BULLETIN OF THE
Dipterists
Forum

Bulletin No. 70

Autumn 2010

Affiliated to the British Entomological and Natural History Society

Bulletin No. 70

Autumn 2010

ISSN 1358-5029

Editorial panel

Dipterists Forum Officers

Ordinary Members

Unelected Members

Recording Scheme Organisers

Dipterists Forum Website

www.dipteristsforum.org.uk/

Annual Subscription

Obtainable via subscription to Dipterists Forum:

Annual Membership (N.B. Overseas = £20 total)

Forum - £6 (includes Dipterists Bulletin)

Subscription to Dipterists Digest - £9

Contact Mr M. Parker, 9, East Wyld Road, Weymouth, Dorset, DT4 0RP Email: jmparker_87@hotmail.com

to whom all enquiries regarding delivery of this Bulletin should be addressed

Contributions

Please refer to page 25 of this Bulletin for details of how to contribute and send your material to both of the following:

Bulletin Editor: Darwyn Sumner

122, Link Road, Anstey, Charnwood, Leicestershire LE7 7BX.
0116 212 5075 Darwyn.sumner@ntlworld.com

Assistant Editor: Judy Webb

2 Dorchester Court, Blenheim Road, Kidlington, Oxon. OX5 2JT. 01865 377487 judy.webb@virgin.net

Dipterists Forum Forum

www.dipteristsforum.org.uk/index.php

Photographs: Front cover *Rhamphomyia pilifer* male (Realdipterocera) Adrian Plant, *Calliphora* (above) & *Machimus* (opp) Mark Pajak, Pipunculids (above) & Tephritids (p13) Darwyn Sumner. Other photographs as supplied by the authors or the editorial panel who would be pleased to receive illustrations for general purposes.

BULLETIN OF THE
Dipterists
Forum

Contents

Newsletters
Hoverfly #49
Sciomyzidae #6

m P
PRINTERS

Editorial

The entomologist's burden

I'm not alone in being something of a gear-addict. I've backpacked with everything from a suitcase rattling about with cadged blood-sample tubes (for insects, not blood) to state-of-the-art rucksacks and everything you could need for a life on the road.

I suffer for my addiction; I dismiss the ridicule especially that regarding my pretty useful collapsible mini-table from the Peterborough Mafia (at least one of them carries a canoe about and, from this issue's photographs, seems to also have a line in enormous tripods and telescopes) but "Oh, my poor back!"

So what are we trying to achieve? The most compact and lightweight arrangement of entomological gear and optionally - photographic gear, covering enough for every possible eventuality.

"Save some for me."

This stuff evolves, we try things out for a while and gradually discard them in favour of better options. Ken Merrifield has kept to his assorted bags-on-a-strap system for a long time and Mick Parker has the most compact arrangement for his lab gear so they seem to have reached the evolutionary peak. Mine keeps changing; photographic items from the days of heavy cases and analogue cameras and lenses, through soft lightweight cases and mini-digital cameras (remember the good old Nikon Coolpix days?) and now back again to superior digital cameras and lenses which, for anyone not built like Geoff Capes, cripple after a day on foot. Collecting gear has undergone a bit of a change too, nowadays it's possible to brandish a glass fibre, light weight (fixed length) pole + net as if it were a fly whisk. ("If that's the case" said Alan, "What have you still got in your bag?" - hmm, perhaps I should bring only the one pole, and I do promise you that that collapsible chair is absolutely essential.) My latest find is a pair of super-light binoculars, Pentax "Papilio" (6.5 or 8.5 x 21) which focus down to an amazing 0.5m

All we need now is a revolutionary new pooter design (free from breakage, breath, sawflies, tubing crimpage & bungs popping out) to achieve the perfect dipterist's kit.

Darwyn Sumner

Notice board

Views on the natural environment

There's a White Paper on the natural environment due to be published in spring 2011 which will cover the government's committment for its protection and enhancement in England for a while.

If you've got views on this matter then you can take part in their online survey at http://ww2.defra.gov.uk/our-responsibilities/nat-environment/

Instant garden malaise trap?

The Radio Times "reader offers" magazine is currently advertising an instant gazebo, an insect netting contraption which slips over your patio umbrella to create an insect-proof enclosure. Leave the zippered door open and put some goodies inside and you've got yourself a neat trap or safe outdoor photography studio. www.readersoffers.co.uk/cr52 (not coated with genuine simulated wood-effect veneer)

Free keys

Norwegian keys on the web, including some on Diptera. Not in English, but may cover some groups of interest. I knew of some of these but not the more recent cranefly key (Tipulidae ss).

http://www.entomologi.no/journals/tabell/tabell.htm

Alan Stubbs

Leafmines of Europe web site

The following website is worth a look:

http://www.bladmineerders.nl/ Leaf miners of Europe including Galls. It appears to have very wide coverage, is easy to use and remarkably has English as well as German.

K Merrifield & A Stubbs

OPAL grant for a camera microscope and teaching material

Dipterists Forum has successfully obtained an OPAL (Open Air Laboratories) grant for £3,675 to purchase a camera microscope and to print handouts for the purposes of running Diptera identification training courses.

The technique we have developed for running these courses involves having material prepared so that each participant has a specimen of the same species in front of them. We then take the whole class through a range of specimens to demonstrate the key features, ideally with reference to a tailored, photographically illustrated key. We have found that a camera microscope makes this process much easier. When we have not had access to such equipment we find we have to go round each student and position and point out characters individually – which is very time consuming and makes the whole process rather slow. Having our own camera microscope which, hopefully, gives reliable and decent quality results, will greatly facilitate our training programme.

Consequently, we are in the process of buying a trinocular zoom microscope with a 3 mega-pixel USB camera and an LED ring-light. The bid also included a protective carrying case in which to keep it all. We are also getting printed a quantity of handouts for Hoverfly Identification training courses.

Apart from Hoverfly Identification, we have material available for "Introduction to Fly Families" courses and have started to accumulate material for a "Larger Brachycera identification" training

course. Printing a stock of the 3-part Diptera families handout proved too expensive to include in this bid (these OPAL grants have an upper limit of £4,000), so we will need to seek further sources of funding to do more printing in future.

It is intended that this equipment will be demonstrated at Dipterists Day in November and will be in use at the Preston Montford workshops in March 2011. Apart from the March workshops, we have a series of training courses organised and planned starting with Hoverfly Identification training in Shetland and an FSC course at Preston Montford, both in August, and including courses in Lincolnshire, London, Newcastle and Glasgow during the Autumn and Winter.

So far, most of these courses have been delivered by Roger Morris and Stuart Ball or by John and Barbara Ismay, but Nigel Jones has also run a hoverfly course in Shropshire using the material we have developed. If any other Forum members are interested in becoming involved in running training courses and would like to use this equipment, please get in touch with the Committee.

Stuart Ball

BAP & Conservation

UK BAP update

It is difficult to give a clear assessment of the current and future UK BAP strategy as several aspects of the UK BAP process are under review, but it is possible to give an overview of recent BAP progress and discuss possible changes that are afoot. There is a general consensus that the BAP process has not and is not delivering what was intended of it, hence the need for change. Devolution is also having an impact as the different countries develop their own BAP strategies. The current financial climate, which we all know is not good, will certainly influence the outcome as well.

The new government finally released the results of the UK BAP 2008 reporting round (available through www.jncc.gov.uk) soon after it came to power. The review does not consider species added during to the BAP list in 2007, which effectively represents half the invertebrates. For the other BAP species it shows the trends have changed very little since the previous review in 2005. Approximately a tenth of species are increasing, a quarter are in decline and a little over a third are stable. For the remaining species the trends are unclear, fluctuating or have not been reported. The situation for species in 2008 is subtly better than 2005, but the difference is slight, and there is still a lot to do. Lack of research and survey work, lack of funding and lack of appropriate habitat management are cited as the main barriers to progress, and these concerns have notably increased from 2005 to 2008. The picture for BAP habitats is worse, with fewer habitats increasing or stable and more habitats declining in 2008 than in 2005. It's estimated that 8 BAP species have been lost since the BAP process launched in 1994, and a further 11 BAP species were probably already extinct. Natural England published its "Lost Life" report earlier this year to highlight losses to biodiversity, listing 43 Diptera species that are believed to have gone extinct in England since 1800.

Despite the gloomy picture there are success stories, and members of Dipterists' Forum will be aware that good work has been carried out on BAP species such as *Odontomyia hydroleon* and *Thyridanthrax fenestratus*. However, these examples emphasize that conservation efforts tend to be driven by enthusiasts, societies and agencies engaged at a local level.

As a result of devolution the different UK countries are developing their own BAP strategies. Unfortunately I only have adequate knowledge of the England Biodiversity Strategy, but I am aware that Wales has been appointing new Lead Partners for invertebrate species, Scotland has put Ecosystem Groups in place and Northern Ireland has recently produced a new Priority Species list. The latter lists only one Diptera species; *Cheilosia ahenea*, but in contrast lists thirteen species of sponge, a group that's not represented by any other country.

In England the push has been to integrate species concerns within habitat conservation. Biodiversity Integration Groups (BIGs) were established to co-ordinate this work across broad habitat categories (e.g. wetland, woodland). Taxon groups were established to advise on species requirements and the Regions have been asked to identify Integrated Biodiversity Integration Areas (IBDAs) where conservation effort should be targeted. Different BIGs are at different stages of development and their exact responsibilities are still being refined. The invertebrate taxon group (Buglife, Butterfly Conservation, and Natural England) is active and feeding into the process, but has limited resources. Regions have given a varied response to the IBDA request, as they have already been developing other regional maps to focus conservation effort and the function of IBDAs was not clearly defined at the outset. The original target to map thirty or so IBDAs has been scaled back to less than ten.

A habitat-integrated approach to conservation is therefore becoming more embedded within the BAP process. As habitat loss and a deterioration in habitat quality have been the main drivers behind biodiversity declines it is important we manage the landscape sympathetically to encourage increases in invertebrate diversity. This will emulate other European countries that have maintained a rich invertebrate fauna as a result of having more sustainable agricultural practices. A major challenge will be to recreate structural diversity and connectivity within a landscape that has become fairly homogeneous.

It's recognised that within such a framework we still need separate projects for those species with restricted distributions or specific requirements that won't be addressed through habitat conservation. For some species we still don't understand enough of their ecology to propose management recommendations. Defra made some money available earlier this year to help fill the knowledge gaps, a process we are hoping they repeat in the future as many species still need more research, but in the current financial climate this is / may be unlikely. There are 435 BAP invertebrates in the UK and 398 on the England list. In a climate of diminishing resources we cannot fund conservation projects for these species on an individual basis; we must prioritise those species most at risk and accept that species less at risk will have to wait until more funding can be found.

For other species that we know more about there is still the issue of filtering the distributional and ecological information and management recommendations through to local agencies, land-owners and conservationists. Local conservation workers may not be aware of the species on their patch nor be aware of how to protect them.

The invertebrate taxon group is hoping to centralise available information on BAP species, to make it widely accessible to those who need it, but we need to source the funding.

Another call for more Landscape Scale Conservation is expected to come from the Defra commissioned "Space for Nature" report otherwise known as the "Lawton Review". This report is expected to be published in August 2010 and will look at the state of ecological networks in England (e.g. nature reserves and SSSIs). Landscape Scale Conservation again involves the integration of species and habitat conservation with the wider countryside in mind, linking with agri-environment or other schemes where appropriate.

Defra has just launched a public consultation on a Natural Environment White Paper, which is scheduled to be tabled in spring 2011 (http://ww2.defra.gov.uk/our-responsibilities/nat-environment/). This paper will be used as a vehicle to review the BAP process in England and suggest changes to the current strategy. The results of the Lawton Review will influence this, as well as comments from conservation bodies and other interested parties. Defra intend the consultation to be very open and potentially wide-ranging, but at the same time are keen to promote localisation, where communities become more involved in conservation on the ground. Some conservation bodies have already expressed concern over this as community groups often lack the expertise to tackle species or habitat conservation effectively.

Developments outside of the BAP process that may effect species conservation include the biodiversity duty and biodiversity offsets. Defra recently reviewed the biodiversity duty given to public bodies, which range from Local Authorities and Government Departments to Universities and NHS Trusts. In England and Wales public bodies should "have regard" for biodiversity concerns and embed this within their everyday functions. The review shows that Wales are ahead on this by requiring bodies to report annually, and not surprisingly, public bodies that appoint or assign biodiversity issues to a member of staff perform better in this area. Scotland's biodiversity duty was thought to be stronger as it asks public bodies "to further" biodiversity concerns. In practice Scottish and English public bodies showed similar performance.

Biodiversity offsetting, also known as conservation credits or habitat banking, is a system where profits from development can be reinvested into habitat and species conservation. Plans to introduce biodiversity offsets to the UK are in their infancy, but such a system is well established in the USA and some other countries in Europe have a comparable credit scheme. It is presumed that biodiversity offsetting will arrive in Britain at some point in the future, and this could be used to deliver species conservation on the ground if it can be tailored correctly. Whenever it arrives the critical factor in its effectiveness could boil down to the way in which "biodiversity" is measured.

This has been a longer than intended summary of the BAP process. As you can see a few items are still under development or up for discussion and we expect the strategy in England to undergo some changes. As 2010 is the International Year of Biodiversity this is a good time to take stock. The BAP process has not delivered what it set out to and the 2010 biodiversity targets have not been met. The Convention on Biological Diversity will meet in Nagoya, Japan, this November. Hopefully, and with hindsight, the UK and its constituent countries will lay down adequate post-2010 targets to halt biodiversity loss and will also develop a strategy to provide the necessary resources to carry this through.

Duncan Sivell

Buglife Biodiversity Officer 06/08/2010

Why Collect Flies?

When Oliver Wendell Holmes included the words "Lepidoptera and Neuroptera for little folks, Coleoptera for men sir", he was making an ecological statement as well as observing rivalries between entomologists of different persuasions.

Collecting Leps and Neuroptera does not necessitate dirtying the hands, but Coleoptera presents a very different ball game. Two famous Coleopterists were collecting one time in the New Forest when they found a dead tramp in a hedge bottom. What more natural than to shake him over a sheet to reap the rich harvest of beetles? Coleopterists are made of sterner stuff!

"Don't venture out on the moors alone Sir Henry" warns the mad lepidopterist; from "The Hound of the Baskervilles" The Idler, 1893

But the flies are a different ball game again. Something weird happened to big G when he came to create flies. For all their dubious pabula the beetles are a fundamentally decent crowd. They abide by the rules - they play Queensbury - following the accepted lifestyle of egg, larva, pupa and adult. But flies are the sly opportunists of the animal world. Rules are there to be broken - not only is there a clear evolutionary trend towards doing away with a metamorphosis so that a female adult of an African genus lays another adult, but in another group of flies the adult is dispensed with and the larva rules okay!

Then the habits of flies are varied beyond measure. In the order we see the whole range of human social strata - the genteel well-healed aristocrats decked in splendid regalia- like the truly noble hoverfly *Caliprobola speciosa*. Then we have the swashbuckling pirates like the magnificent assassin flies *Laphria flava* and *Asilus crabroniformis*. We then descend through numerous strata of increasingly dubious habits including those that first infest mammalian or avian wounds, then the surrounding tissue and finally consume the corpse. Finally after a nightmare journey we reach the catacombs level where the real urchins of the fly world make their questionable living. These are the phorids, guys who go in when the skunks come running out with pegs on their noses- they include the famous Coffin flies and there's nothing in Creation so foul that a phorid would not be interested. Not only do these horrid phorids or scuttle flies have diabolical habits, they also look the part.

In Britain we have around 6000 species of flies (imagine that in

comparison to the total for vertebrates, vascular plants and bryophytes with molluscs, Leps and Neuroptera thrown in for good measure!). And most people who study flies gain a reasonable working knowledge of the order as a whole, although most specialise on one or more families. Most families of flies are currently being studied by someone or other, so progress can be made in any family which might take your fancy. As an introduction, I can do no better than to recommend Colyer and Hammond's Wayside and Woodland volume "Flies of the British Isles" backed up by the AES Dipterist's Handbook. If you wish to go further join the Dipterists' Group organised by Alan Stubbs of the NCC.

