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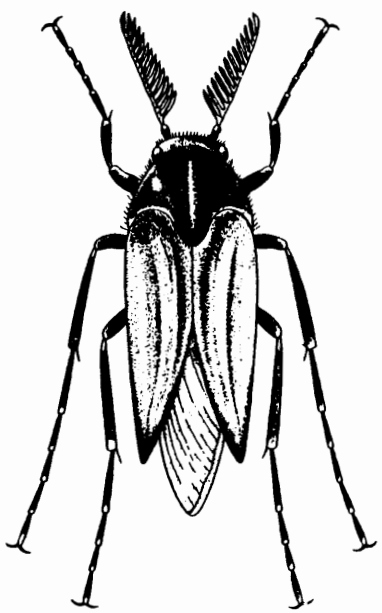
THE COLEOPTERIST'S NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 42 FEBRUARY 1991



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COLEOPTERIST'S NEWSLETTER

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References Allen, A.A. (1958a), Allen, A.A. (1988), Bily, S. (1982), Fowler, W.W. (1889), Harding, P.T. & Rose, F. (1986), Harding, P.T. (1978), Levey, B.B. (1977), Menzies, I. (1990), Owen, J.A. (1990), Shaw, S. (1951), Shirt, D.B.,ed. (1987), Tozer, D. (1939).

Roger Key,
NCC,
Peterborough.

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ACCOUNTS FOR 1990

Expenditure	£ p	Income	£ p
Postage	109 - 81	Subscriptions	360 - 00
Envelopes	11 - 58	Adverts	10 - 00
Printing	264 - 64	Interest	12 - 89
Sundries	3 - 00	Bank fee refund	00 - 70
	£389 - 03		£383 - 59

Balance at 13 November 1989 = £111 - 19p

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P. Hodge

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THE COLEOPTERIST'S NEWSLETTER

February 1990 Number 42

PHYTOBIUS ZUMPTI WAGNER, 1939 (CURCULIONIDAE) IN BRITAIN - A PRELIMINARY NOTE AND APPEAL FOR RECORDS

The discovery of this species in this country stems from John Read's observation that *Phytobius quadrituberculatus* (Fab.) had *Glaux maritima* as one of its foodplants (1990, *Coleopterist's Newsletter* 40: 10-11). In correspondence with Dr Enzo Colonelli of Rome I mentioned this record; it is also of interest that Lohse (1985, *Die Käfer Mitteleuropas*, Vol 11: 184, Goecke & Evers, Krefeld) also gives *Glaux* as a foodplant of *P. quadrituberculatus*. Dr Colonelli pointed out (*in litt.*) that it was more likely that the *Glaux*-feeding weevils were *P. zumpti* Wagner and sent me a photocopied extract from Tischler (1985, *Faun. -Ökol. Mitt.* Suppl. 6: 1-180), which details the differences between the two species. Amongst these are : i. the much less pronounced shoulders of *P. zumpti* compared to *P. quadrituberculatus*; ii. the thick elytral covering of small coppery scales (much smaller than the broad coppery scales also present) in *P. zumpti*, which are sparser and much less obvious in *P. quadrituberculatus;* iii. the unicolorous tibiae of *P. zumpti*, usually reddish-yellow, contrasting with the tibiae of *P. quadrituberculatus*, which are evidently darkened in the middle and thus ringed, sometimes rather obscurely; iv. the second and third joints

of the antennal funiculus: these are about the same length and shorter compared to their breadth in *P. zumpti;* in *P. quadrituberculatus* the third joint is evidently shorter than the second and both are narrower in proportion to their length. There are other differences, several of them distinctive, but at the same time difficult to see without the aid of a high power light, or scanning electron microscope. The habitats and foodplants are very different in the species. Tischler says that *P. zumpti* is monophagous on *Glaux* whereas *P. quadrituberculatus* is oligophagous on various species of *Polygonum* (out of Allen, A.A., 1990, *Coleopterist's Newsletter* 41: 8). It would appear that the account of the two species given by Lohse(1985) is not accurate and has been superseded. John Read has kindly sent me a series of six *P. zumpti* from four localities in Cumbria and I have two specimens taken at Whiteford, Glamorgan by myself. *P. zumpti* appears to have a narrow distribution in other parts of Europe, being known previously only from North Sea coasts of the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark; it has not been recorded from France.

