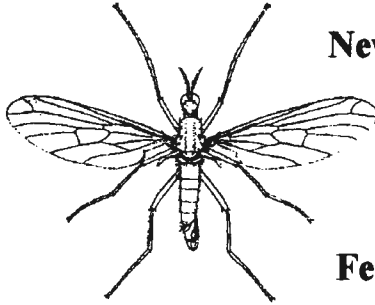




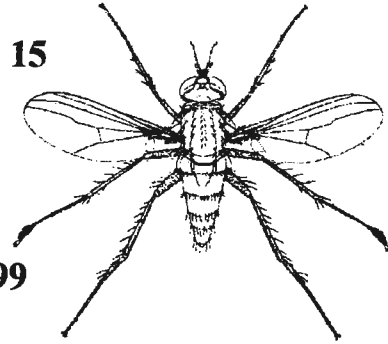
Dipterists
Forum

Empid & Dolichopodid Study Group

Newsheet No. 15



February 1999



Editorial

Newsheet No. 1 was produced in March 1986 as a two-sided A4 sheet, and for several years thereafter subsequent Newsheets were produced twice annually. However, after 1990 momentum was lost; number 13 appeared in August 1994 and the most recent, number 14, came out in February 1996.

The present issue is an attempt to revive what has become a flagging publication and if this inspires others to contribute to future issues it will take off again. Since those early days Dipterists Digest has come along in leaps and bounds and it now provides a more appropriate vehicle for the publication of some material that would formerly have appeared in the Newsheets. That is good, and as nothing is forever it may be the case that the Newsheet has outlived its usefulness - time will tell.

However, this issue is offered, with thanks to the contributors, in the hope that it might stimulate others to take up the pen.

Roy Crossley, 1 The Cloisters, Wilberfoss, York YO41 5RF. Tel 01759 388809

An empid new to science? - be warned

A male *Empis* s.s. which I collected at Troutdale Fen in North Yorkshire, 7/8/98, did not fit any of the species in the Collin key, nor in the 1994 Fauna Ent. Scand. work by Milan Chvála. Excitement mounted with the dawning realisation that here was probably an undescribed species. But there was something nigglingly familiar about the specimen and then, after several fruitless attempts to name it, the penny dropped. This wasn't an *Empis* at all but a *Rhamphomyia*, *Aclonempis longipes* to be precise, with a typically *Empis* cubital fork on both wings. And this isn't unknown, because Collin mentions exactly this phenomenon in *Aclonempis* (p.328), although he does go on to comment that it is very rare.

Roy Crossley

Some recent Yorkshire 'goodies'

Hilara setosa at Duncombe Park and Forge Valley Woods; *Hilara gallica* at a relict heathland site east of York; *Dolichopus migrans* at the same site; *Oedalea ringdahli* at Forge Valley Woods. Full details of these will appear in various journals in due course.

Roy Crossley

A further record of *Tachypeza fennica* Tuomikoski

In June 1989 I swept a female of an unknown *Tachypeza* sp. at Rassal NNR, Wester Ross (VC105).

I was uncertain of its identity and sent it to Milan Chvála who confirmed it as *T.fennica*, new to Britain (**Dipterists Digest No.12. p.27, 1992**). The specimen was swept from rough vegetation beneath the canopy of Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior* L.) on limestone pavement.

On 30 May 1994 I was searching tree trunks in a small patch of acidic, mostly boggy woodland, near Scourie (VC108) at NC173445. Amongst the usual *Medeterea* spp., *Tanypeza nubila* (Mg.)

and occasional *Rhagas unica* Walker, characteristic of such situations, I found two males of *Tachypeza* sp. with conspicuous maculations on the anterior femur. On close examination these proved to be *T.fennica*. In contrast to the females, which are difficult to determine and perhaps best distinguished by the paler proboscis and slight apical convergence of the cubital and discal veins, the males were readily identified by the characters given in Chvála (**Fauna Entomologica Scandinavica 3. 1975**). The shape of the dark maculations, anterior patch of long hairs on the front of the femur, together with a tubercle bearing strong bristles near the base of the mid femur are characteristic of males of this species.