Why study flies though? Many reasons –

a). Conservation - site surveys are the in-thing these days and time is at a premium. Henry Disney puts the interesting argument that the best group to collect for site evaluation is the Diptera because as a group they cover the largest array of ecological niches. A rich and diverse fly fauna indicates a plethora of niches.

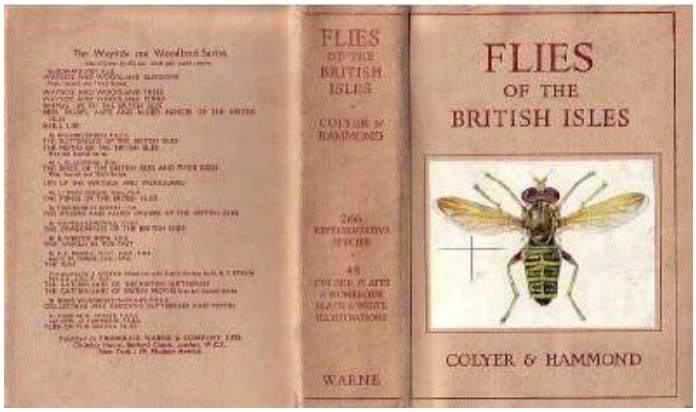
b). Aesthetics- this might seem a slender one - flies! what have they to do with aesthetics. In fact many are exquisitely beautiful- vying with the loveliest of living things.

c). Humanitarian reasons. So many flies are of economic importance as crop pests, or carriers of disease in man and animal that we should find out as much as possible about them.

d). Personal interest and Job satisfaction. This I find the most compelling reason, and this is the one in my case.

By the age of 10, a keen member of Oldham Natural History Society, I decided that there were too many people interested in birds and there was no room for interesting discoveries, and I moved into the world of Lepidoptera - butterflies I bypassed completely - nothing there. But moths were nice. At 13 though, attending the Manchester Entomological Society, I soon came to the conclusion that the study of the larger moths was flogging a very dead horse and I tried to get into micro-leps. But I liked beetles and wanted to know more about flies.

On Christmas Day, 1951, my sister gave me a present, which had the most profound effect on my entomological career- Colyer & Hammond's *Flies of the British Isles*.



On Christmas afternoon, I was out in our garden, looking for flies. Under a sheet of corrugated iron, I found four dingy little jobs, which I found from Colyer & Hammond were pointed winged flies- Lonchopterids. At the next meeting of the Oldham Nats, I showed them to Leonard Kidd of the Werneth Park Museum. He pronounced them males of *Lonchoptera furcata* - about the third record for Britain and about the fifth world record. I'd hit the jackpot straight away with the first shot! Pretty smartish I was in the garden again searching for an action replay- but to this day I have never again taken a male *furcata* - thousands of females of course. But whilst my second sortie for *furcata* was abortive, I made another interesting discovery. I found some weird little things, like legless woodlice, and out of these hatched some female *Lonchoptera*. Back to Leonard Kidd only to learn that lonchopterid larvae had only been described once before in the literature, many years previously on the Continent. I needed no further encouragement- my future lifetime devotion to the study of flies was assured.

I've had some marvellous times pursuing flies, and met some wonderful characters. Through the late 50s and 60s we had a traditional pilgrimage to Windsor Forest after its magnificent hoverflies. Cyril Hammond (illustrator of the C & H duo there, usually with Andrew Low and myself. Back at the boozer in the evening we would discuss the day's catch, then Andrew would try to start a riot by distributing political pineapples and circulating from table to table as the arguments appeared to be abating. Then there was the other half of the C & H duo, Charles Colyer, - a great sense of humour too. I recall him telling me at a Verrall meeting (annual 'ento noshup' in London started at the turn of the century by George Verrall, father of British dipterology) that he always found neighbours very peculiar people. It transpired that his was the only flat in the very plush North London block, which had a vat of pig dung as a permanent outside fixture for rearing the horrid phorids in which CC was the world authority. Sadly CC is no longer with us- in fact he is well past the phorid stage- but the seat of master of Phoridology has passed into the very capable hands of Henry Disney of Malham. After a colonial career in West Africa, Henry found himself living in the sedate city of Bath, where casting around for some avenue of study he suddenly stepped into, or was struck by, the one commodity in copious quantity on the pavements and parks of Bath, which was absent from the West African shanty towns, namely the dog dung mountain! Realising the enormous dipterous potential of this studied habitat he whisked off home with quantities of the priceless commodity placing each dollop in its very own jam jar on the living room window sill overlooking the street. He spent many a happy evening watching the good citizens of Bath craning their necks as they passed by to see what was in the neat row of assorted jars. I gather his was the only house in that street where dog dung replaced the more traditional floral displays. And there have been many other wonderful characters- like the guy who travelled the length and breadth of the country studying the fly fauna of public toilets in search of the near apocryphal Urinal fly. Once apparently common in places, this beast has not been seen for ages- ah, things aren't what they used to be!

The Diptera beggar description - marvellous little beasts - and their study calls for a special type of individual - and some Dipterists unquestionably fall into that category. Obviously the punk era has had something to do with the recent great increase in the number of people taking up Diptera. Clearly in Oliver Wendell Holmes' day, it was unspeakable to even consider the habits of flies, let alone mention Diptera, in respectable poetry.

If you were to rewrite that line now, would it read:

Lepidoptera and Neuroptera for little folks, Coleoptera for the man in the street and Diptera for the superheroes?

Peter Skidmore

[found among his papers by Paul Buckland and Martin Limbert; from various included comments evidently written some time in the early 1980s]

(there's an interesting tribute to Peter on the Thorne & Hatfield Moors Conservation Forum at http://www.thmcf.org/aboutps.htm - ed)

Manchester Museum

On the collection of British Diptera in the Manchester Museum

The Manchester Museum's collection of British Diptera numbers over 123,000 specimens of various kinds, namely: almost 100,000 dried specimens (both identified and undetermined), over 22,000 specimens preserved in spirit, and over 1,600 slide preparations. This Diptera collection contains 3347 species overall, with 48% species coverage of the British fauna (see Table). Some groups are particularly well-represented (e.g. Tipulidae and Limoniidae), others are clearly underrepresented, for instance, Cecidomyiidae (6% of the British fauna), Sciaridae (30%), Phoridae (13%) or Agromyzidae (21%). Only a few small families are as yet absent from the Museum's collection (see Table). The entire Diptera collection is fully labelled and contains lots of local material, particularly from Lancashire and Cheshire.

The Museum's collection of dry specimens of British Diptera was first assembled by John Hardy, the Assistant Keeper in Entomology (1889-1918), and by the end of his term of keepership should have consisted of about 500 species. Harry Britten (1919-1938), the successor of J. Hardy, collected and mounted thousands of Diptera specimens, mostly from Lancashire and Cheshire. He also arranged a number of valuable acquisitions, for instance, a collection of over 300 named species received from the BMNH in return for many rare specimens he presented to them. Harry Britten's extensive collection and the card-index of faunistic records based on his collecting in the north-west continue to be the important source of data for the Diptera of Cheshire and Lancashire (e.g. Kidd & Brindle 1959).

A further big step in the development of the British Diptera collection was undertaken by Alan Brindle, the Keeper in Entomology in 1962-1982. In 1967, he started a complete reorganization of the collection, which lasted several years and resulted in the present layout of the British Diptera collection. A large part of the present Diptera collection of dried specimens is the extensive collection of Cyril Henry Wallace Pugh, collected principally in his home district of Oswestry, Shropshire, which was acquired by the Museum in 1972-73. This collection consisted of nearly 60 store boxes and contained about 20,000 specimens of well over 2,000 species, and at that time "it was the finest collection of its kind existing in private ownership" (Report 1971-72: p. 10). In 1972-1974, the main part of the Pugh collection was incorporated into the Museum's Diptera general collection by Alan Brindle. Since the late 1970s, the Diptera collection was largely augmented by Alan Brindle's own collecting during his survey on the Diptera and smaller aquatic orders of the north-west. This survey resulted in the assemblage of a large spirit collection of adults, mainly of the Tipulidae and other Nematocera families, and of Diptera larvae of all families (over 22,000 specimens of 540 species).

More detailed information about the development of the Manchester Museum's Diptera collection, as well as of other collections of British insects, has been provided by Logunov (2010).

The present Manchester Museum's Diptera collection of dried specimens (see Table) still remains in the same state as it was left by Alan Brindle after his retirement in 1982, and consequently the nomenclature of the entire collection is in need of updating and revision. It is my hope that the present brief report will encourage fellow-dipterologists to use the Manchester Museum's collection of the British Diptera. The collection is fully accessible and can be searched from the museum's website: <http://www.museum.manchester.ac.uk/>. Lists of species for individual Diptera families can be obtained from the Curator (contact details below).

Table: The extent of the British Diptera collection of dry specimens in the Manchester Museum, according to families

Family	British fauna	MM collection	%	Specimens
Nematocera				
Tipulidae	87	76	**87**	2536
Cylindrotomidae	4	4	**100**	115
Pediciidae	20	18	**95**	575
Limoniidae	215	154	**72**	4526
Bibionidae	18	16	**90**	568
Bolitophilidae	17	9	**53**	129
Diadocidiidae	3	2	**67**	16
Ditomyiidae	3	1	**33**	12
Keroplatidae	52	27	**52**	393
Mycetophilidae	471	218	**45**	2460
Sciaridae	266	46	**18**	1108
Cecidomyiidae	652	37	**6**	514
Psychodidae	99	43	**43**	610
Trichoceridae	10	10	**100**	243
Anisopodidae	4	4	**100**	173
Mycetobiidae	3	1	**33**	40
Scatopsidae	46	19	**43**	477
Ptychopteridae	7	7	**100**	219
Dixidae	15	14	**93**	473
Chaoboridae	6	4	**67**	97
Culicidae	34	19	**55**	577
Thaumaleidae	3	2	**67**	33
Simuliidae	35	18	**52**	374
Ceratopogonidae	170	69	**40**	824
Chironomidae	608	269	**44**	4031
Brachycera				
Xylophagidae	3	2	**67**	55
Athericidae	3	2	**67**	57
Rhagionidae	15	10	**67**	380

Tabanidae	30	25	**83**	806
Xylomyidae	3	-		-
Stratiomyidae	48	47	**98**	1766
Acroceridae	3	3	**100**	80
Bombyliidae	9	9	**100**	216
Therevidae	14	7	**50**	182
Scenopinidae	2	2	**100**	45
Asilidae	29	21	**72**	726
Atelestidae	2	1	**50**	4
Hybotidae	178	87	**50**	1414
Empididae	212	150	**70**	4194
Dolichopodidae	296	174	**58**	3856
Opetiidae	1	1	**100**	13
Platypezidae	33	16	**48**	159
Phoridae	336	41	**12**	353
Lonchopteridae	7	5	**71**	249
Syrphidae	276	208	**75**	6621
Pipunculidae	95	39	**41**	622
Pseudopomyzidae	1	-		-
Micropezidae	10	9	**90**	258
Tanypezidae	1	-		-
Strongylophthalmyiidae	1	-		-
Megamerinidae	1	1	**100**	9
Psilidae	26	19	**71**	490
Conopidae	23	17	**73**	471
Lonchaeidae	46	14	**30**	187
Pallopteridae	13	7	**55**	381
Piophilidae	14	10	**74**	420
Ulidiidae	20	15	**75**	363
Platystomatidae	2	2	**100**	96
Tephritidae	76	59	**78**	1921
Lauxaniidae	56	36	**64**	1063
Chamaemyiidae	32	7	**22**	163
Coelopidae	2	2	**100**	72
Dryomyzidae	6	5	**83**	246
Phaeomyiidae	2	2	**100**	54
Sciomyzidae	70	51	**73**	1653
Sepsidae	29	21	**78**	719
Clusiidae	10	5	**50**	120
Acartophthalmidae	2	-		-
Odiniidae	9	1	**12**	1
Agromyzidae	392	78	**20**	1037
Opomyzidae	16	10	**63**	376
Anthomyzidae	20	11	**59**	98
Aulacigastridae	1	1	**100**	2
Stenomicridae	2	-		-
Periscelididae	3	-		-
Asteiidae	8	3	**40**	64
Milichiidae	18	1	**6**	9
Carnidae	13	5	**38**	85
Braulidae	2	1	**50**	32
Canacidae	11	1	**9**	7
Chloropidae	177	67	**38**	1300
Heleomyzidae	63	44	**71**	1108
Chyromyidae	11	3	**29**	78
Sphaeroceridae	137	71	**52**	2524
Drosophilidae	62	32	**51**	564
Campichoetidae	2	2	**100**	37
Diastatidae	6	5	**83**	74
Camillidae	5	2	**40**	20
Ephydridae	151	69	**47**	1137
Hippoboscidae	14	8	**57**	296
Nycteribiidae	3	2	**67**	5
Scathophagidae	54	41	**80**	1166
Anthomyiidae	242	153	**63**	5418
Fanniidae	60	42	**70**	793
Muscidae	285	225	**80**	7576
Calliphoridae	38	36	**95**	1177
Rhinophoridae	8	7	**100**	87
Sarcophagidae	60	45	**75**	787
Tachinidae	261	155	**60**	2159
Oestridae	11	7	**64**	53
Unidentified				19841
Total	**7032**	**3347**	**48**	99636

In the Table the totals for the British Diptera list and for individual families are based on the figures given in the Dipterist's Handbook (in press); the family order and composition of Empididae, Coelopidae, Dryomyzidae and Heleomyzidae follow Chandler (1998). I wish to thank Peter Chandler for providing me with the most updated Diptera family totals and for editing the earlier draft.

References

Chandler, P. (Ed.), 1998. Checklists of Insects of the British Isles (New Series). Part 1: Diptera. Handbooks for the identification of British insects, 12: 1-234.

Kidd, L.N. & Brindle, A. (1959). The Diptera of Lancashire and Cheshire. Part I. Lancashire and Cheshire Fauna Committee, 136 pp.

Logunov, D.V. 2010. British entomology collections of the Manchester Museum. Journal of the Lancashire & Cheshire entomological society (in press).

Report 1971-72. The Manchester Museum. The University , Manchester: 20 pp.

Dmitri Logunov

Curator of Arthropods, The Manchester Museum,
University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL;
email: dmitri.v.logunov@manchester.ac.uk

Dipterists Forum

Membership Matters

The Number of Members & Subscribers at the time of writing (31st July 2010) are as follows :

Dipterists Forum Members	319
Dipterists Digest Subscribers	293

The Breakdown of these figures is as follows :

There are 269 UK based Members & Subscribers to both Dipterists Forum & Dipterists Digest

There are 14 Overseas Members & Subscribers to both Dipterists Forum & Dipterists Digest

Some 35 UK Members and 1 Overseas Member are "Dipterists Forum only" = 36

Some 4 UK and 11 Overseas are Subscribers to the Dipterists Digest only (15)

(this amounts to a total of 329 individuals, as on the 31st July 2010)

We have had some 43 New Members join during the first half of 2010.

There are an additional 63 Members/Subscribers who have yet to renew for this year and they are currently off the mailing list, awaiting renewals.

Membership renewals are usually sent out towards the autumn to any of those who have not renewed by then. As can be seen by the Membership figures, if only a small proportion of last year's Members renew, then we will easily exceed last year's total of 336 Forum Members. If all those renew, then that figure climbs to 380+! (although, in reality I expect it to be about 350).

I am hopeful that more New Members will join during the second half of 2010.

There are still a small number of Members & Subscribers and Overseas Members who continue to pay at the old rate, therefore I would be grateful, if those who have yet to top up their membership fees could please do so. Pay me in person if you wish, as I plan to be at all the main Entomological Events this autumn.

There will be a Dipterists Forum stall at the Amateur Entomologists Society Exhibition on Saturday 2nd October 2010, at Kempton Park Racecourse, starting at 11.00am. More details are available from the AES Website http://www.amentsoc.org/exhibition.htm

This stall will be manned by various Committee members, and advice on a wide range of issues, including membership, can possibly be resolved here. Back issues of the Dipterists Digest will also be on sale. All members & potential members are welcome to introduce themselves.