British coleopterists should examine their series of *P. quadrituberculatus*, particularly specimens taken in association with *Glaux* or on coastal vegetation, for *P. zumpti*. I would be very grateful to receive further records or specimens for determination.

M.G. Morris,
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Dorchester,
Dorset, DT1 2HF.

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RE-APPEARANCE OF *ATHETA FUSSI* BERNHAUER IN SURREY

Among the beetles caught last June in a flight interception trap which I had set up in a wood near Headley, Surrey, was a small staphylinid which

Sussex, Middlesex, Surrey, West Kent, North Hampshire and Leicestershire & Rutland from 1970 onwards.

Habitat and ecology Ancient broad-leaved woodland and pasture-woodland. Associated with oak. Continental authors also list beech and sweet chestnut as host trees. In Britain the larvae develop in and under bark of old, dying and dead trees. Larvae have been recorded in October, November and February. On the Continent the larval stage takes two years. In Britain, adults leave a characteristic emergence hole in the bark and have been found on the trunks and branches of oak. Adults have been recorded from May to early August, though the main period of emergence is probably during June and early July. Adults are very active in hot, sunny weather.

Status Status revised from RDB 2 in Shirt (1987). Very local in south-eastern England. There are old records for as far north as Nottinghamshire. Possibly increasing, with a number of recent new vice-county records.

Saproxylic status Grade 2 in Harding & Rose (1986).

Threats Loss of broad-leaved woodland and parkland through practices such as clear-felling and coniferisation. Habitat loss, in particular, through the felling of ancient trees, removal of dead wood from living trees for reasons such as forest hygiene, aesthetic tidiness, public safety, or for use as firewood.

Management and conservation Ancient trees and both fallen and standing dead timber, especially with the bark attached, should be retained. The removal of dead timber from ancient trees should be avoided. Gaps in the age structure of the tree population should be identified and the continuity of the appropriate dead wood habitat ensured by planting and possibly by pollarding.

Almost 50% is now completed and has an additional vetting by national experts. Because of its size we have decided to produce the Review in two volumes, and will publish the first half as soon as it is ready in early spring. This comprises most major families such as the carabids, chrysomelids and curculionids as well as many of the smaller families. The second volume will not surprisingly be dominated by the staphylinids.

After March, Mark's work on completing the Review will become part of that of the "Joint Nature Conservation Committee", that bit of NCC which will retain a national overview, while I will then be working for NCC (England). The responsibility for overseeing Mark's work will then probably fall to Stuart Ball, (some of you may know him from his work in developing the biological recording database package Recorder) who has already had considerable input into the project.

There may be additional delays caused by the dismemberment of the NCC - I sincerely hope not, but the reorganisation has already cost us a very great deal of time. I must apologise to everyone eagerly anticipating the publication of the Review, especially to those of you who have contributed so much to it. I hope that you will all think that it will have been worth your enforced patience when you finally see it.

EXTRACT:

AGRILUS PANNONICUS NOTABLE A
Two-spot wood-borer

Order COLEOPTERA Family BUPRESTIDAE

Agrilus pannonicus (Piller and Mitterpacher, 1783) formerly known as biguttatus (F., 1777)

Distribution Recorded from the following vice-counties:Nottinghamshire, Hertfordshire, and south Hampshire before 1970 and Berkshire, West

has turned out to be an example of *Atheta fussi* Bernh. Its features, including the shape of the aedeagus, agree well with those published for this species and, on direct comparison, it matches well wuth the only other specimen of this beetle to have been recorded from Britain, taken by Champion in 1875 (see Champion, 1909, *Entomologist's mon. Mag.* 45: 31) and now in the Nature History Museum, London.