When I originally described this species as new to Britain I speculated that careful searching of tree trunks would yield further examples and perhaps also *T.truncorum* (Fall.) and *T.heeri* Zett. which have similar boreal distributions. This assertion appears to have been partly (if statistically irrelevantly) vindicated so it would be well worth making detailed searches of tree trunks in the Scottish highlands.

The *T.fennica* were taken running on a *Fagus* trunk where they were conspicuous on the relatively smooth surface. I have often noticed *T.nubila* in greater numbers on smooth-barked trees (particularly *Betula*) but I am not sure if this is a genuine habitat preference or merely a reflection of their habit of retreating into crevices in rough-barked trees and so being less conspicuous. It would be interesting to use sticky traps, positioned flush with the bark, to establish if they really do prefer certain trees over others. Indeed, this technique probably holds the best promise for investigating the distribution and habitat preferences of the rarer species of *Tachypeza* as well.

Adrian Plant, 30 Dorset St., Blandford Forum, Dorset, DT11 7RF

Some *Systemus* problems resolved

In a recent paper Kassebeer (1998), reports his findings after studying the types of most palaeartic species of *Systemus*. He has resolved problems discussed by me in Newsheet 9 p.7-9, and shown that *S.pallidus* Vaillant is a junior synonym of *S.pallipes* (von Roser), and *S.alpinus* Vaillant is a junior synonym of *S.scholtzi* (Loew). He has also shown that *S.tener* Loew is a valid species and not a synonym of *S.bipartitus* (Loew). *S.tener* is included in the **Handbook** by Assis Fonseca (1978), where it is distinguished by antennal colour. Kassebeer mentions that there are also differences in the hypopygium which were mentioned by Loew (but have yet to be figured). However, *S.tener* was given as a synonym of *S.bipartitus* in the **Palaeartic Catalogue** (Negrobov 1991), and this was followed in the recent **British Checklist** (Chandler 1998).

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Kassebeer, C.F., 1998, *Dipteron* 1: 10-20
Negrobov, O.P., 1991, Family Dolichopodidae. In: Soós, Á. and Papp, L. (Eds) *Catalogue of Palaeartic Diptera* 7: 11-139

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'Fonseca' reprinted

The standard Dolichopodid RES 'Handbook' first appeared in 1978 and has been difficult to obtain for many years. The good news is that it has now been reprinted and is available from the RES. Peter Dyte points out that the name *Teuchophorus* is consistently misspelt, and the misspelling has crept into the literature.

Recent publications

It has been suggested that a regular item detailing recent publications concerning empids and dolis would be very welcome, especially to those who do not have access to a wide range of current literature. Peter Dyte has taken up the challenge and we are greatly indebted to him for producing the following list; Roy Crossley extracted details from **The Naturalist** and from **Studia Dipterologica**.