Mick Parker, 9 East Wyld Road, Weymouth, DORSET. DT4 ORP.
Tel : 01305 788380
E-mail : jmparker_87@hotmail.com

Review

Publications

How to Find Reprints

In the Old Days, the process of obtaining reprints involved prolonged visits to specialist libraries, long queues at photocopy machines and writing reprint requests on postcards to the author followed by a long wait to see if they bothered to respond. All this was not particularly difficult for those with institutional support but a different matter for those lacking it. Membership of professional societies was (and remains) extremely useful as organisations such as the Royal Entomological Society maintain large libraries with efficient librarians who can photocopy material (for a reasonable price). By dint of a lot of effort and a lot of waiting for a thump on the doormat, it was usually possible to get hold of that vital paper one needed.

Empis laetabilis (Adrian Plant)

We now live in an age of electronic publishing. Many journals now publish online (sometimes exclusively) and even where hard copy journals are available, individual articles are now almost invariably available as downloadable pdf files too. Many journals allow online access enabling pdfs to be downloaded (usually at a prohibitive price) but others allow free download. Crucially, modern authors are usually provided with electronic versions of their papers which they are able to attach to e-mail and this is now almost exclusively the way in which 'reprints' are exchanged in the scientific community. Hard copy libraries and exclusively hard copy journals are fast becoming things of the past.

So, reprints of more recent literature can be accessed by three simple operations:- (1) identify the reprint you want (2) find the e-mail address of the author (3) write to the author and ask. There are many ways to identify the reprint you want:- looking down reference lists of papers you already have, searching with search engines such as Google (http://www.google.co.uk/) or Google Scholar (http://scholar.google.co.uk/) or by searching online abstracting services. For example, putting the search parameters 'Empididae AND larvae' into Google returns 10,100 hits, many of which refer to papers I wish to read. Some of the hits are on abstracting sites where you can read the abstract but charge if you want to download the full article. However, there is often a link to the e-mail address of the authors, and even if there isn't, another quick search with Google will usually reveal it. Failing that, you

can search one of the directories of dipterists listed below. Armed with the title of the article and the author's e-mail, all that remains is to pen a polite request for a copy. I have heard it said that this approach only really works if you have an institutional address but having worked as both 'amateur and 'professional' entomologist, I have to disagree. I work mostly on empidoid systematics and have about 95% success rate if I write to others working on empidoid systematics. However, I also work on ecology and biogeography but as I haven't published much in these areas and am 'an outsider' in those fields, the success rate is lower, say 50%. It all boils down to if they know your name or not. If first you don't succeed, try again and they will soon learn your name. When you publish a paper yourself, get into the habit of sending a copy to everybody you are aware of who might be interested in it and you will soon find that they are sending you their own work unsolicited too, sometimes before its actually been published.

Rhamphomyia barbata (Adrian Plant)

Access to older literature can be more difficult and traditional contact with libraries will still be required in many cases. However, there is an increasing trend to make available digital copies of ancient literature that has passed out of copyright and this is likely to become more important in future. A number of digitization websites are listed below.

We all tend to print out hard copy of papers we receive but it can be a devil of a task to lay your hands on the precise one you want for a specific purpose. This is where some means of electronic organization comes in handy. If you are a dab-hand with Access, Excel or similar you can no doubt construct your own, but it might be worth exploring some of the 'off the shelf' options. There are many applications that offer this sort of ability but most of them cost money. One that doesn't cost anything but which seems to hold great promise is Mendeley (http://www.mendeley.com/). In this you can drag your pdf (and other document formats) into the Mendeley desktop which will automatically catalogue them, extract searchable key words and the abstract etc. You can also add your own searchable terms and more complex operations such as configuring it to automatically download new papers from abstracting sites as they are published using user-defined key words. Furthermore you can share your library with other interested parties so that you and they are effectively sharing one larger library. It's only in beta version at the moment but it works reasonably well and even a Luddite like myself can use it.

The following is a list of useful websites. The list is by no means exhaustive but should get you started. Seek and ye shall find.

Links to online journals

Useful links to online journals include those at the B.P Bishop Museum (http://hbs.bishopmuseum.org/dipterists/online-journal-liks.html) and the Smithsonian (http://www.sil.si.edu/eresources/tfr_ej_alpharesults_all_cfm).

Useful sites for accessing older literature

Biodiversity Heritage Library. (www.biodiversitylibrary.org) aims to digitize all taxonomic literature ever published and link it with the species pages at Encyclopaedia of Life (www.eol.org). In some cases the quality of what you download may be a bit substandard or the file sizes a bit too large in which case a trip to http://www.archive.org/ which takes BHL files and converts them to various formats might give you a better result.

Göttingen University. The Göttingen University Digitizing Project (http://gdz.sub.uni-goettingen.de/) has many older German language natural history works including many journals.

Gallica. (http://gallica.bnf.fr/) allows retrieval of old French language publications

Animalbase.http://www.animalbase.uni-goettingen/zooweb/servlet/AnimalBase/list/references is a treasure-trove of old taxonomic literature.

Google Books (http://books.google.com/). This site has a lot of older books in digital formats but you need to search quite hard to find them sometimes. Use the 'advanced search' option and try entering journal name, taxon name etc.

Directories of Dipterists

Addresses of European Dipterists. http://www.geller-grimm.de/address/europe.htm

Directory of North American Dipterists. http://www.nadsdiptera.org/Directory/Directhome.htm

Database of European Entomologists. http://www.entu.cas.cz/europe/select.phtml

World Diptera Systematists Homepage. http://hbs.bishopmuseum.org/dipterists/

Directory of South American Dipterists. http://zoo.bio.ufpr.br/diptera/south/index.html

Other sites with useful links

Dipterists Forum. http://www.dipteristsforum.org.uk/

Diptera info. http://www.diptera.info/news.php

The Diptera site. http://www.diptera.org/

Free books

The out-of-print series Manual of Nearctic Diptera is now available for free as pdf files courtesy of the Ent. Soc. Canada

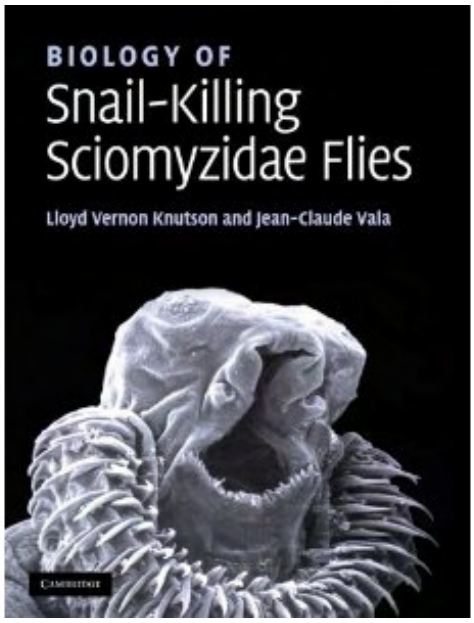
http://www.esc-sec.ca/aafcmono.html

Adrian Plant

Sciomyzidae

Knutson, L.V. & Vala, J-C 2010. Biology of Snail-Killing Sciomyzidae Flies. Cambridge University Press. 584 pp., hardback. ISBN-10 0521867851 ISBN-13: 978-0521867856.

Available from Amazon.com or CUP at http://www.cambridge.org/catalogue/catalogue.asp?isbn=9780521867856



Written for academic researchers and graduate students in entomology, this is the first comprehensive analysis of Sciomyzid flies. Sciomyzid flies are important as prime candidates for the biological control of snails and slugs that help transmit diseases such as schistosomiasis or are important agricultural pests. They also serve as a paradigm for the study of the evolution of feeding behavior in predatory insects. Starting with analyses of malacophagy in general and then in Diptera specifically, all important aspects of the Sciomyzidae are discussed, including behavior, ecology, life cycles, morphology, and identification. New behavioral and morphological classifications and hypotheses are proposed on the basis of unpublished information and a complete analysis of the extensive literature. Also included are keys to adults, larvae and puparia and a checklist of world species, with information on geographical range and the location of type specimens. The accompanying DVD includes Clifford O. Berg's classic film on the biology of Sciomyzidae and biological control of snails

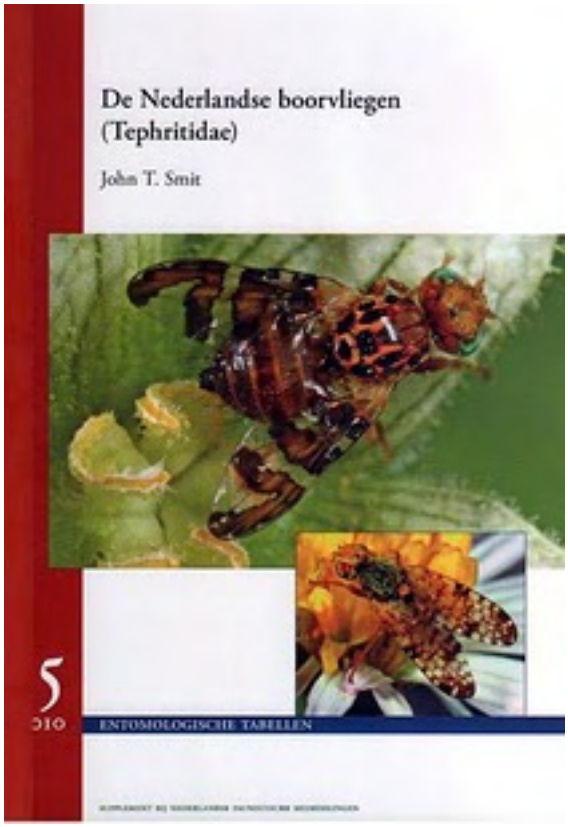
• Brings together information from over 3000 technical publications and unpublished reports, providing an invaluable review of all of the important research in the field • Includes identification keys to all adults and immature stages from all world regions enabling efficient and authoritative identification of specimens • A checklist presents the essential data on all 450 world species in a concise format • Accompanying DVD provides valuable background information on the biological control of snails

Cambridge University Press publicity

Tephritidae

Smit, J.T. 2010. De Nederlandse boorvliegen (Tephritidae). Entomologishe Tabellen 5. Supplement bij Nederlandse Faunistische Mededelingen. 159 pp., paperback. ISSN 1875-760X.

Since tephritids are popular with us and were the subject of a DF workshop looking at my test key in March 2009, this new key work is especially relevant.



The book is written in Dutch to encourage the large and growing community of entomologists like us in the Netherlands. The faunal coverage embraces a segment of NW Europe including all the Benelux countries and the UK/Eire, northernmost France and the west fringe of Germany. A tabulation indicates country occurrence within this boundary (NL, B, D, GB) for 83 species.

The keys are accompanied by a generous supply of illustrations accompanying each page and additional pages of wings with colour tints. With a starting knowledge of the structure of British keys it is practical to ascertain the separation of species not currently on the British list. Species accounts are often accompanied by a colour photo of the live fly. There are formalised headings covering a description, similar species, distribution and biology. The latter heading gives food plants in both Dutch and scientific names. There is also an appendix list of food plants with associated tephritids. Thus though the introductory and some other sections of the text may be awkward to translate, there is much of relevance to us in this very nicely produced work.

In the country tabulation mentioned above, there are two species listed only for GB: *Campiglossa solidaginis* (a great rarity in GB) and *Tephritis divisa* (a very recent colonist in GB). Some continental tephritids have food plants which are absent in Britain (or of very limited occurrence in gardens or as casuals). However,

there are some resident species that could potentially occur in Britain, the list below being species present in the Netherlands or Belgium, or both:-

Carpomyia schineri On rose *Rosa.*

Heringina guttata On Corn Chamomile *Anthemis arvensis* (an arable weed which has greatly declined, but still well established in areas such as East Anglia), Marsh Thistle *Cirsium palustre* and Ox-eye Daisy *Leucanthemum vulgare*.

Ictericodes zelleri On Ploughman's Spikenard *Inula conyza*. A widespread plant on lowland calcareous soils in England.

Myopites apicatus On Common Fleabane *Pulicaria dysenterica*. In Britain we have *M. inulaedysentericae* on Common Fleabane. Both species occur in Belgium but curiously only *M. apicatus* is recorded in the Netherlands.

Rhagoletis batava On Sea Buckthorn *Hippophae rhamnoides* (berries). Regarded as a native of the East coast and very widely planted/invasive elsewhere. The plant is not kind to sweep nets so generally avoided. A strong chance that the fly has been overlooked in Britain.

Tephritis angustipennis On Sneezewort *Achillea ptarmica.*

Tephritis crepis On Rough Hawk's-beard *Crepis biennis*, Widespread native in SE and much of central southern England/south Midlands; also as a casual elsewhere.

Tephritis dilacerata Perennial Sow-thistle *Sonchus arvensis*. Very widespread except in bleak upland areas.

Tephritis diosurea On Wormwood *Artemisia absinthium* (a widespread wasteland plant of densest occurrence in parts of the Midlands) and Yarrow *Achillea millefolium.*

Tephritis fallax On Rough Hawkbit *Leontodon hispidus*. Common over most of England and Wales.

Tephritis tanaceti On Tansy *Tanacetum vulgare*. A widespread native over much of GB though generally found in waste places.

The food plant list includes some extra information that may apply to the situation in Britain.

John Smit has provided an excellent book which should greatly improve the popularity of tephritids in the Netherlands and his keys and illustrations are very relevant to study of the British fauna, especially for the recognition of species that may yet be found here.

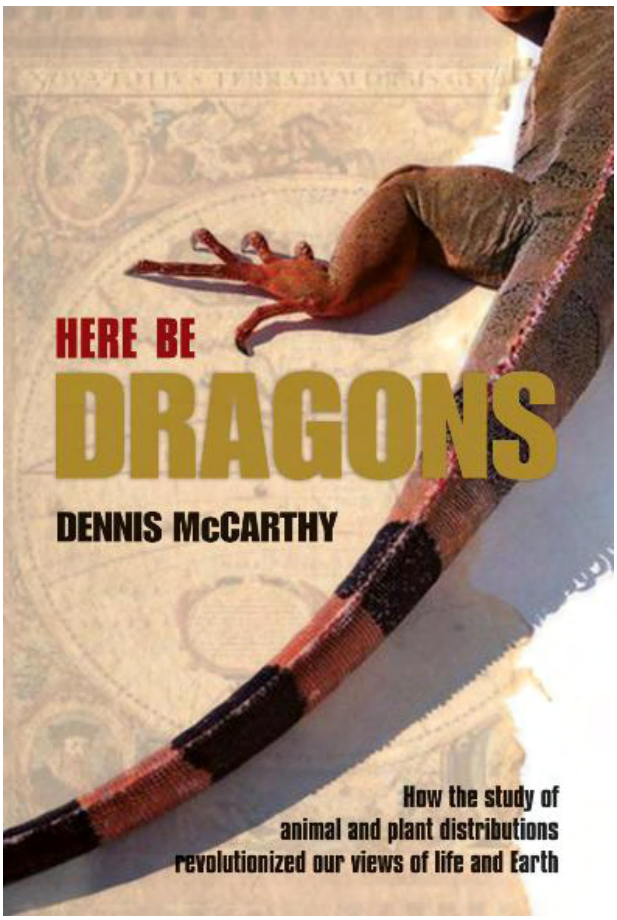
Alan Stubbs

Is this double-Dutch? - Darwyn Sumner

Biogeography

McCarthy, Dennis 2009. Here be dragons. Oxford University Press Inc., New York. 214 pp., hardback. ISBN 978-0-19-954246-8

Available from Amazon.com



Interrogated by a bright 10-year-old at a friend's birthday party the other day about what I did, I chose the word "environment" as a conceptual tag to help answer all the "why" questions fired at me. A more stimulating choice would have been "biogeography" as Dennis McCarthy ably demonstrates in this highly readable story of the subject, it certainly fascinated me for a few hours.

McCarthy uses the work of many of the science "greats" (Linnaeus, Darwin, Wallace, Wegener) to take us on a tour around the Galapagos, Gondwana, Hawaii and lots of isolated islands, along Wallace's and Weber's lines and rings of volcanoes. Along the way he provides us with some of the best examples of the distribution of flora and fauna which serve to tie together the drifting continents. He does the same in the oceans too, linking hydrothermal vent systems to the same drift, and barriers affecting the distribution of aquatic fauna.

With a final brief look at human biogeography, McCarthy has tied together several major scientific subject areas and broadened our perspective and provided us with some context into which we can place our efforts studying Diptera distribution.