Though only two specimens of this beetle have yet been found there, it seems likely that the species is indigenous. Champion's specimen was taken at Mickleham, Surrey, which lies about two miles from the site of the trap at Headley and neither area is one in which an immigrant beetle species would be expected. Anyway, the species is very rare on the continent. How the beetle has kept out of the way of the many collectors who have worked the Mickleham-Headley area since Champion's time remains to be determined.

A. fussi does not appear in Joy (1932, *A practical handbook of British beetles*) but descriptions are given by Champion (*loc.cit.*), Fowler & Donisthorpe (1913, *The Coleoptera of the British Islands*, vol. 6, supplement) and by Lohse (1974, *Die Käfer Mitteleuropas*, vol. 5).

I thank Mrs S. Shute and Mr P. M. Hammond for access to the Champion Collection and for providing facilities for comparison of the two beetles.

J. A. Owen,
8 Kingsdown Rd.,
Epsom,
Surrey KT17 3PU.

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SOME UNEXPECTED BEETLES IN S. ESSEX

My friend Peter Harvey recently sent me some Staphylinidae that he had taken in pitfall traps whilst recording spiders at Mucking Heath

(TQ6580), during 1990. The traps were placed on a section of unimproved grassland adjoining the golf-course. Several rare spiders were taken in the traps, together with twelve species of ant, suggesting that the beetles would also prove to be of interest. From a single large tube some 300 specimens were shaken out, most of these comprising *Staphylinus aeneocephalus* Deg., *S. brunnipes* Fab., *S. compressus* Marsh., and *S. olens* Müll., but also several *Acidota cruentata* Mannh., and one each of *Quedius longicornis* Kraatz, *Q. nigrocaeruleus* Fauv. and *Lamprinodes saginatus* (Grav.). As the two *Quedius* are associated with moles (although I have once taken *Q. nigrocaeruleus* in a barn owl's roost) it occurs to me that pitfall traps in suitable places might be an effective method of recording them without disturbing the moles. Likewise, *Lamprinodes* might be caught in traps placed near suitable species of ants (I could also mention in this respect that *Drusilla canaliculata* (Fab.), *Zyras limbatus* (Payk.) and *Platydracus stercorarius* (Oliv.), known associates of ants, were also present). The complete list of species recorded (32 in all) is appended below:

Acidota cruentata, *Oxytelus inustus* (Grav.), *Lathrobium multipunctum* Grav., *Othius angustus* Steph., *O. laeviusculus* Steph., *Xantholinus jarrigei* Coiff., *Philonthus cognatus* Steph., *Platydracus stercorarius* (Oliv.), *Staphylinus aeneocephalus*, *S. brunnipes*, *S. compressus*, *S. olens*, *Quedius curtipennis* Bernh., *Q. longicornis*, *Q. nigrocaeruleus*, *Q. picipes* (Mannh.), *Q. semiaeneus* (Steph.), *Q. tristis* (Grav.), *Sepedophilus nigripennis* (Steph.), *Tachyporus hypnorum* (Fab.), *T. dispar* (Payk.), *Lamprinodes saginatus*, *Tachinus signatus* Grav., *T. subterraneus* (L.), *Aloconota gregaria* (Er.), *Atheta fungi* (Grav.), *Drusilla canaliculata*, *Aleochara curtula* (Goeze), *A. bilineata* Gyll., *A. bipustulata* agg., *Zyras limbatus*.

The ants were:

Myrmica lobicornis Nyl., *M. rubra* (L.), *M. ruginodis* Nyl., *M. sabuleti* Mein., *M. scabrinodis* Nyl., *M. schencki* Emery, *Stenamma westwoodi* West., *Formica cunicularia* Latr., *Lasius flavus* (Fab.), *L. fuliginosus* (Latr.),

are only a few North Wales records none of which are more recent than 40 years. About 40 adults were encountered in a small area at high altitude, mostly under stones. No site details are given to help safeguard the population. Adults were noted predating spiders (*Drassodes lapidosus* (Walck.)). There may be more to this mysterious genus than meets the eye.