- Bowden, J.**, 1998, Observations on *Neurigona abdominalis* (Fallén) and other Dolichopodidae (Diptera). Ent.Mon.Mag.. 134: 61-64.
Records 32 spp from an Essex garden with notes on habits, feeding etc.
- Chandler, P.J.**, 1998, *Oedalea hybotina* (Fallén) (Diptera, Hybotidae), a third British record. Dipterists Digest. (2nd ser.) 5: 26.
- Chvála, M.**, 1996, Classification and phylogeny of European *Empis* subgenus *Xanthempis* Bezzi (Diptera, Empididae). Studia Dipterologica. 3(1): 3-18.
- Chvála, M.**, 1997, A revision of the European species of *Hilara chorica* - complex (Diptera, Empididae), with new synonymy and description of a new species. Studia Dipterologica. 4(1): 99-113.
- Chvála, M.**, 1997, A revision of the European species of the *Hilara flavipes* - group (Diptera, Empididae), with new synonymies and description of a new species. Studia Dipterologica. 4(2): 463-472.
- Cole, J.**, 1998, *Sciapus basilicus* Meuffels and Grootaert (Diptera, Dolichopodidae) new to Britain. Dipterists Digest. (2nd ser.) 5: 79.
- Cole, J.**, 1998, (Report of exhibit). Dipterists Digest. (2nd ser.) 5: 24.
Medetera impigra reared from under bark of grey poplar, and Empidoidea from Wales
- Crossley, R.**, 1996, Notes on the Empidoidea (Diptera) of a Yorkshire salt-marsh. Naturalist. 121: 67-69.
A brief account of the rather impoverished fauna of one of the few surviving salt-marshes on the Humber estuary
- Crossley, R.**, 1996, Using Diptera in assessing site quality, with particular reference to Empidoidea - a regional perspective. Naturalist. 122: 155-157.
An outline of the development and practical application of the 'Species Quality Index' technique as devised by the author
- Crossley, R.**, 1997, Two recently described flies in Yorkshire: *Platypalpus australominutus* Grootaert (Diptera: Hybotidae) and *Hercostomus silvestris* Pollet (Diptera, Dolichopodidae). Naturalist. 122: 60.
- Crossley, R.**, 1998, *Sciapus maritimus* Becker (Diptera, Dolichopodidae) in Britain. Br.J.Ent.Nat.Hist.. 10: 192.
- Crossley, R.**, 1998, *Platypalpus bilobatus* Wéber (Diptera: Hybotidae), and *Chelifera astigma* Collin (Diptera: Empididae) in northern England. Br.J.Ent.Nat.Hist.. 10: 195.
- Daugeron, C.**, 1997, Evolution of feeding and mating behaviours in the Empidoidea (Diptera: Eromoneura). Mém.Mus.natn.Hist.nat.. 173: 163-182.
- Dobson, J.R.**, 1997, Observations of aerial swarming in thirteen species of Diptera and a discussion of 'occasional' swarmers. Dipterists Digest. (2nd ser.) 4: 9-17.
- Drake, C.M., & Chandler, P.J.**, 1997, Re-instatement of *Dolichocephala oblongoguttata* (Diptera: Empididae) as a valid species. Dipterists Digest. (2nd ser.) 4: 74-77.
- Dyte, C.E.**, 1998, (Report of exhibit). Br.J.Ent.Nat.Hist.. 11: 114.
Records *Syntormon silvianus* from Scotland and *Dolichopus strigipes* from a cross-channel ferry between Dover and Calais
- Dyte, C.E.**, 1998, Species of *Medetera* (Diptera: Dolichopodidae) active in autumn. Dipterists Digest. (2nd ser.) 5: 33.
- Godfrey, A.**, 1998, (Report of exhibit). Br.J.Ent.Nat.Hist.. 10: 165-166.
Includes rearing records of *Euthyneura halidayi*, *Platypalpus parvicauda*, *Drapetis arcuata*, *Systemus pallipes* and *S.leucurus*
- Godfrey, A.**, 1998, The Diptera of Moccas Park National Nature Reserve. Dipterists Digest. (2nd ser.) 5: 44-48.
Platypalpus aurantiacus, *Rhamphomyia micropyga*, and *Hercostomus nigrilamellatus* recorded, and *Systemus pallipes* reared from horse chestnut sap
- Godfrey, A.**, 1998, (Report of exhibit). Br. J. Ent. Nat. Hist.. 11: 99.
Includes records of *Platypalpus luteolus*, *P.melancholicus*, *Tachydromia acklandi*, *T.costalis* and *T.halidayi*
- Hancock, E.G. & Ward, A.**, 1996, The effect of shade on the relative abundance of insects in water traps in the tropics. Entomologist. 115: 91-96.
Dolichopodidae comprised 55% of 1509 Diptera trapped in the sun, but only 8% of 793 trapped in the shade
- Hodge, P.J.**, 1998, (Report of exhibit). Br.J.Ent.Nat.Hist.. 10: 166.
Includes *Sciapus contristans* from E.Kent
- Hodge, P.J.**, 1998, (Report of exhibit). Br.J.Ent.Nat.Hist.. 11: 100.
Includes records of *Platypalpus politus*, and *Hilara discoidalis* from Sussex
- Hoffeins, C., Hoffeins, H.W. & Wagner, R.**, 1997, Beschreibung einer Art der Gattung *Heleodromia* (Diptera: Empididae, Hemerodromiinae) aus dem Bitterfelder Bernstein. Studia Dipterologica. 4(2): 441-446.
Description of a *Heleodromia* sp. From the Bitterfield amber. (In German with English summary and colour illustration)
- Horvat, B.**, 1997, New records of aquatic Empididae (Diptera) from Macedonia. Studia Dipterologica. 4(2): 489-494.
An account of the distribution of 21 spp. Including the Balkan endemic *Wiedemannia dyonysica* Wagner new to Macedonia
- Hövmeyer, K.**, 1998, Diptera associated with dead beech wood. Studia Dipterologica. 5(1): 113-122.
A study of emergence trapping; includes 16 Empidoidea species
- Laurence, B.R.**, 1997, Diptera in the Northern Isles of Britain. Ent.Mon.Mag.. 133: 225-232.
Lists 30 spp. Empididae (sens.lat.) and 21 spp. Dolichopodidae from Orkney or Shetland or both, with detailed localities, and discussion of island faunas
- Laurence, B.R.**, 1997, Flies from ancient coppiced woodland in Suffolk. Dipterists Digest. (2nd ser.) 4:

- 78-92.
Includes records of 38 spp. Empididae (sens.lat.) and 11 spp. Dolichopodidae
- Laurence, B.R. & James, R.**, 1997, Diptera from the mountain of Cadair Idris, Gwynedd, North Wales. *Ent.Mon.Mag.* 133: 165-171.
Records 10 spp. Empididae (sens.lat.) and 17 spp Dolichopodidae from traps at 200, 400, 600 or 800m from vi-xi
- Longley, M.**, 1997, Densities and spatial distributions of predatory flies (Diptera: Empididae) in winter wheat. *Entomologist*. 116: 207-211.
Sticky traps were used to study *Platypalpus* adults identified only to Genus
- MacGowan, I.**, 1997, Further records of *Hilara setosa* (Diptera: Empididae) with some notes on its ecology. *Dipterists Digest*. (2nd ser.) 4: 4-5.
- MacGowan, I.**, 1997, *Systemus mallochi* sp. N. from Britain (Diptera: Dolichopodidae). *Dipterists Digest*. (2nd ser.) 4: 24-29.
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- Meyer, H. & Filipinski, B.**, 1998, Empidoidea (Diptera: Dolichopodidae, Empididae, Hybotidae, Microphoridae) aus Emergenzfängen von zwei Seeausflüssen (Oberer und Unterer Schierenseebach) in Norddeutschland (Holsteinische Jungmoräne). *Studia Dipterologica*. 5(1): 123-144.
111 spp. of Empidoidea are reported from emergence traps at lake outlets. (In German with English summary)
- Naglis, S.**, 1997, Alpine Arten der Familie Dolichopodidae aus den Schweizer Alpen (Diptera: Dolichopodidae). *Studia Dipterologica*. 4(1): 137-142.
14 species of Dolichopodidae are reported from high altitude in the Swiss Alps. (In German with English summary)
- Naglis, S.**, 1998, Dolichopodidae (Diptera) aus der Südschweiz. *Mitt. Schweiz. Ent. Ges.* 71: 169-176.
27 spp. Listed including 4 new to Switzerland
- Olejniczek, J. & Kozanek, M.**, 1997, *Systemus slovakii* sp. Nov. (Diptera: Dolichopodidae) from Korea. *Entomological Problems*. 28: 127-129.
- Parsons, T.**, 1996, The invertebrates of the island of Steep Holm in the Bristol Channel
Wincanton Press, Wincanton, Som. 316pp. . . .
Includes annotated lists of species of Empididae (sens.lat.) and Dolichopodidae
- Perry, I.**, 1998, (Report of exhibit). *Br.J.Ent.Nat.Hist.* 11: 101.
Includes a record of *Diaphorus hoffmanseggi* from R.Monnow, Gwent
- Perry, I.**, 1998, *Achalcus thalhammeri* Lichtwardt (Diptera: Dolichopodidae), in Cambridgeshire. *Dipterists Digest*. (2nd ser.) 5: 69.
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In Merz, B. Bächli, G., Haenni, J.P. & Gonseth, Y. (eds) *Diptera Checklist. Fauna Helvetica*. . .
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- Stark, A.**, 1996, Eine neue brachyptere *Tachydromia* aus Deutschland und Diskussion ihres Indikatorwertes für alte Dünengebeite im Binnenland (Diptera: Empidoidea, Hybotidae). *Studia Dipterologica*. 3(2): 300-310.
Tachydromia schnitteri sp.nov. is the second brachypterous sp. of this genus for the Palaearctic fauna. The indicator value is discussed. (In German with English summary - well illustrated, including colour photo).
- Underwood, R.**, 1998, (Report of exhibit). *Dipterists Digest*. (2nd ser.) 5: 26.
Gynandromorph of *Hilara monedula*
- Wagner, R.**, 1998, A new species of the genus *Dolichocephala* (Diptera: Empidoidea, Empididae, Clinocerinae) from the Czech Republic. *Studia Dipterologica*. 5(1): 71-72.
- Waring, P.**, 1998, (Report of exhibit). *Br.J.Ent.Nat.Hist.* 10: 184-187.
Includes *Phyllodromia melanocephala*, *Dolichopus atripes*, *D.ungulatus* & *Sciapus platypterus* from woodlands near Abergwynny, Merioneth
- Watt, K.R., Hancock, E.G., Horsfield, D. & MacGowan, I.**, 1997, Rare and local Diptera from the Tay reed beds in Scotland. *Dipterists Digest*. (2nd ser.) 4: 30-34.
Includes 1 Empidid, 2 Hybotids & 3 Dolichopodids