Disappointingly, the biogeography as carried out by the vast hordes of amateur and professional naturalists throughout the world today doesn't get a mention, perhaps I'll save the concept of "semantics" for the next party.

Darwyn Sumner

Meetings

Reports

Spring Field Meeting

Windsor Great Park

22-23rd May 2010

Windsor used to be a very difficult place to access and was visited by a very select band, including Cyril Hammond, Peter Chandler and Alan Stubbs. In recent years we have had very few records of flies from Windsor, and so a field meeting to find some of the Windsor specialities was really important to see how the fauna is faring. Special permits are needed to visit some parts of the forest, so a group meeting was a great privilege. This meant that we decided to concentrate wholly on Windsor Forest over two days, giving members the opportunity to see two different places: Cranbourne Chase and Highstanding Hill. Several members opted to stay overnight but there was no formal arrangement for accommodation.

Our visit coincided with some of the hottest days of the year to date, and so although the hawthorn was nicely in flower, there were very few flies about. Indeed, our haul comprised single individuals of many species.

The party starting off in Highstanding Hill

Day one (22nd) saw us assembling at Cranbourne Car Park. This provides access to one of the exclosures within the park that comprises a mixture of secondary woodland and a scattering of very ancient oaks. By the time Alan and I arrived at 9.15am the heat was intense and it got increasingly more oppressive. Nevertheless, we had an enjoyable day and one or two flies were taken. The best of the day was probably *Ctenophora flaveolata*, which is a Windsor speciality (RDB2). The hoverfly *Brachypalpus laphriformis* also turned up in reasonable numbers - this was something of a surprise to me as I so rarely see it. Our Coleopterists fared much better and compiled an impressive list of Red Data Book and Notable beetles, including *Dryophthorus corticalis* and *Ampedus nigerrimus*, both of which are listed as RDB1.

We again assembled at Cranbourne Car Park on day two, but then formed a convoy behind Bill Cathcart the Superintendent of Parks responsible for Windsor to proceed to Highstanding Hill. Here, Bill gave us a very useful tour of the site before we dispersed. This meant that we had a clear picture of the site, its strengths and orientation. Upon dispersing, the group rapidly started to find interesting flies, but again numbers were very low. Some of the best finds of the day included several records of *Ctenophora flaveolata*, a single *Caliprobola speciosa* that was much photographed, several *Brachypalpus laphriformis* and numerous *Criorhina floccosa* that were seen patrolling the bases of oak and beech trees.

The party at lunchtime - thank goodness for the shade of a tree!

My haul on day two included two really nice specimens - a single *Psilota anthracina* investigating a dead tree, and a specimen of *Pandivirillia melaleuca* caught as it investigated the base of the same dead tree. The latter was not recognised as a fly when it flew - it seemed to resemble a *Coelioxys* bee and was caught for that reason. Disaster struck though because I inadvertently pooted a sawfly that promptly chewed up both my prize specimens - the therevid in particular fared badly and now lacks three legs and half its wings. The moral of the story is of course to look more closely and not let sawflies into the pooter.

This meeting was a huge success despite the absence of flies. I was particularly pleased because we attracted a large group of Dipterists and a few Coleopterists. The total attendance comprised 27 entomologists, including 11 who had not previously attended a Dipterists meeting, which is especially encouraging. It also showed that meetings at well-known sites could draw in a range of different specialisms and this too is good to see because we really need to breathe new life into field meetings across the disciplines.

Caliprobola speciosa

This meeting was facilitated by kind permission of the Crown Estate and in particular by Mr Bill Cathcart to whom I am most grateful for his kind help both prior to and during our meeting.

Present: Stuart Ball, Howard Bentley, Christopher Bentley, Peter Chandler, Martin Colyer, Mike Edwards, Andrew Grayson, Andrew Halstead, Peter Hammond, Brian Harding, Martin Harvey, David Hopkins, John Hopkins, John & Barbara Ismay, Alan Lawson, Russell Leavett, James McGill, Ken & Rita Merrifield, Mark Mitchell, Roger Morris, Candace Padmore, Mick Parker, Ivan Perry, Alan Stubbs, Bill Urwin & Judy Webb.

Roger Morris

Summer Field Meeting

Stackpole Head

12-19 June 2010

This was a departure from our traditional approach to field meetings because we chose a self-catering venue and opted to engage a professional caterer to provide evening meals. Memories run deep and we have not forgotten the Charterhouse meeting in 1985 when a similar approach had been taken but the caterer failed to arrive! On that occasion Jane Stubbs and Christine McLean did a fabulous job feeding the hungry masses, but we had no such fall-back this time. In the end, we had an excellent meeting with very good food, nice accommodation and a superb venue. The only thing missing was the flies - it was fiendishly hot and followed a long period of drought in Pembrokeshire that had clearly affected the flies.

One of the fishing lakes at Stackpole

Stackpole, however, was an inspired venue because the National Trust Centre lies within the Stackpole NNR and its complex includes the warden's office and one of the largest greater horseshoe bat colonies in the UK. The great thing about this juxtaposition was that there was plenty of habitat close at hand, so those members who did not want to travel could have a happy time pottering about locally. The presence of cliffs and seabird colonies added to the enjoyment and a good deal of time was spent just enjoying the scenery and the birds. Several members also saw otter in Bosherton Lake.

Work room at Stackpole, Peter Chandler, Claudia Watts, Andrew Halstead & Alan Stubbs.

South Pembrokeshire offers great opportunities to look at sand dunes and saltmarshes, which figured strongly in our itinerary. Both Freshwater West and Freshwater East were well-visited, but the absence of flies was a persistent problem. Local woodlands yielded very little too, although we were very surprised to find *Rhingia rostrata* in many localities. It is obviously doing well in Pembrokeshire. Other nice finds included several records of *Brachypalpoides lentus* and *Lejogaster tarsata*.

One of the most interesting records was that of the broomrape Psilid *Chyliza extenuata* at Freshwater East and Manorbier dunes. In both cases climbing dunes covering rocky outcrops were a common factor combined with the presence of the ivy broomrape *Orobanche hederae*. There seems little doubt that this was the host plant.

The highlight of the week for many of us was a trip to Skomer Island, a South Wales Wildlife Trust reserve and major seabird colony. Our first attempt to get onto the island was thwarted by bad weather having created a huge backlog of people wanting to visit the island. We could not get tickets and had to return the following day (a much earlier start!).

Eric Philip and Stuart Ball participating in the well-known Dipterists' activity of spotting the Hippoboscid.

Our abortive visit to Skomer was improved by a nice walk along the cliffs from Martin's Haven to Marloes Sands. This was bliss, with wonderful cliff-top vegetation and the chance to look for *Eumerus sabulonum*. I found one individual and spent the rest of my time scanning sheep's bit *Jasione montana* for more. This jaunt highlighted a real problem with management of the Pembrokeshire coast because the narrow fringe of coastal path and cliffs was a riot of colour but adjacent fields were almost entirely bright green improved pasture with nowhere for the wild flowers to colonise. There is an urgent need to take action to restore coastal heaths to this wonderful landscape.

Mick Parker, Malcolm Smart, Stuart Ball & Eric Philip at Martin's Haven car park awaiting the ferry to Skomer Island.

The following day a large party made it onto Skomer. Few flies were seen but the birding was excellent. Numerous members spent a long while photographing puffins and many fine shots reside in people's photo galleries. As might be expected, the island is not an outstanding locality for flies and we were largely confined to the footpaths for fear of falling into bird's burrows. The broken remains of shearwaters were evident in several places but did not yield any flies of note (shearwaters are predated upon by larger gulls).

Two remarkable records did however emanate from Skomer, both of which fell to Peter Chandler. The first, *Sphegina sibirica* might be thought of as a woodland species, so its presence on Skomer is a matter of some interest. This record rivals those of the same from Cairngorm car park in 2008 and shows just how widely this species will travel. One possibility is that it breeds in the decaying roots and stems of hemlock water dropwort *Oenanthe crocata* which provided just about all of the decaying plant material on the island. Peter also took *Opetia nigra* (Opetiidae) from Skomer, another reputedly saproxylic species, although it is also reported from emergence traps in open ground (Chandler, 2001).

In commenting on this find, Peter observed

" I've had to give some attention to the *Sphegina* that I collected, but have concluded that they are as I first thought *S. sibirica*, two males from *Oenanthe crocata* flowers on Skomer and both sexes from hawthorn flowers in the Preseli Mountains where it was numerous. Some people were saying during the meeting that they had *S. verecunda*, which caused me to have some doubt, but any records you have received of that may need checking. The problem is that the postcoxal bridge is complete in *S. sibirica* so it runs to *verecunda* in the key. I recognised them as *sibirica* on the long tergite 2 and shiny sternopleura. The difference of *sibirica* from the other species is in the lack of sclerotisation of sternite 1 in *sibirica* as illustrated by van Veen while *verecunda* has a small basal sclerite as van Veen illustrates for *clunipes*, so this will need correction in the new edition of British Hoverflies. If there has been an increase in records of *verecunda* since the second edition came out, this may be because people are misidentifying *S. sibirica*."

If members did record *S. verecunda* could they check specimens please as there is a possibility of mistakes (see note in Hoverfly Newsletter 49).

The shortage of flies during this meeting was reflected in the numbers of our traditional quarry, fungus gnats and craneflies. A haul of 67 fungus gnats is pretty uninspiring, whilst 65 species of craneflies suggests that insects really are in trouble this year. The cranefly list is roughly half the total that might be expected in an average year and illustrates the dire nature of recording this year. There were no notable species apart from *Ctenophora pectinicornis* in the woods surrounding Bosherton Lake within the Stackpole complex. The best fungus gnat record was a female of the very local *Manota unifurcata* from Minwear Wood. *Mycomya pectinifera*, which is confined to the south-west and South Wales but is locally common there, was found at 6 localities. Both are new to Pembrokeshire. Other records of note included the Sciomyzids *Pherbellia nana* and *Pteromicra angustipennis* in the saltmarsh fringe at South Williamston.

Ice cream stop - a DF speciality - Rita Merrifield, Claudia Watts & Ken Merrifield.

The other big highlight for many of us was the opportunity to watch greater horseshoe bats departing from the Stackpole Courtyard maternity roost at dusk. This was a rare opportunity for us to see one of Britain's rarest and biggest bats and was made possible through the kind help of Bob Haycock, the warden of the Stackpole NNR. The roost lies above dwellings and the human residents get upset by large numbers of visitors and need prior warning. For us the sight of these huge hats dropping out of the entrance hole in a ceiling in the entrance arch was quite enthralling.

Planning the day out: Eric Philip, Alan Stubbs, Darwyn Sumner, Richard Underwood, Andrew Halstead, Claudia Watts, John O'Sullivan, Stuart Ball, Ken Merrifield & Mick Parker.

The low numbers of flies meant that this meeting account concentrates on a much wider selection of events, but in many ways this may be taken as a good sign, for despite difficult entomologising a good time was had by all. The combination of an excellent venue, good food and some good localities close to our accommodation meant that we did not venture far afield and were able to adopt a much more leisurely approach to our activities. I shall look for similar opportunities in other parts of the country because it was obviously a good structure for those members who did not feel up to the extreme levels of activity of former years. Most of us are slowing down and a new approach to meetings seems appropriate - concentrate on people having a good time, enjoying good company with similar interests and values, and seeing a part of the world that we have not seen before.

Malcolm gets some help in his search for flies

Numbers of flies were matched by low numbers of other Orders. There were very few aculeate hymenoptera and precious few sawflies, which made the honeypot challenge a very tight race. As we entered the final day, I knew I would have to manage something special even to get a respectable total (I expected to be outperformed by several past winners). As luck would have it, I hit gold that day and returned with the best haul of the week, thereby securing the honey for the second time in my career with a paltry total score of 30 (most years 40 is the score needed to get close to a winning margin).

Andrew Halstead reports: "*the tally of sawfly species recorded by me and others at the Pembroke meeting was 75 (there may be a couple of additional spp when I have time to look through some pinned material). Of these 75 spp, 48 were recorded by me, so 27 species would have gone unrecorded without the assistance of the honeypot challengers. These people will also have added extra sites for those species that I had recorded. Nineteen of the participants provided at least one sawfly record. The worthy winner was Roger Morris (30 points), with Kevin Chuter and Richard Underwood in joint second place (22 points)*".

Those members who have not participated in field meetings might be encouraged to do so by the knowledge that they could win a pot of Andrew Halstead's finest honey if they collect sawflies for him during the week. The trick of course is to carry a separate killing jar for the little perishers as they can make a nasty mess of one's catch (see Windsor write-up).

Members attending: *Residents*: Stuart Ball, Howard Bentley, Peter Chandler, Kevin Chuter, Hannah Cornish, Andrew Grayson, Andrew Halstead, Mike Howe, Roger Hawkins, Nigel Jones, John Kramer, Brian Levy, Erica McAlister, Ken Merrifield, Rita Merrifield, Roger Morris, Mick Parker, Mark Pavett, Eric Philp, Adrian Plant, John O'Sullivan, Darwyn Sumner, John Showers, Sarah Showers, Malcolm Smart, Alan Stubbs, Richard Underwood, Claudia Watts. *Day visitors*: Frank Menzel & Jane Smith

References

Chandler, P.J., 2001. The flat-footed flies Diptera: Opetiidae and Platypezidae) of Europe. *Fauna Entomologica Scandinavica*, **36**. 276pp.

Roger Morris

Late Summer Field Meeting

Wells, Somerset

22-25 July 2010

As there was not a proper residential spring field meeting this year, and the main field meeting was earlier than normal (see Stackpole account), a trip to Wells was organised to try a new venue. The Cathedral School was brought to my attention because my mother attends piano classes there. Fifteen rooms were booked, but in the event only eleven members stayed as residents. It was an excellent choice with pleasant grounds, comfortable if a little unusual rooms, and first class food. We were thoroughly spoiled.

"Dratted GPS - said it was the A39"

Late July was not the ideal time to run a field meeting because the spring and early summer had been so dry, but what was lacking in flies was made up for by the company. In keeping with other short meetings, this one aimed to provide an opportunity for those who could not make the main meeting either because of work commitments or the need to limit time in the field (several members now find the rigours of a full week too much). Our group reflected this, with 5 resident members who had not attended the main meeting, and two day visitors who were new to our residential meetings. This was immensely pleasing because it seems that we are finding ways of encouraging new members to dip their toes into the fun of a residential field meeting.

As Alan Stubbs and I approached Wells, we thought we had time to do a bit of prospecting, but black clouds over the Mendips suggested otherwise. The heavens opened, and we failed to do any fieldwork. Instead we headed for our venue, got ourselves organised and awaited the arrival of other members. The School itself lies in amazing landscaped grounds and comprises a series of stately houses of grand proportions. Our own home (Edwards House) included a magnificent sitting room in which a chamber orchestra might be accommodated.

Day one (Friday 23rd) started with overcast weather and wet foliage, and led to a debate about the sense of going onto peat bogs – they would be wet! In fact everywhere would have been wet as it had tippled down overnight. As arrangements had been made to meet day visitors at Westhay Moor we proceeded to this former peat working, followed by Shapwick Heath NNR. There was limited diversity of flies, although more hovers than anticipated, and good numbers of flies at hogweed for once. The most interesting record was of *Melangyna guttatum* by Mike Pugh. I spent a fair while taking novelty photographs of flies on hogweed. The other striking feature of this site was the abundance of crickets: great green bush cricket *Tettigonia viridissima*, dark bush cricket *Pholidoptera griseoaptera*, and long-winged cone-head *Conocephalus discolor*.

Probably the best record of the day was the Red Data Book (RDB1) weevil *Mononychus punctumalbum* whose larvae breed in the seed pods of *Iris pseudacorus* and *I. foetida*. This species is known from sites on the Dorset coast as well as Shapwick Heath which is a well-known site and so our record is not a huge surprise.

One point that struck us was the ongoing peat milling on The Levels. Surely this should have stopped by now as we imagine these sites must be designated under European legislation and there is provision for review under both the 1994 and 2010 Regulations. For those that are unaware, there is a first class peat substitute marketed by Levingtons – Multipurpose compost which is peat free (£5.99 for a 60 litre bag) that Chris Spilling has tried and recommends. It is competitively priced and an effective alternative to peat.