P.F. Whitehead

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NCC'S NATIONAL REVIEW OF BRITISH BEETLES

It is now more than a year since I wrote the progress report on Paul Hyman's National Review (*Coleopterist's Newsletter* 37, November 1989), optimistically anticipating publication during that forthcoming winter. Much water has passed under the bridge since then.....

First, in of the many turmoils preceding the impending split of NCC, I changed jobs to become acting head of the branch in which I previously worked. This again left me with no time to work on the review. We then had to bid, (fortunately successfully!) for money to employ someone to continue the work. This took us until July before we could take on Mark Parsons, whom some of you will know from his Coleoptera work on Dungeness, to carry on with the work. He has since been working on it full time and is doing a splendid job.

The magnitude of the task proved far greater than we anticipated. The review first had to be transferred from our defunct word processor, on which it had originally been compiled, onto a computer database, and the work then started to bring it up to scratch, incorporating additional information, creating a greater consistency in the status of species, and beefing up the "conservation" sections. A finished data sheet is given below as an example.

EUOPHRYUM CONFINE BROUN (CURCULIONIDAE) IN WEST CUMBRIA

On 14 September, 1990 I was somewhat surprised to find three specimens of this wood-boring weevil crawling over the stone floor of my basement cellar here at Hensingham (NX9816). To try and establish where the weevils may have originated I began to search the cellar and eventually discovered that they had come from the half-rotten wood of a door frame. The weevils had attacked one side only of the frame and the galleries extended from ground level to a height of about ten inches. A good deal of very fine, reddish-brown powder had accumulated around the point at which the infestation had occurred, and from this powder and other general debris on the floor I extracted the remains of well over one hundred individuals.

E. confine has previously been recorded from Cumbria and VC. 70, Cumberland (*Entomologist's mon. Mag.*, 120: 46), but this appears to be the first record for West Cumbria. I would just like to add one more record of it from the county, and this time of its occurrence in a wild situation. On 28 August, 1986, while on a day visit to the Kingmoor Nature Reserve just north of Carlisle (NY3858), in the company of Mr David Bilton I found several adults under bark of a large willow tree.

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

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ACLYPEA OPACA (L.) (SILPHIDAE) BEHAVING GREGARIOUSLY IN MERIONETHSHIRE

The finding of a substantial popula'ion of *Aclypea opaca* (L.) on Cadair Idris, Merionethshire, on 27 May 1990 raises more questions than answers. According to Mrs M.J. Morgan (*in litt.* 14 January 1991) there

L. mixtus (Nyl.), *L. niger* (L.).

Alex Williams,
40 Preston Park,
Faversham,
Kent ME13 8LN.

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THE GENUS *QUEDIUS* STEPHENS

In an earlier edition of the *Coleopterist's Newsletter* (40: 11-13) I initiated a discussion on the genus *Quedius*. The response has largely highlighted the value of the *Newsletter* as a working tool. I should like to thank both Mr Allen and Mr Last for raising the tone of the discussion subsequently (*Coleopterist's Newsletter* 41: 2-7) and I should now like to try to bring together information from these and other contributions.

First comments relate to *Q. aridulus* Jans. and *Q. boops* (Grav.). The hypothesis is that both of these are calcifuge species. Note in particular how Mr Last's regional records demonstrate an affinity with sediments over acid rock. *Quedius aridulus* is the rarer and perhaps more acidicolous species; only specialist work on fossils is likely to unravel their history as colonists in Britain. A record of *Q. aridulus* (det. P.M. Hammond) passed to me by Mr T.D. Harrison is perhaps typical, originating from under heather in a conifer plantation on acid soil, at Tadley, Hampshire (SU66; 25 March 1987). The pH near the soil surface in such a situation is virtually certain to be between 3 and 4.

