study Visit to the BIALOWIEZA FOREST, NE Poland.

Although I have experienced some of the grandeur of continental climax forest, the opportunity to visit Bialowieza, has, thus far eluded me. It is generally regarded as the finest approximation of broadleaved post-glacial climax forest that exists in the Old World. It is, like our own Flandrian forests once were, something of a mosaic, various trees achieving dominance in accordance with prevailing edaphic conditions.

The entire biota is spectacular. Polorbis, the Polish travel people have prepared for us an opportunity to visit Bialowieza, meet Polish scientists, and study and collect invertebrate material in some parts of the forest.

I am not a travel agent and have time constraints of my own. Please bear with me because synchronisation of all the many details is difficult because the trip is being made known only through the medium of the "Newsletter". Demand for accomodation in Poland is high. I have had to book a provisional departure date due to this, and we leave for 14 days on Saturday August 1st, 1987.

The likely inclusive cost will be £380-00 all half board for flight, 2 nights Warsaw hotel, remainder in Forestry Institute Bialowieza, guides, interpreters etc.

Interim circulars providing updates (if necessary) will on the tour details will be issued. I have asked for opportunities to see other areas of NE Poland, and participants must be prepared to accept what comes!

Cheque deposits in the sum of £90=00 made out to "Mr P.F.Whitehead (Polish Study Trip)" must reach me by February 21st, 1987, preferably sooner. The entire cost may be paid in advance but the balance has to reach me in any case by JUNE 1st 1987. Please send 3 x 18p stamps with your cheque.

You can expect a vivid memorable trip looking at natural unspoilt communities of animals and plants, but you should be prepared for minor amendments, and the need (if response is poor, which is not judged likely) to accept perhaps a 10 day tour.

Reinbursement scales set by Polorbis (read carefully)

(applies to personal cancellation)

Up to 42 days before departure	total cost less deposit
42 - 28 days before departure	60% total tour cost
27 - 15 days before departure	40% total tour cost
14 - 1 days before departure	20% total tour cost
Departure day	no reimbursement

For the limited period of time during which I hold monies reimbursement is not a problem.

Insurance: Details of presumed group scheme to follow from Polorbis.

Visa: Likely to cost £17=30p per head; presumption is Polorbis will circularise you. Two passport-type photographs are normally required.

Innoculations: None required.

My role: As instigator, I simply gather and disseminate information. I accept no responsibility, legally or in any other sense, for any matters resulting from this visit, however arising. Price changes are entirely in the hands of Polorbis.

Binoculars: Recommended (for Black Woodpeckers and Cerambyx cerdo!) but not for Giant Oxen as the world's last was killed at Bialowieza in 1672.

Wellies: light boots of some kind are probably essential. (visit may include areas of wet-lands).

Alcohol: This excellent preservative of insect, if not human, tissue is probably best purchased at the airport on entry.

Anthropocentric insects: mosquito repellent advisable!

P.F. Whitehead,
"Moor Leys"
Little Comberton,
Persnore,
Worcestershire,

(Polorbis Travel Ltd.,
82 Mortimer Street,
London,
WIN 7DE).

WR10 3EP (tel: 038-674-533)

Book Notice: PASTURE-WOODLANDS IN LOWLAND BRITAIN.

by Paul Harding and Francis Rose (ITE).

This is a very unusual publication - it is wholly readable! So refreshing to find a book that is concise, easily understood and packed with necessary information. Alas, I have not had the time to read through as a "reviewer" with ultra-critical eye; however, reading as an entomologist who has spent more time in ancient woodlands looking for insects than in any other habitat, I find this book has more than filled a yawning gap in our literature. Some of the text has appeared in ITE reports, but it has now been expanded and updated and, more to the point, formally published.

An order form is enclosed with this "Newsletter". It is

necessary reading for anyone interested in ecology of our woodlands and will be a constant reference for many years to come. The tables and appendices are packed with information and as such are very useful tools for anyone engaged in survey work for the NCC or their County Trust (which probably includes most "Newsletter" subscribers!).

I can strongly recommend this fine book to fellow Coleopterists.

J.C.

7th Scottish Entomologist's Field Meeting.

This year's meeting will be based at Achnamara Outdoor Activities Centre, Achnamara, Argyll for the weekend of July 3rd to 5th.

Achnamara is close to the National Nature Reserves of Tainish and Moine Mhor (Crinan) and numerous SSSI's covering a diversity of habitats including mixed deciduous woodland and the rich wet flushes characteristic of the West Highlands. The Centre is surrounded by Forestry plantations and excellent coastal sites are within walking distance. Gigha, Jura, the Mull of Kintyre and the extensive Machrihanish Dunes are within reach for a day visit.

Accommodation: Dormitories and bunk beds (duvets provided) The large recreation room will double as a laboratory (bring own microscope and lights (with extension leads). Not licenced. Cost: about £10 per day all-in. Arrive 9pm Friday (supper 6:30 - 9:00)
Full details from Dr R.P. Knill-Jones, 2 Lilybank Gardens, Glasgow, G12 8QQ