Our final venue for the first day was Combe Hill Wood, adjacent to Great Breach Wood where perhaps the best find of the trip was made. This was the drosophilid *Hirtodrosophila trivittata* found by Judy Webb on the fungus *Pleurotus cornucopiae* (see photograph). This species was added to the British list by Ivan Perry in 2007 and Judy's record is only the 5th so far (David Gibbs has recorded it from three additional sites).

Saturday greeted us with overcast weather and much lower temperatures, so the choice of woodlands as a theme may have been a little unhelpful. Our first venue, Harridge Wood, a SWT site, offered great potential with silver-washed fritillary *Argynnis paphia* butterflies, ancient ash coppice stools and nice streams, but proved disappointing in many ways. A high point was Judy Webb capturing a vast haul of craneflies that outshone Alan Stubbs' efforts. A nice haul of gnats also indicated that this could be an excellent autumnal site. The only other noteworthy sighting was a fleeting glimpse of *Volucella inflata* (again by Judy).

Our second venue, Holcombe & Lowcombe Woods, was a site that had performed well during the autumn field meeting based at Lacock (Wiltshire, 2003). It was dark and dry but yielded a remarkably good haul of gnats - the best of the trip with 24 species. The woodland hummed and it became apparent that this was the sound of hovering male *Episyrphus balteatus* amongst the small-leaved limes.

Site three, Leighton Hangings, was one that Martin Drake regularly samples for its aquatic fauna. Those that entered the wood and valley did less well than the small band who sampled the ruderal

slopes of the adjacent quarry and the edges of the wood. Here we found *Melangyna guttatum*, *Cheilosia vulpina* and numerous other syrphids, whilst the main party concentrated on gnats and craneflies with limited success.

Keith Alexander, Howard Bentley & Rob Wolton at Westhay Moor

Exhaustion set in, and the party split, with one car heading for base whilst a hardy few went on to Kings Castle Wood which bore resemblances to the description of the Mirkwood in 'The Hobbit'. All that was needed was Shelob to capture the party and dangle them from branches. Remarkably, a few gnats were found and despite the late hour we assembled a small list with the standard flies from Somerset woodlands.

Members at Shapwick Heath NNR: l-r Alan Lawson, Chris Spilling, Howard Bentley, Peter Chandler, Judy Webb, Keith Alexander & Martin Drake.

The meeting came to an end all too quickly with our party partially dispersing on the Sunday morning, but a hardy nucleus pushed on to Velvet Bottom, a site that was remembered as a nice place visited during our Summer meeting at Charterhouse in 1985. This was relatively unproductive, but was noteworthy for its ancient hawthorns. We found one with the workings of the jewel beetle *Agrilus sinuatus*, which is rarely seen as an adult but can be recorded from exit holes and larval chambers. We felt the site was in need of heavier grazing but its history as a lead mine has a strong bearing on what can be done - animals cannot be grazed when water levels are high and they are more susceptible to lead poisoning.

Investigating a vegetated (dry) ditch: l-r Judy Webb, Keith Alexander, Una Garland, Alan Lawson, Chris Spilling & Rob Wolton.

Our final venue was Priddy Mineries, a site Alan and I noted as we took several wrong turnings. This was an amazing site that comprised a mixture of wet and dry habitats, both calcareous and acid. Reed fen and sallow carr was interspersed with localised *Sphagnum* hummocks. There were plenty of flies on hogweed and we noted heavy infestation of marsh thistles with *Cheilosia albipila* and the frosted orange moth *Gortyna flavago*. Overall, the site proved to be a disappointment in terms of the range of flies. Alan found virtually no craneflies but Rob Wolton and I did relatively well for hoverflies.

The fungus *Pleurotus cornucopiae* with *Hirtodrosophila trivittata* in attendance (photo Judy Webb).

The adjacent Scots pine plantation (Stockhill Plantation) yielded one notable fungus gnat: Peter Chandler found *Greenomyia mongolica* in some numbers, collecting 22 males but no females. This is a species that was only recently added to the British list (Chandler, 2008) and until now was known from southern and eastern England. This record shows that it is clearly becoming more widespread in southern England. The gnats from Stockhill Plantation brought the trip's total to 46 species. Given the dry spring and effects of drought on other flies, this seems to be a moderately respectable haul, although one might have hoped for more.

As the remnants of our team dispersed I reflected that it felt that the meeting had been too short, but in fact that was the point - it was enjoyable because the company was attracted to a short meeting. It was designed to appeal to those who would find a week too much and in this respect it was highly successful. I shall be looking for new venues to provide similar events in future years.

Participants: *Residents*: Keith Alexander, Howard Bentley, Martin Drake, Alan Lawson, Roger Morris, Mike Pugh, Malcolm Smart, Chris Spilling, Alan Stubbs, Judy Webb & Rob Wolton. *Day visitors*: Peter Chandler, Una Garland & James McGill.

References

Chandler, P., 2008. *Greenomyia Brunetti*, 1912 (Diptera, Mycetophilidae), a genus new to the British list. *British Journal of Entomology and Natural History*, **21**: 137-142.

Perry, I., 2008. *Hirtodrosophila trivittata* (Strobl.) (Diptera, Drosophilidae) new to Britain. *Dipterists Digest*, **15**: 27-28.

Roger Morris

Forthcoming

2010 International Year of Biodiversity

Events Calendar 2010/11

Dipterists Forum & selected meetings

Check the Dipterists Forum website for changes and meetings added after publication of this Bulletin, www.dipteristsforum.org.uk)

2 October 2010, AES Annual Exhibition and Trade Fair, Kempton Park, London Sunbury-on-Thames, TW16 5AQ, UK. DF will have a publicity stand and publications for sale. See www.amentsoc.org/

2 October 2010 Symposium: 'Insects and the Changing Scene: commemorating the life and work of Peter Skidmore PhD FRES' Doncaster Museum, Chequer Road, Doncaster, DN1 2AE. See www.royensoc.co.uk/meetings/

9-16 October 2010, DF Autumn Field Meeting. **Devon/Somerset**. Accommodation in guest houses. Contact Roger Morris (7 Vine Street, Stamford, Lincolnshire roger.morris@dsl.pipex.com).

15 October NBN Conference, The Royal Society, London "Opening opportunities for biodiversity: working with the NBN" Contact Jo Purdy j.purdy@nbn.org.uk

13 November 2010, BENHS Annual Exhibition and Dinner, Imperial College, London. DF members invited to exhibit flies. See www.benhs.org.uk

(26) 27 – 28 November 2010, Dipterists Day and DF AGM. Oxford University Museum of Natural History, Parks Rd, Oxford, OX1 3PW. See this Bulletin issue for more details and check website for updates.

26 February 2011, AES & Bug Club: Young Entomologists' Day at Oxford University _Oxford University Museum of Natural History, Parks Road, Oxford, Oxon, OX1 3PW, UK.

4-6 March 2011, DF Identification Workshops. Beginner's workshop on 'Introduction to Fly Families', Advanced Workshop on 'Fungus Feeding Flies (Fungus Gnats & Flat-footed Flies) Preston Montford Field Studies Centre, Shrewsbury. Details in this issue and posted on the DF website and on FSC website: www.field-studies-council.org/prestonmontford

March 2011, BENHS AGM and Presidential Address. See www.benhs.org.uk

6-8 April 2011, NFBR (+ ALERC) Conferences, Bristol (Holiday Inn, Filton). The Future of Biological Recording in the UK (+ tba). Contact John Newbould john_newbould@btinternet.com

12-15 May 2011, DF Spring Field Meeting to Abergavenny, S Wales. Contact Roger Morris (7 Vine Street, Stamford, Lincolnshire roger.morris@dsl.pipex.com).

2-9 July 2011, DF Summer Field Meeting to Exeter, based in the University. Booking deposit of £40, full payment by 01 May 2011. Contact Roger Morris (7 Vine Street, Stamford, Lincolnshire roger.morris@dsl.pipex.com

BENHS Dinton Pastures Open Days in the Pelham-Clinton Building, Hurst, Reading. Open 10:30-17:00 on the **second** and **fourth** Sunday in each month except from May – Sept when open only on the **fourth** Sunday in each month**.** We encourage you to bring along your pinned flies and use the Diptera Collections and library for identification. Other Dipterists are usually present meaning good chat and assistance with identifications may be possible. The grid reference for Dinton Pastures is SU 784718, turn left off the B3030 driving North from Winnersh. When parking in the Country Park,

BENHS members are entitled to free car parking if they display a BENHS notice (available from the display desk in the Pelham-Clinton Building). The site is about 15 minutes walk from Winnersh station, which has trains running on a half-hourly service from Reading and Waterloo. See www.benhs.org.uk

April-Sept/Oct 2011 The Northants and Peterborough Diptera Group
see below

Judy Webb

Northants and Peterborough Diptera Group Meetings

April-Sept/Oct 2011. This active local group hold meetings every weekend from end of April until some time in September/October. The programme won't be put together until the winter but if anyone is interested they can contact John Showers at ShowersJohn@aol.com for a copy when it is ready. The meetings usually run from 10:00 until about 13:00 and we try to cover a variety of habitats, including nature reserves and private woodlands and estates

Autumn field meeting 2010

Devon/Somerset 9-16 October 2010

This meeting will involve two venues, one on the south coast, probably around Honiton, and the other on the north coast, possibly based at Minehead. Details have yet to be finalised, so please contact Roger Morris (roger.morris@dsl.pipex.com) with expressions of interest. Accommodation will be in guest houses, so it is possible the group will be split between accommodation units. We will, however, operate as a group and will eat together.

Booking your place:

Administrative arrangements

Important - please read

In the past, I took personal responsibility for the finances of the meetings and the necessary guarantees of payment. This has caused problems however. For example, I frequently made deposits amounting to up to 20% of the total cost of the meeting and am no longer in a sufficiently strong financial position to underwrite meetings. In addition, I was also liable if anything went wrong (as we had at Swansea when I was threatened with legal action because the college messed up their records of payments!). Moreover, if my bank account was scrutinised for additional income, the deposits and payments might be regarded as income by the Inland Revenue and I might therefore be liable to tax of this money (incidentally participants have only been charged for actual costs and I have borne the administrative costs myself).

There was also a need to simplify the payment system to avoid the complications of past meetings where final costs were not known until the end of the trip when the bill arrived. High numbers of last minute changes made by members (cancellations and changes to duration of stay) have made the process of working out prices very difficult and vague until the last minute and have complicated administration considerably.

These issues have been discussed by the Committee and it was concluded that a greatly simplified system was needed. Firstly, the Forum will be responsible for paying deposits and for administering deposits by members. Secondly, a formal booking system will be established, with written records of members' intentions. A form is included within this bulletin and can also be downloaded from the website.

The Stackpole meeting also raised the possible risk of the Forum committing itself to costs that might not be reimbursed by attendance. When I booked Stackpole, we were committed to a fixed price for the group, regardless of attendance. When the final payment had to be made in March 2010, we had just 20 places booked and six places vacant, and so there was a risk that we would be liable for an additional £1080 beyond the income that would have been gained from attendees. In the end, the meeting was over-subscribed, but it highlights a problem for the Forum whose assets need to be safeguarded. The Committee therefore concluded that there should be a system of discounts for early booking and penalties for last minute changes.

The intention is therefore to add 10% to the price for bookings beyond a specified cut-off date. Cancellations before that date would also lead to return of the deposit, but after the date would be non-returnable.

How to book

Please complete the booking form, you can either copy the page later in this Bulletin or use the separate sheet.

Deposits payable to DIPTERISTS FORUM should therefore be sent together with the **booking form** to:

Roger Morris
7 Vine Street, Stamford
Lincolnshire PE9 1QE

Annual Meeting and Dipterists Day 2010

Oxford University Museum of Natural History

Friday - Sunday, 26th - 28th November 2010

DIPTERIST DAYS PROGRAMME

Friday 26 November

14:00 to 17:00 The Hope Entomological Library will be available to Dipterists Forum members

Prior booking with John or Barbara Ismay (schultmay@insectsrus.com) is essential. The photocopying charge is 5p per page. Access to the collections can also be arranged through Darren Mann (darren.mann@oum.ox.ac.uk)

Accommodation in Oxford

Oxford has a wide range of B&B and guest houses available. (see http://www.oxford.gov.uk/tourism/where-to-stay.cfm)

Parking: Note that parking is not available at the museum, so please use your B&B, or use the Park and Ride if staying for less than 72 hrs.

Updates to Dipterists Day Programme

For latest details of the Dipterists Day programme including more information on the Saturday afternoon and evening activities, please check the Dipterists Forum website www.dipteristsforum.org.uk

All new members are especially welcome! Come and meet everyone

Saturday 27 November

10:00 The Museum opens - Assemble and set out exhibits. These exhibits may be viewed during the coffee and lunch breaks.

10:30 Talks begin in the main lecture theatre.

Programme of Talks

10:30 **Introduction: Welcome to the Hope Entomological Collections and Library**
.....Darren Mann

10:40 **Chloropidae: Home & Away**
..... John Ismay

11:10 **Culicidae (mosquitoes) in 21st Century Britain**
.....Jolyon Medlock

11:40 to 12:00
Tea or coffee break

12:00 **Bogs and Bottoms: Flies of the New Forest Valley Mires**
..... Steven Falk

12:30 **The Ant, the Fly and the Poplar Tree**
.....Judy Webb

13:00 to 14:00
Break for lunch

Bring sandwiches, which may be eaten in the common room, or use the local pubs/restaurants. View the exhibitions and Displays of the Recording Schemes. Organisers please contact the Secretary to book a table for exhibits.

14:00 to 14:30 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
See below for the Agenda

14:30 to 16:30 A programme of talks and discussions about the recording schemes, including a **Culicidae** talk and workshop by Jolyon Medlock and an introduction to world and British **Oestridae** by Andrew Grayson. **Hoverflies** and **Dryomyzidae** are also favourite hot topics so bring your specimens. Also Costa Rica Congress of Dipterology.

16:30 to 16:50 Award of prize for best exhibit

16:50 Close of Afternoon Session. The building must be vacated by 17.00

18:00 to 20:00 Dipterists' Supper

It is planned to organise a meal on Saturday evening at a local restaurant for a reasonable fixed price if enough attendees are interested. Please contact John Ismay or Barbara Ismay to book a place. (schultmay@insectsrus.com)

Sunday 28 November

From 10:00

This is your chance to see the Verrall-Collin and other collections at the Hope Entomological Collections. Please contact John or Barbara Ismay to book a place. (schultmay@insectsrus.com)

Malcolm Smart
Indoor Meetings Secretary malcolmsmart@talktalk.net

Please bring an exhibit if you can
A £25 prize is awarded to the best exhibit

Any material relevant to Diptera will be welcomed. This might include drawings, photographs of specimens and habitats, as well as live or set specimens. Larvae are a neglected area, and the apparatus used for keeping them, so bring that along. **Computer-based presentations are welcomed.** Any new publications, or websites would also add interest. Displays can be laid out in the lecture theatre foyer where there is plenty of space. See also www.dipteristsforum.org.uk

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Saturday 27th November 2010

The Chairman will open the AGM at 2.00pm

Agenda

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the last AGM and matters arising.
3. Secretary's Report.
4. Treasurer's Report.
5. Membership Secretary's Report.
6. Dipterists Digest Editor's Report.
7. Election of Officers: See details below

The Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer and other elected officers with specific responsibilities (detailed below) require annual election. The constitution (7c) currently requires nominations 30 days in advance of the AGM. Ordinary elected committee members serve for two years.

The Officers and General Committee proposed for re-election for election this year, 2010 are as follows:

Office	Officer
Chair	Martin Drake
Vice Chair	Stuart Ball
Secretary	John Kramer
Treasurer	Howard Bentley
Membership Secretary	Mick Parker
Field Meetings Secretary	Roger Morris
Indoor Meetings Secretary	Malcolm Smart
Bulletin Editor	Darwyn Sumner
Assistant Editor and Publicity Officer	Judy Webb
Website Manager	Stuart Ball
Conservation/BAP Officer	Barbara Ismay

Committee Members

1. John Showers (Proposed)
2. John Ismay (Proposed)
3. Erica McAlister
4. Chris Spilling
5. Vacancy
6. Vacancy

Posts 3 & 4 were elected in 2009 and are therefore due for re-election in 2011.