It may be that *Q. boopoides* Munst. is essentially an orophilous species. I know it from the Scottish Highlands (Argyll 1986) and Prof. J.A. Owen recorded it from Perthshire (1985, *Coleopterist's Newsletter* 20: 6-8). Mr C. Johnson cited it from Snowdon in July 1965 (1968, *Nature in Wales*, 11: 62). Even less seems to be known of the very similar *Q. fulvicollis* (Steph.) in Britain. Essentially a northern species, Mr C. Johnson

cited a male from Broadbottom, Cheshire in March 1964 (1965, *The Entomologist*: 97-103).

In trying to rationalise my knowledge of *Q. fuliginosus* (Grav.) I have paid particular attention to Mr Allen's observations of it in relation to other species. The possibility exists that *Q. fuliginosus* has had its range usurped by *Q. curtipennis* Bernh. in Britain; certainly *Q. fuliginosus* is known as a fossil in England. In Worcestershire I now recognise *Q. fuliginosus* from two sites, both fen. Material recently sent to me for identification by Mrs M.J. Morgan of the University of Bangor, Gwynedd, was dominated by *Q. curtipennis*. *Quedius fuliginosus* was represented by only three specimens: in fen, Cors Goch, Anglesey (SH68), 6 June 1973; at Budleigh, Devon (SY08), 30 May 1978; and in leaf litter at Tregynon Great Wood, Montgomery (SO89), 5 May 1989. The Cors Goch specimen has the elytra much abbreviated. One specimen (Penmon, Anglesey (SH68), 25 September 1972) is of some interest as there is a clear possibility that it is a female *Q. curtipennis* X *Q. fuliginosus* hybrid. It is assumed that hybridisation is much more likely to occur among species which regularly invade each other's niches and compete directly, rather than simply overlap spatially. Mr Harrison has a record of *Q. fuliginosus* for near Marloes, Dyfed (SM60) on 9 July 1988 at the upper limits of a saltmarsh, in a situation where tall-herb (*Sonchus, Eupatorium, Lythrum*) fen communities can develop. So it may be that the habitats of *Q. fuliginosus* and *Q. curtipennis* are tending to become mutually exclusive (in some places) even if it has not always been so (Allen, *vide supra*).

It must be stressed that these are not conclusions, simply pointers. The matter is fraught with difficulty. Amongst *Q. schatzmayri* Grid. one finds considerable variation not only in externals, but also in the relative sizes of the parameres, some of which are densely black-spiculed at the apex, and some of which are bare of spicules. Species are specious!

P.F. Whitehead,
Moor Leys,
Little Comberton,
Pershore,
Worcs. WR10 3EP.

BRITISH ELATERIDAE - MORE NAME CHANGES

Several name changes affecting the British elaterid fauna have been widely adopted on the Continent. The recent publication of 'A reclassification of the *Melanotus* group of genera (Coleoptera: Elateridae) by von Hayek (1990, *Bull. Br. Mus. nat. Hist. (Ent.)*, 59(1): 37-115) has reminded me of two of them. P. Leraut (1981, Les Elateridae décrit par E.L. Geoffroy, *L'Entomologiste*, 37: 95-98) has established the correct application of the name *Melanotus villosus* which has made it necessary to revert to using the name *rhombeus* for the species we are used to calling *Stenagostus villosus*.

Finally, the species formerly known as *Cidnopus minutus* has been transferred to the genus *Kibunea* Kishii (1977, Elaterid beetles from Europe collected by Mr A. Shinohara with descriptions of some new forms and notes, *Bull. Heian High Sch.*, 21: 19-34).

In summary, the following new names replace those in Kloet and Hincks (Pope, R.D., 1977, A check list of British insects, Part 3: Coleoptera and Strepsiptera, *Handbk. Ident. Br. Insects*, 11(3): 48-50) which are shown indented.

Melanotus villosus (Geoffroy in Fourcroy, 1785)
    Melanotus erythropus (Gmelin in Linnaeus, 1789)
Kibunea minuta (Linnaeus, 1758)
    Cidnopus minutus (Linnaeus, 1758)
Stenagostus rhombeus (Olivier, 1790)
    Stenagostus villosus auctt.

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