John Kramer
Secretary
john.kramer@btinternet.com

Diptera Identification Workshops 2011

Preston Montford Field Studies Centre

Friday 4th - Sunday 6th March 2011

Beginner's Workshop – Introduction to Diptera (Two-winged Flies)

Led by Stuart Ball & John Ismay

Arrive Friday in time for supper at 6.30pm - depart 4.00pm Sunday.

This is an introductory course on the Identification of Fly Families. It is designed to help people getting started with identification and recording of this fascinating group of insects which are very varied in their behaviour and can be found in nearly all habitats. They can also be used in the assessment of the quality of many different types of habitat.

The course is aimed at absolute beginners and will guide them through many hurdles, both as a group and as individuals. Each attendee gets individual help and will work using a microscope on their own individual set of specially prepared flies which are examples of the major Dipteran families found in the UK. A set of keys with colour illustrations has been specially produced for this course and these in themselves have been much sought after! Each attendee leaves with their own set of valuable keys plus advice on how to collect and pin flies for identification and for retention as voucher specimens.

All materials and equipment (microscopes, lights etc.) will be supplied by the Field centre.

Advanced workshop – Fungus Feeding Flies (Fungus Gnats & Flat-footed Flies)

Led by Peter Chandler with assistance from Judy Webb

Arrive Friday in time for supper at 6.30pm - depart Sunday afternoon.

Feeding on fungi as larvae is a common life style scattered throughout the Diptera, with more than 540 British species in 45 families of flies having now been reared from fungi and a few hundred more likely to depend on them. This Workshop will cover two of the groups that are particularly tied to fungi, the small family of Flat-footed Flies (Platypezidae) and the five families of Fungus Gnats (Bolitophilidae, Ditomyiidae, Diadocidiidae, Keroplatidae and Mycetophilidae).

The 33 species of Platypezidae include the 5 species of small black Smoke Flies (*Microsania*) with unknown larvae but well

known as adults by their attraction to wood smoke, but the rest are fungus feeders of which the adults may be found running about in a jerky fashion on broad leaves where they feed on honeydew. The expanded hind tarsi of many species (especially the females) give them their English name. Most members are remarkable for their sexual difference in coloration, with males often drab while females may be brightly marked with distinctive patterns of grey, silver, yellow, orange and red, requiring the sexes to be keyed separately. All British species are included in the Fauna Entomologica Scandinavica volume entitled 'The Flat-footed Flies of Europe.' A separate British key has yet to appear so a cut down version, covering only the British species, will be provided..

The Fungus Gnats have been neglected but are by no means as difficult to name as might be thought. They vary greatly in size and coloration and many have distinct wing markings. Their great diversity in form will be demonstrated by showing a range of species from each of the main groups. Less than 200 of the 550 British species have yet been reared from fungi but many of the others must also have this habit, so there is plenty of scope to add to knowledge of their biology. Not all are fungus associated; some develop in rotten wood, mosses, liverworts, bird's nests and caves. The four smaller families and the smaller subfamilies of Mycetophilidae are covered by an RES Handbook (Hutson et al. 1980) that keyed 204 species, to which 33 have since been added. That leaves only the large subfamily Mycetophilinae with 313 British species for which a handbook is in preparation. The draft keys need to be tested and testing of the generic key will be a priority for this Workshop. The 25 genera of this subfamily are mostly recognised by characters of the wing venation. Within genera the structure of the genitalia is most important and the male genitalia are often distinct enough for species recognition from published figures without any preparation, although confirmation by mounting is desirable to discern fine details and the techniques for achieving this will be described.

Judy Webb will contribute a colourful slide show on fungi (everything from Devil's Boletes and Morels to Fly Agarics and Scarlet Elf Cups) and will talk about identifying them and finding the ones that are good food sources for fly larvae. There will be a practical demonstration of methods of successfully rearing from fungi, along with examples of the range of species that can be obtained in this way.

Specimens for checking keys will be provided, but please bring any that you have collected yourself. If you have your own microscope, lamp etc. then please bring them along. The centre does have some, so don't feel that you cannot attend if you don't have them.

Fees & Booking Procedure for either workshop

Dipterists Forum members:

Single Room Resident:	£160 full board accommodation
Shared Room Resident:	£140 full board accommodation
Non-resident:	£75 incl. packed lunches & evening meals

Non Dipterists Forum members (fees include one year's membership):

Single Room Resident:	£240 full board accommodation
Shared Room Resident:	£220 full board accommodation
Non-resident:	£155 incl. packed lunches & evening meals

To book a place on either of these workshops please contact

Preston Montford Field Centre, Montford Bridge, Shrewsbury, SY4 1DX
Tel: 01743 852 040 Fax: 01743 851 066
Email: enquiries.pm@field-studies-council.org

You will be requested to pay a deposit of £50 (cheque payable to Field Studies Council) to the address above. Payment of the balance of the course fee will be due 30 days before beginning of course. Cancellation after this date may leave the customer liable for the full amount - a condition which is accepted when the booking is confirmed. Make sure that you note that you are a DF member on the booking form in order to secure your members discount.

Organiser: Malcolm Smart

Field Meetings 2011

Spring 2011

12-15 May 2011 - Abergavenny

Full details will be posted on the website, in due course. There are two options that I am investigating, one based in guest houses and the other at the field centre that we used for the 1997 field meeting. I shall investigate the advantages/disadvantages of each. Members who have attended previous meetings will be circulated with details in the autumn and those who might be interested are advised to register your interest to Roger Morris roger.morris@dsl.pipex.com).

Summer 2011

2-9 July - Exeter University

This meeting will be in the Halls of Residence of Exeter University. A block booking for 25 people has been made and these will be allocated on first come, first served basis. Rooms will have a wash basin and there will be shared bathrooms etc. - around one between 6.

Deposit: Booking forms together with a deposit of £40.00 should be sent to Roger Morris. This deposit will be refundable less £10.00 if cancelled prior to 01 May 2011.

Payment in full will be required by 01 May 2011 and any late bookings thereafter will attract a 10% surcharge as described in the note on new arrangements. Full prices have yet to be determined, but they will be in the order of £300 for the full week (depending on the level of increases to be announced by the University).

Cancellation after 30 May 2011 cannot be refunded.

Autumn 2011

This meeting will be advertised in the spring bulletin.

And now ...

Gorillas

Early on I discovered that too many large bristly flies in the pooter led to the trashing of too many craneflies, and some calyptrates had the audacity to eat their weaker brethren. It did not take long to work out that craneflies and docile acalypterates were compatible, and indeed all but the bully-boy and large calyptrate were OK.

With Muscidae one has to be prepared for keys based on many tortuous combinations of bristles here, there and everywhere, seemingly in extra dimensions only understood by quantum physicists. Some dipterists thrive on this. For me, faced with 10,000 seemingly identical flies in the field (well most look identical anyway), I can be guaranteed to pin the only one which has different bristles one side of the body compared to the other. On a few past occasions I have shown such specimens to Adrian Pont, who would pluck a foreign tome from his shelf, flick open a page and give an instant name. Magic, derived by ignoring the leg bristles. So there must be easier ways. Hence, on and off, I have been trying to develop a 'Dummies Guide' to identifying muscids.

The Muscid Workshop last March rekindled my love hate relationship with these flies. As I made quite clear at the start, I had only attended in order the embarrass the course leader, Steven Falk, who over years of my goading had not fully embraced the joys of studying craneflies. Logically if I went to the extreme of studying muscids for 2 days, the least he could do was take craneflies seriously.

I spent my time looking at named specimens trying to conjure up simpler keys - oh, why did I even start on such a foolish endeavour! I was far from alone in my struggles. Mike Bloxham, Steven's assistant leader, tried gallantly to assure one of us that it was so easy that a gorilla could identify this muscid at a distance of 3 yards - all very well, but none of us were gorillas.

That apart, the humans all had an enjoyable weekend and everyone was (at least a little) wiser, leaving with armfuls of handouts (including enormous tomes from Stuart Ball). And enthusiasm had certainly been generated.

I am reminded of an apocryphal tale of the oral part of a physics degree exam. The examiner asked the student to explain gravity. The student embarrassingly had to admit he could not remember but reassuringly said that he did know but had forgotten the answer. The examiner then said that was a pity. There were only two people who knew the answer, God and the student, and now one of them had forgotten. Since even Steven admitted he could not identify every muscid, it is reassuring that God and Adrian Pont can identify them, and lets hope Adrian has not forgotten.

Alan Stubbs

How to contribute articles

Text

1. Articles submitted should be in the form of a word-processed file either on disk (3.5", CD or USB Flash) or via E-mail which should have the phrase "DF Bulletin" in the Subject line. Email text alone will not be accepted.
2. Please submit in native format (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Native_and_foreign_ format) and in "text-only" Rich Text Format (.rtf) and additionally send pictures in their original format. An accompanying print-out (or pdf) would also be useful.
3. Please note the width of the borders used in Dipterists Bulletin; for conformity with style would newsletter compilers please match this format.
4. **Do not** use "all capitals", underlining, blank lines between paragraphs, carriage returns in the middle of a sentence or double spaces.
5. Scientific names should be italicised throughout and emboldened only at the start of a paragraph.
6. Place names should have a grid reference.

Illustrations

7. Colour photographs are now used extensively in the Bulletin, they appear coloured only in the pdf or on the covers.
8. Please include all original illustrations with your articles. These **should** be suitably "cleaned up" (e.g. removal of partial boxes around distribution maps, removal of parts of adjacent figures from line illustrations) but please do not reduce their quality by resizing etc. .
9. Please indicate the subject of the picture so that a suitable caption may be included, in some cases it will be possible for the picture file's name to be changed to its caption (e.g. 049.jpg becomes Keepers Pond NN045678 12 Oct 2008.jpg). All group pictures should identify all the individuals portrayed.
10. Powerpoint files may be submitted, they are a useful means of showing your layout and pictures are easily extracted.
11. Pictures contained within Word files are of too low quality and cannot be extracted for use in the Bulletin.
12. Line artworks are also encouraged - especially cartoons
13. Colour pictures and illustrations will be printed in black and white (uncorrected) and so it would be wise to see what a B&W photocopy looks like first, although the print quality from Autumn 2009 onwards gave excellent B&W results.
14. A suitable colour photograph is sought for the front cover (and inside front cover) of every copy of the Bulletin, note that it must be an upright/portrait illustration and not an oblong/landscape one for the front cover.
15. Due to the short time-scales involved in production, the editors will not use any pictures where they consider there to be doubt concerning copyright.

Tables

16. Tables should be submitted in their original spreadsheet format (e.g. Excel)
17. Spreadsheet format is also appropriate for long lists

When to send (deadlines)

Spring bulletin

18. Aims to be on your doorstep before the end of February, the editorial team has very little time available during January and so would appreciate as many contributions as possible by the middle of December; the deadline for **perfect copy is the 31st Dec**, it will be printed then distributed in February in time for the March workshop meeting (which may by that time be fully booked). Please note that the date for contributions is now earlier than for previous Bulletins.

Autumn bulletin

19. Aims to be on your doorstep in mid September, contributions should therefore be made to the editor **by the end of July**. It will be printed then distributed in time for final notification of the Autumn field meeting (although you would be well advised to contact Roger Morris before this time and consult the DF website) and in time to provide details of the Annual Meeting. Please note that the date for contributions is now considerably earlier than for previous Bulletins

Where to send

20. Would Bulletin contributors please ensure that their items are sent to BOTH Darwyn Sumner and Judy Webb

Sciomyzidae Recording Scheme News #6

July 2010

In what seems to be a generally lean year for finding adult Sciomyzidae, we have news of an exciting forthcoming publication on Sciomyzidae and Phaeomyiidae, some identification tips for separating our two *Limnia* species and an update on progress with extracting data from Sciomyzidae and Phaeomyiidae in the British Collection at The Natural History Museum, London.

Forthcoming publication

The well-known Sciomyzidae specialists Lloyd Knutson and Jean-Claude Vala have prepared a global review of the biology of Sciomyzidae, to be published by Cambridge University Press in November 2010. *Biology of Snail-Killing Sciomyzidae Flies* is to be a hardback of 584 pages and will be priced at £85. An accompanying DVD will include Clifford Berg's classic film on the biology of Sciomyzidae and biological control of snails. This is the first comprehensive world review of the biology of Sciomyzidae (Snail-killing Flies) and Phaeomyiidae (whose known larval biology is feeding on Millipedes).

Contents (taken from the CUP website) are: Foreword by Benjamin A. Foote; Foreword by Rudolf Rozkošný; Preface; Avant propos; About the authors; Acknowledgements; 1. Introduction; 2. Natural enemies of Mollusca; 3. Malacophagy in Diptera; 4. Life cycles; 5. Host/prey ranges and preferences; 6. Host/prey finding; 7. Feeding behavior; 8. Competition; 9. Phenology, reproduction, and development; 10. Macrohabitats and microhabitats, guild structures and associations, threatened species, and bioindicators; 11. Natural enemies; 12. Defense mechanisms; 13. Population dynamics; 14. Morphological, physiological/behavioral, and genetics and related aspects; 15. Systematics and related topics; 16. Zoogeography; 17. Evolutionary considerations; 18. Biological control; 19. History of research on Sciomyzidae; 20. Methods; 21. World checklist of Sciomyzidae and Phaeomyiidae; Index.

Undoubtedly, this will be a major milestone in the study of Sciomyzidae and Phaeomyiidae globally and should do much to increase interest in these families of flies and understanding of their life histories and biology. With publication scheduled before Christmas 2010, some dipterists will know what to ask Santa for this year….

The separation of female *Limnia*

The identification of females of the two British species of *Limnia* is continuing to give problems for some recorders, particularly in the absence of named voucher specimens for comparison. This note is intended to help by including photos of the top of the female thorax of both species to show the colour differences discovered by Rozkošný. These patterns are easily to see, but not so straightforward to interpret from written descriptions. Diagrams of the shape of the ventral sclerite at the tip of the female abdomen are also included, which should help with material preserved in alcohol.

Limnia paludicola Elberg

Female thorax with brown central stripe

Limnia unguicornis Scopoli

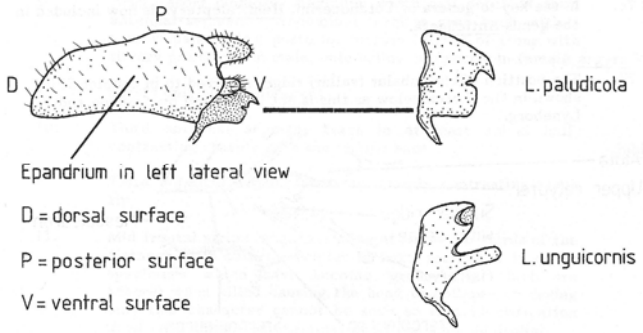
Female thorax with yellow central stripe flanked by a brown line each side

Hairs on ventral sclerite in a triangular shape pointed anteriorly away from the cerci
[hairs not shown on cerci]

Hairs on ventral sclerite in a square shape

The thorax colour characters apply only to females, not males, and are suitable for dry preserved material or specimens extracted from alcohol using critical point drying or using Hexamethyldisilazene, HMDS. The pattern of hairs on the ventral sclerite can be easily seen in material preserved in alcohol, so this saves time when sorting material from traps because it is not necessary to dry out adult females. The ventral sclerite should be manipulated so as to be seen at a right angle to its surface by placing the tip of the abdomen under a coverslip and gently compressing the segments, or with practice by using fine forceps to extend the tip to reveal the shape of the haired sclerite.

The male genitalia of *Limnia* species are reliable for identifying this sex, they are illustrated in the European key works and a sketch of these structures is given below.



Progress with data abstraction

The extensive British collection of Sciomyzidae at the Natural History Museum contains many valuable records and I have started to abstract the data for the Recording Scheme. This will be a lengthy task, but should be completed by the end of 2010. At the same time as data are abstracted from specimen labels the collection is being re-curated into unit trays to improve future access and handling of these species.

There is much interesting historical material in the collection, with important early specimens collected by Verrall and Yerbury, followed by such noteworthy dipterists as F.C. Adams, Sir Christopher Andrewes, C.N. Colyer, J. Cowley, E.A. Fonseca, C.G. Lamb, L. Parmenter, C.J. Wainwright and J.H. Wood. The collection was checked some years ago by Lloyd Knutson, but there have been numerous accessions since and the identifications of these are being checked.

When completed the coverage of the Recording Scheme will be enhanced considerably and the data from the collection will be made available for others to access and use.

Submitting data to the Recording Scheme

Valuable data continue to be submitted to the Scheme, mostly as Excel spreadsheets, which are straightforward to import into Recorder 6. If you have records of Sciomyzidae or Phaeomyiidae from anywhere in Britain, whether many or few, please get in touch and I will be delighted to discuss the best way of importing your data. Use of my E-mail (*ianmclean@waitrose.com*) is generally the best way to make contact, or otherwise you can get in touch by post to either of the addresses below.

Ian McLean
Entomology Department
The Natural History Museum
London
SW7 5BD

109 Miller Way
Brampton
Huntingdon
Cambridgeshire
PE28 4TZ
Tel: 01480 450554
ianmclean@waitrose.com

Hoverfly Newsletter
Number 49
Autumn 2010
ISSN 1358-5029

Stuart Ball and Roger Morris refer in the Recording Scheme update to the inconsistency of hogweed as a nectar source for hoverflies. I have noticed something similar this year with another umbellifer, fennel, several plants of which I have in my garden. Until the final third of July this year the flowers of these plants attracted many social wasps but scarcely any hoverflies. Then a sudden transformation occurred, and the umbels are now covered daily with numerous hoverflies (and very few wasps). The species involved have comprised large numbers of *Episyrphus balteatus*, and *Syrphus* in perhaps even greater numbers, plus smaller populations of several other species; on most days there have been a few *Scaeva pyrastri*, which is also being found in several other areas – it is encouraging to see that this elegant hoverfly seems to be having a good year after a number of lean ones.

Articles and illustrations (including colour images) for the next newsletter are always welcome. Copy for **Hoverfly Newsletter No. 50** (which is expected to be issued with the Spring 2011 Dipterists Forum Bulletin) should be sent to me: David Iliff **Green Willows, Station Road, Woodmancote, Cheltenham, Glos, GL52 9HN, (telephone 01242 674398), email:davidiliff@talk21.com**, to reach me by 20 November 2010. Please note the earlier than usual date which has been changed to fit in with the new bulletin closing dates.

The hoverfly illustrated at the top right of this page is a female *Platycheirus peltatus*. Those in other recent newsletters were *Scaeva selenitica* male (no. 48), *Cheilosia illustrata* male (no. 47) and *Dasysyrphus albostriatus* (no. 46).

Hoverfly Recording Scheme update July 2010

Stuart Ball
255 Eastfield Road, Peterborough, PE1 4BH, stuart.ball@dsl.pipex.com
Roger Morris
7 Vine Street, Stamford, Lincolnshire, PE9 1QE,
roger.morris@dsl.pipex.com

This year started quite nicely. April was equable and there were reasonable numbers of flies about. May too was productive, but declined towards the end. In Lincolnshire it was the best year for a long while for *Dasysyrphus venustus* which has been virtually absent for many years. But from June onwards the question has been "has anyone found any hoverflies?" There appears to be nothing at hogweed at all in eastern England, and numbers in general seem to be well down, except perhaps in Warwickshire where Steve Falk continues to report goodies, the latest being a very nice female *Mallota cimbiciformis*. Roger joined a small group in Shropshire in early July for a meeting of students on the Birmingham University certificate in Biological Recording. They barely found any hoverflies, even in a large field full of hogweed. Whilst this is discouraging, the bigger issue is the knock-on effects on the chain of predators that depend upon insect larvae. After a harsh winter a good breeding season might have replenished numbers of small birds, but if prey is as scarce as it appears to have been it is likely that insectivorous birds will have fared poorly.

For us, 2010 has been a very busy year but not in the field. Our big news is that we have secured a grant from OPAL (Open Air Laboratories [OPAL] network administered by the Natural History Museum) to fund a camera microscope and printing course material so that we can run our hoverfly identification courses more effectively. The microscope and camera should also help us develop new teaching aids and illustrations for books (it will also help develop other Dipterists' products and events), whilst funding the handouts we provide to participants on courses means that we are no longer reliant upon good will from the conservation agencies who are going through worrying times. So a huge thank

you to OPAL. We have already commissioned the printing and have the microscope and camera on order.

On the issue of teaching, we are about to depart for Shetland to provide a course for the Biological Records Centre in Lerwick. This arose when we were offered a contribution towards the cost of travel to the Shetlands (it is jolly expensive) and both of us felt that the combination of teaching and a wildlife holiday would be a nice change. Stuart has a list of birds he wants to see, and Roger has his eyes on looking at storm debris on the cliffs on the west coast (plus of course otters, killer whales and maybe the odd bird).

The teaching season then starts with our Introduction to Hoverflies course at Preston Montford in late August. We are very pleased to see high levels of interest, with the course oversubscribed. Our tour then progresses to Glasgow in September, Newcastle in the autumn and a further course for the Northants Trust and Natural History Museum this winter. We are very keen to organise additional courses and so if you have a group that would like a course, all we need is for you to organise a venue and microscopes. We will bring all the necessary material. A contribution towards travel and subsistence is always welcome – we reckon the costs of travel to a mainland UK location between southern Scotland and Cornwall is in the order of £200-300 for a weekend, so provided a group of 10 can be secured, the cost per person need not be exorbitant.

One possibility that has emerged is that we have found a venue in Wells (Somerset) that might be suitable for an elementary class in Diptera and hoverfly identification. No promises yet, but it would be helpful if readers who would be interested in such a course (perhaps 3 days) would let Roger know so that we can judge possible demand. Timing would be during the School's summer holidays.

Despite doing little fieldwork, we have not been idle. Our most interesting foray was a quick trip up to the Spey Valley for what is becoming a tradition at the end of May. This time we went in search of *Microdon analis/major* to see whether we could make progress on the disjunct distribution of *M. analis*. We know that the Scottish population is not *M. miki* (pupae found this year confirm that), but we have still to investigate *M. major*. More in due course.

Our Scottish jaunt lasted a whole 4 days – travel up on Saturday, searching for larvae and pupae in the rain on Sunday and then a jaunt round Culbin Forest on Monday, followed by a long journey home on the Tuesday – a total of 1200 miles. Apart from finding a single *Microdon* pupa and four larvae at Loch Morlich, we took *Parasyrphus nigritarsis*, *Sphaerophoria batava* and *Eriozona syrphoides* at Culbin and spent a delightful half hour watching and photographing a narrow bordered bee hawk moth at birds foot trefoil.

The Dipterists summer field meeting at Stackpole Head proved to be a great disappointment from a hoverfly perspective. There were very few about, although we did see *Rhingia rostrata* at numerous localities. There was also the first reported British record of all four *Sphegina* at the same site (a wooded stream with hemlock water dropwort *Oenanthe crocata* in dappled light). This experience illustrates the need to hold on to numerous specimens because the full list arose from a sample of around 20 specimens dominated by *S. clunipes*.

Watch out for reports of new species. There have been two added to the British list this year by Mick Parker and Ian Rabbarts. The proper announcements will be made in due course, and we cannot say any more. Both illustrate the need to be vigilant as they might have been expected but could easily be overlooked.

And finally, we did say we were going to produce a Wildguide on hoverflies. We have not forgotten and are slowly progressing. Our aim is to start with a more compressed book that illustrates the 60 commonest species or at least a selection that might be expected to occur in parks and gardens. The full guide, which will emerge later, will illustrate around 150 species and so it should help the aspiring hoverfly worker. It will not replace Stubbs & Falk, and indeed the recent discoveries emphasise very clearly that a popular guide may lead to species being overlooked. Our objective, therefore is to encourage recorders to develop an interest before progressing to the big book.

Stop press: The day after this note was written Dipterists Forum visited the Somerset Levels and at Shapwick Heath we saw hogweed in action as it used to be. Lots of *Cheilosia*, *Chrysogaster solstitialis* and a few *Syrphus*, plus the odd *Leucozona laternaria*. There were also plenty of muscids, a few *Tachina fera* and the occasional *Mesembrina meridiana*. Maybe all is not lost after all, and where there is a bit of rain the hogweed still performs.

Separating *Sphegina sibirica* – a clarification

Roger Morris
7 Vine Street, Stamford, Lincolnshire, PE9 1QE,
roger.morris@dsl.pipex.com

Sphegina sibirica is rapidly becoming a widespread and indeed common species that may turn up in the most unlikely situations. This was illustrated by the records of specimens taken in the car park at the foot of the ski-lift at Cairngorm in 2008 (Morris, 2009) and more recently by the record by Peter Chandler of two males at the flowers of *Oenanthe crocata* on Skomer Island (Morris 2010).

In Stubbs & Falk (2002) the separation between *S. siberica* and the remaining three British species is theoretically achieved by comparing the completeness of the coxal bridge at the base of the abdomen. This character does not work however, and several more useful features are needed to make the separation. Consequently, it is possible that specimens will run to *S. verecunda* (Peter Chandler pers. comm.) using Stubbs & Falk. The following characters should therefore help to make this split more simply.

- The coxal bridge is complete but there is no sclerotisation on the first abdominal sternite unlike the small shining sclerotised area in other British *Sphegina* (figure 1).
- The sternopleuron has a large dust-free shining area that is readily apparent in all specimens.
- There is huge variation in colour forms of *S. siberica* and wholly or partly yellow specimens are highly likely to be this species (but check other characters).
- The middle and front tarsi are generally black in *S. siberica* contrasting with the pale tibiae and femora (not reliable but useful indicator).

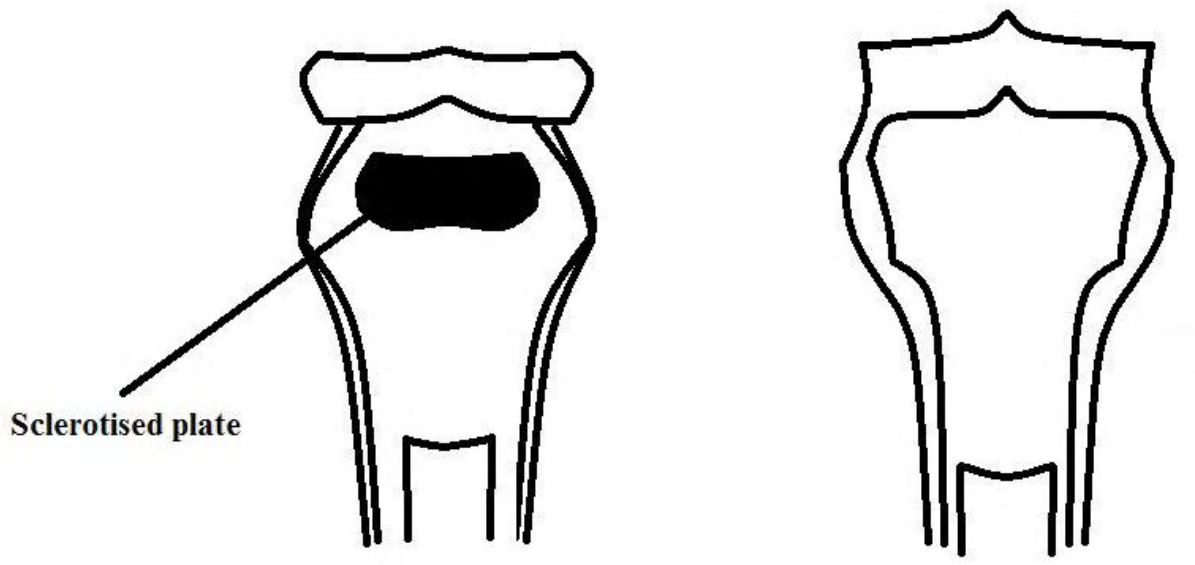


Figure 1. Sternite 1 *of Sphegina sibirica* (right) and *S. clunipes* (left) showing the sclerotised plate that exists in all other British *Sphegina*. After van Veen (2004).

Whilst on the question of *Sphegina*, I often find it helpful to look at the genital processes of males because those of *S. clunipes* are much longer than those of other species, making it possible to sort this species from *S. verecunda* and *S. elegans* with relative ease.

References:

Morris, R., 2009. Glenmore Lodge, 28 June to 5 July 2008. *Bulletin of the Dipterists Forum*, **67**: 23-26.

Morris, R., 2010. Summer field meeting, Stackpole Head, 12-19 June 2010. *Bulletin of the Dipterists Forum*, 70 (this issue).

Stubbs A.E. & Falk, S.J. (Revised & Updated by Ball, S.G., Stubbs, A.E., McLean, I.F.G., Morris, R.K.A. and Falk, S.J.) 2002. *British Hoverflies: an illustrated identification guide*. British Entomological & Natural History Society. 469pp.

van Veen, M. P., 2004. *Hoverflies of Northwest Europe*. KNNV Publishing, Utrecht, The Netherlands. 254pp.

Eristalis nemorum males and Hymenoptera

David Iliff
Green Willows, Station Road, Woodmancote, Cheltenham, GL52 9HN
davidiliff@talk21.com

Eristalis nemorum is well known for its courtship behaviour which involves the male hovering above a female which is perched on a flower or on foliage. In **Hoverfly Newsletter No. 7** (April 1988) I described an occasion in Tenby where I saw a male *E. nemorum* hovering in precisely that manner, but the object of its attention on the flower below was not a female of its own species but a honey bee (*Apis mellifera*) worker. I was intrigued by this incident and being something of a novice at the time wondered whether the male hoverfly was in fact confused as a result of its mimicry and actually mistook the bee for a female *E. nemorum*. I submitted a note on the incident to the Hoverfly Newsletter in which I posed the question "are hoverflies sometimes fooled by their mimicry?" The Newsletter editor of the time, Graham Rotheray, wisely substituted the following: "Is it the aggressiveness of *nemorum* males or the effectiveness of hoverfly mimicry that causes males to show considerable interest in bees?"

On 8 August 2009 in Sheffield Botanic Gardens I once again saw a male *Eristalis nemorum* hovering above a bee. In this instance the bee was a queen buff-tailed bumblebee (*Bombus terrestris*). The hoverfly's behaviour again seemed to be exactly the same as during its courtship display: when the bumblebee flew to a new position the hoverfly immediately followed and resumed hovering above her.

Whereas on the earlier occasion I had wondered whether the incident was associated with mimicry – *E. nemorum* does somewhat resemble a honey bee is size and colouration – it seems clear that this could not have been the explanation for this behaviour on the more recent occasion, as *nemorum* is certainly not a bumblebee mimic and is considerably smaller than a *Bombus terrestris* queen.

Eristalis nemorum male and honeybee

Eristalis nemorum male and Buff-tailed Bumblebee (photos: David Iliff)

Photography of the *Pyrophaena* subgenus of *Platycheirus*

David Iliff
Green Willows, Station Road, Woodmancote, Cheltenham, GL52 9HN
davidiliff@talk21.com

In **Hoverfly Newsletter No. 25** (February 1998) I wrote an article entitled "*Pyrophaena*: the hoverfly photographer's most irksome genus" and in **Hoverfly Newsletter No. 41** (Spring 2006) I contributed another entitled "Hovering behaviour of female Syrphinae". I certainly never expected that an opportunity would later arise to link these two apparently unconnected articles in a single follow-up note.

In the first of the original articles I lamented the fact that while the two hoverflies of the genus *Pyrophaena* (since relegated to a sub-genus of *Platycheirus*) are colourful and picturesque it was difficult for a photographer to do justice to their splendour as, when at rest, they eclipse their abdomens with their darkened wings. Both *Platycheirus granditarsus* and *P. rosarum* have darkened wings which are deep blue in life. *P. granditarsus* has a fiery orange abdomen; that of *P. rosarum* is less spectacular, but it is still a very pretty-looking hoverfly. In my experience *P. rosarum* sometimes perches with its wings extended, but more often covers its abdomen with its wings, and *P. granditarsus* always seems to cover its abdomen with its wings when at rest. This is of course the typical resting attitude of *Platycheirus*, but in the case of *Platycheirus* species not in the *Pyrophaena* sub-genus the wings are clear and the abdominal colours can be seen through them. The problem for the photographer with *Pyrophaena*, especially with *P. granditarsus*, is that because of their attitude at rest the dark wings obscure the colourful abdomen from view. For this reason I was always on the lookout for opportunities to photograph them in while they were hovering, but these were few and far between and the quality of the results was unacceptable.

The purpose of my note on the hovering behaviour of female Syrphinae was really to challenge the myth that has been perpetuated in much hoverfly literature that it is only the males that hover. In support of this I cited many instances of sustained hovering by females of several species of the Syrphinae.

On 16 August 2009 I participated in a field meeting at Farmhouse Lake, Lower Mill, in the Cotswold Water Park. On that day hoverflies were abundant at the site and a wide range of species was present. Among them were many examples of *P. granditarsus* and *P. rosarum* hovering. Equipped by now with a digital camera, which unlike its film equivalent, allows the user to take numerous shots without the fear of running out of opportunities, I tried to capitalise on this unexpected chance to resolve my problem. I therefore took as many shots as I could and at least some of the results were satisfactory and I obtained acceptable images of these hoverflies in which their abdominal colours were clearly displayed.

When I later uploaded the images and examined them I discovered that all the hovering specimens of both species that I had photographed were females.

Platycheirus granditarsus female in flight (photo: David Iliff)

Observations on hovering behaviour of *Epistrophe eligans* and *Xanthogramma pedissequum*

David Iliff
Green Willows, Station Road, Woodmancote, Cheltenham, GL52 9HN
davidiliff@talk21.com

For hoverfly recorders one of the most familiar sights in spring in this country must be that of *Epistrophe eligans* males hovering in areas well away from vegetation for long periods at heights typically about a metre above ground level. I am accustomed to watching them in my garden when the weather is fine between mid-April and early June. I have assumed that the purpose of this is territorial. During 2009 I noticed that these hoverflies seemed to favour one particular part of my garden, the airspace above an area of about two to three square metres of lawn, for this activity. Although there are plenty of other apparently similar areas in the garden these were apparently ignored. This year I found that the new generation of *E. eligans* males were hovering in the same little area as those in 2009; on most days there were two or three males hovering in close proximity to one another. Periodically one of the males would buzz another one in an aggressive manner as if trying to drive it away. This was never successful and normal hovering was immediately resumed. I was left wondering what attracted these males, when so much other territory was available, to compete day after day for the same airspace.

A different part of my garden seems to hold a special attraction as a hovering site for *Xanthogramma pedissequum* males. In the summer of 2009 a male of this species hovered for long periods on a number of days between *Acanthus* and *Crocosmia* plants situated close to a panelled wooden fence in a herbaceous border. On 4 July of this year I noticed a male *X. pedissequum* hovering in the same position. It hovered for long periods while oscillating in an elliptical pattern. When I observed the insect closely I saw that it was an example of the form that has multiple yellow spots on the pleura in place of the usual single one; this form has been considered as a candidate to be split off as a separate species (**British Hoverflies, 2nd Edition**, page 234). I had seen this form previously, but never before in Gloucestershire. On 16 July I saw a repetition of this behaviour, again at the same part of the herbaceous border; the *Xanthogramma* male was again exhibiting the elliptical oscillation while hovering. My initial thought was that this would be the same individual that I had seen in the previous week. However on this occasion the subject was a typical *pedissequum*, with only a single spot on the pleura.

As was the case with the *Epistrophe*, I was at a loss to explain what special attraction this one particular site in my garden should have for males of *Xanthogramma* in different years.

Xanthogramma pedissequum, form with additional spots on pleura (photo: David Iliff)

Merodon equestris in *Hippeastrum*

Rachel Carter
6 Church View, Wootton, Northampton, NN4 7LJ

Last summer I had about half a dozen small (2–3 cm) amaryllis bulbs (*Hippeastrum*) on a bench in our greenhouse/conservatory. It has roof lights which open automatically, almost every day in summer, and casement windows which we rarely open (because they get in the way outside). The door opens on to the utility room, near the door to outside which is often open. It enjoys more or less full sun. The small bulbs are offsets from larger ones which I have had for many years (the oldest is about 40!). They all appeared to be healthy and undamaged when I planted them. One failed to thrive; the leaves did not grow and then became yellowish, but I kept it and in the autumn I dried it off with the rest. In January I investigated. On removing the dead leaves, I found the bulb was hollow. Further probing unearthed a brown cylindrical object (reminiscent of a guinea pig dropping!) which we decided must be a pupa. A Google Images search for 'pupa + *Hippeastrum*' led to the Narcissus Fly (*Merodon equestris*). The picture in this link corresponded closely to what we observed.

Only one plant was affected, and we have never had this problem before in amaryllis (though we may have done on *Narcissus* in the garden; we wouldn't necessarily know).

Interesting Records for Northamptonshire in 2010

John Showers
103, Desborough Road, Rothwell, Kettering, Northants, NN14 6JQ

Cheilosia chrysocoma was first noted on 28 April where one was seen flying short sorties over bluebells and dog's mercury in an ancient coppiced woodland in the north of the county. It kept settling briefly on the herb layer foliage but appeared to be patrolling an area of about 5m square. After a few minutes it disappeared into the wood. On 1 May in the same wood one male was observed on dead leaves on the ground by the side of the ride. This sort of resting place has been noted several times before. A second *C. chrysocoma* flew within about 50cm of the sitting individual, which immediately took off and flew straight at the incoming one. There was a very brief aerial tussle and the incomer departed into the wood. The original returned to the same leaf on the ground. At another part of the wood on the same day two individuals were seen settled about 100 cm apart on the bare ground of a ride. A third flew into the area and all three tussled in the air briefly before they split up. One disappeared into the wood and the others returned to the ground but at different places from originally. It was not possible to confirm the sex of any of these individuals but it is thought that the individuals on the ground may have been males holding territory.

Portevinia maculata was noted on 28 May on ramsons in a private wood, to which I had been given permission to sample. This wood is in SP77, well away from previous records in Northants, which are all in the north-east of the county.

As part of a study of nectar-feeding at dogwood in a wood in the north of the county on 19 June, Claire Templeman took a female hoverfly which I identified as *Callicera aurata.* This is only the second county record of this species. The first, a male, was found in a garden in Northampton, about 25 miles to the south-west a few years ago.

6th International Symposium on the Syrphidae, Glasgow, provisional date 5-8 August 2011

Roger Morris
7 Vine Street, Stamford, Lincolnshire, PE9 1QE,
roger.morris@dsl.pipex.com

The past five symposia have been amazing events with lots of great talks and inspiring conversation with amazing people. They have also been in some fantastic places: Stuttgart, Alicante, Leiden, Helsinki and Novi-Sad. 2011 is the turn of Glasgow.

In the past the UK contingent has been small, comprising a nucleus of Stuart Ball, Malcolm Edmunds, Francis Gilbert, Yvonne Golding, David Iliff, Roger Morris, Graham Rotheray, & Alan Stubbs. Our attendance was highest in Stuttgart and has declined substantially since then. Only four of us were present in Novi-Sad in 2009.

We therefore hope to stimulate members to attend the UK edition of the road show in August 2011. Full details have yet to be posted on the DF website and there will be opportunities to register and to offer papers. We really hope that there will be a big UK contingent at this event. At the moment the Hoverfly Recording Scheme is linking up with the Scottish Hoverfly Scheme (Kenn Watt) to produce a joint atlas that will be part of the conference pack provided we can secure sponsorship, so that is a further incentive to attend.

If interested, please let Roger Morris know: roger.morris@dsl.pipex.com and keep an eye on the Recording Scheme website www.hoverfly.org.uk.

Field Meetings Dipterists Forum

Booking Form - for rates see Bulletin

Meeting location and dates			
Name			
Address			
Telephone number			
Mobile phone number			
email address			
Intended stay (please indicate days and dates)			
Dietary requirements	Omnivore		Please tick relevant box
	Vegetarian		
	Vegan		
Allergies (food)			
Deposit			
Signature			Date

Please Note: We will endeavour to accommodate for part-weeks but this is dependent upon available accommodation and the policy of the host venue

Payment details:
Cheques made payable to Dipterists Forum

Deposits
Deposits will only be returnable if cancellation occurs before the published cut-off date for reduced rates.

Please send your booking form and cheques to:
Roger Morris
7 Vine Street, Stamford, Lincolnshire PE9 1QE
Email: roger.morris@dslpipex.com

Dipterists Forum

Secretary

John Kramer

31 Ash Tree Road, Oadby, Leicester, Leicestershire, LE2 5TE.

john.kramer@btinternet.com

Treasurer

Howard Bentley

37, Biddenden Close, Bearsted, Maidstone, Kent. ME15 8JP

Tel. 01622 739452

howard@hbentley.wanadoo.co.uk

Field Meetings

Mr. R.K.A.Morris

7 Vine Street, Stamford, Lincolnshire PE9 1QE

roger.morris@dsl.pipex.com

Workshops = Indoor Meetings Organiser

Malcolm Smart

"Southcliffe", Pattingham Road, Perton, Wolverhampton, WV6 7HD

malcolmsmart@talktalk.net

Membership

Mr M. Parker

9 East Wyld Road, Weymouth, Dorset, DT4 0RP

jmparker_87@hotmail.com

Conservation / BAP and Adopt a species

Barbara Ismay

schultmay@insectsrus.co.uk

01844-201433

Dipterists Bulletin Editor

Darwyn Sumner

122, Link Road, Anstey, Charnwood, Leicestershire LE7 7BX.

0116 212 5075

Darwyn.sumner@ntlworld.com

Publicity

Judy Webb

2 Dorchester Court, Blenheim Road, Kidlington, Oxon. OX5 2JT

judy.webb@virgin.net

01865 377487

Dipterists Digest Editor

Peter Chandler

606B Berryfield Lane, Melksham, Wilts SN12 6EL 01225-708339

chandgnats@aol.com

Web Manager

Stuart Ball

255 Eastfield Road Peterborough PE1 4BH

stuart.ball@dsl.pipex.com

Recording Schemes & Study Groups

Whilst all schemes will readily accept records in written form the following symbols are used to indicate some of the known (or surmised) methods by which Scheme Organisers may currently receive records electronically:

Recorder **MapMate** **Microsoft Access** **Spreadsheet (Excel)**

Square brackets indicate that the organiser can handle records in the format indicated.

The Gateway symbol NBN Gateway indicates that the organiser has uploaded a dataset to the NBN Gateway

Potential recorders really need to know your preferred recording format so please inform the Bulletin Editor in time for future updates

Chironomidae

Dr P.P. Roper

South View, Sedlescombe, Battle, East Sussex TN33 0PE

Chloropidae

John Ismay

schultmay@insectsrus.co.uk

01844-201433

Drosophilidae - Fruit Flies

Dr B Pitkin

c/o Kim Goodger, Dept of Entomology, Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road London SW7 5BD Tel. 020 7942 6986

Culicidae - Mosquitoes

Jolyon Medlock

Health Protection Agency, Porton Down, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP4 0JG

jolyon.medlock@hpa.org.uk NBN Gateway

Dixidae - Meniscus midges

Dr R H L Disney NBN Gateway

University department of Zoology, Downing Street Cambridge CB2 3EJ

www.dipteristsforum.org.uk

Sciomyzidae - Snail-killing Flies

Dr I F G McLean

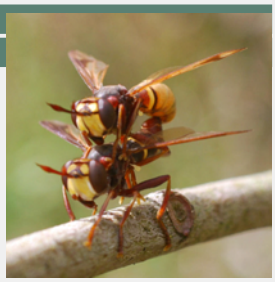
109 Miller Way, Brampton, Huntingdon, Cambs PE28 4TZ

ianmclean@waitrose.com

Darwyn Sumner

darwyn.sumner@ntlworld.com

Conopidae, Lonchopteridae, Ulidiidae & Pallopteridae



Mr D K Clements

7 Vista Rise, Radyr Cheyne, Llandaff, Cardiff CF5 2SD

dave.clements1@ntlworld.com

Sepsidae

Steve Crellin

Shearwater, The Dhoor, Andreas Road, Lezayre, Ramsey, Isle of Man, IM7 4EB

steve_crellin1@hotmail.co.uk

Tachinid

Chris Raper

46 Skilton Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG31 6SG

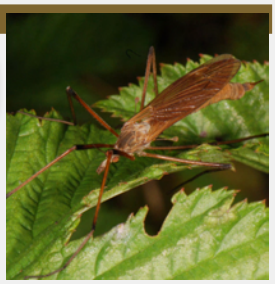
chris.raper@hartslock.org.uk

Matthew Smith

24 Allnatt Avenue, Winnersh, Berks RG41 5AU

MatSmith1@compuserve.com

Tipuloidea & Ptychopteridae - Cranefly



Mr A E Stubbs

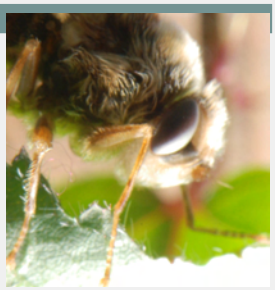
181 Broadway Peterborough PE1 4DS

co-organiser: John Kramer

31 Ash Tree Road, Oadby, Leicester, LE2 5TE

john.kramer@btinternet.com

Oestridae

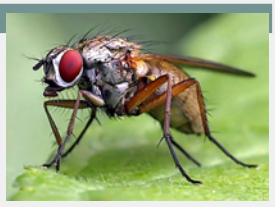


Andrew Grayson

56, Piercy End, Kirkbymoorside, York, YO62 6DF

andrewgrayson1962@live.co.uk

Anthomyiidae



Mr Michael Ackland

5 Pond End, Pymore, Bridport, Dorset, DT6 5SB

mackland@btinternet.com

Hoverflies

Dr S G Ball stuart.ball@dsl.pipex.com

255 Eastfield Road Peterborough PE1 4BH

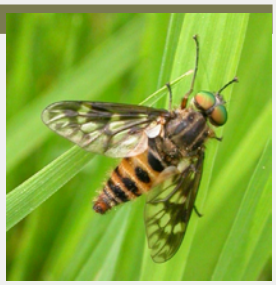
Mr R K A Morris roger.morris@dsl.pipex.com

Newsletter editor

David Iliff davidiliff@talk21.com

Green Willows, Station Road, Woodmancote, Chel-tenham, Gloucestershire GL52 9HN

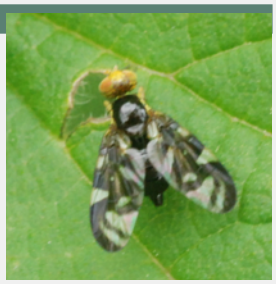
Larger Brachycera



Simon Hayhow

simon.hayhow@btinternet.com

Tephritid Flies



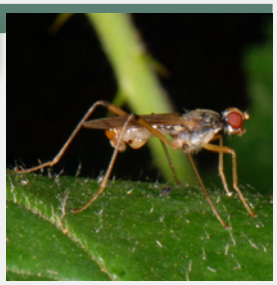
Mr Laurence Clemons

14 St John's Avenue

Sittingbourne

Kent ME10 4NE

Stilt & Stalk Fly



Darwyn Sumner

122, Link Road, Anstey, Charnwood, Leicestershire LE7 7BX.

0116 212 5075

Darwyn.sumner@ntlworld.com

Mycetophilidae and allies - Fungus gnats

Peter Chandler

606B Berryfield Lane, Melksham, Wilts SN12 6EL

01225-708339

chandgnats@aol.com

Empid & Dolichopodid

Dr Adrian Plant

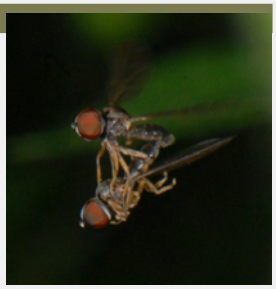
Curator of Diptera, Department of Biodiversity and Systematic Biology, National Museum & Galleries of Wales, Cathays Park, CARDIFF, CF10 3NP

Tel. 02920 573 259 Adrian.Plant@nmgw.ac.uk

Martin Drake, Orchid House, Burridge, Axminster, Devon EX13 7DF.

martin_drake@btopenworld.com

Pipunculidae



David Gibbs

6, Stephen Street, Redfield, Bristol, BS5 9DY

davidjgibbs@aol.com