Contact the Dipterists Bulletin Editor if you have a use for the above list in the form of a Microsoft Access database table.

The separation of some species in the subgenus *Gymnopternus* within *Hercostomus*

Martin Drake

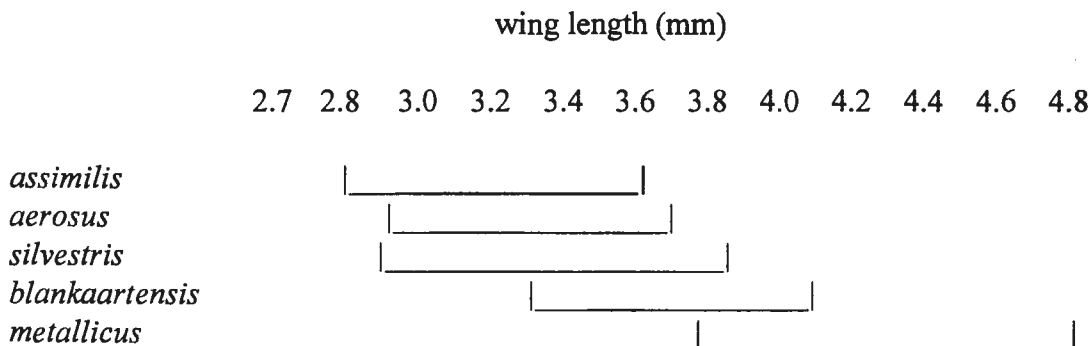
22 Park Road, Deeping St James, Lincolnshire PE6 8ND

Mark Pollet's excellent paper on the subgenus *Gymnopternus* (Pollet, 1990a) described two new species that run to *assimilis* in Fonseca (1978). He describes these briefly also in Pollet 1990b. Although he gives a key (for both sexes) to five of the nine species in the subgenus occurring in Britain, I am not convinced that the colour characters for males, let alone females, are reliable by themselves. The genitalia, on the other hand, are fairly consistent.

Having at last correctly sorted out my specimens, I offer the following alternative key for males. Most difficulty will be found in separating *assimilis* from *silvestris*. The leg colour works for most but not all my specimens of *silvestris*. I still have a suspicion that there is another species lurking among *silvestris* because the finer details of the genitalia do not always fit Pollet's figures and descriptions.

The five species fall into three overlapping size classes. These give a useful clue to identity so I have shown Pollet's values for wing length (his Table 1) for clarity. Females are usually slightly larger, on average, than males but the difference is small so I have not shown the two sexes separately.

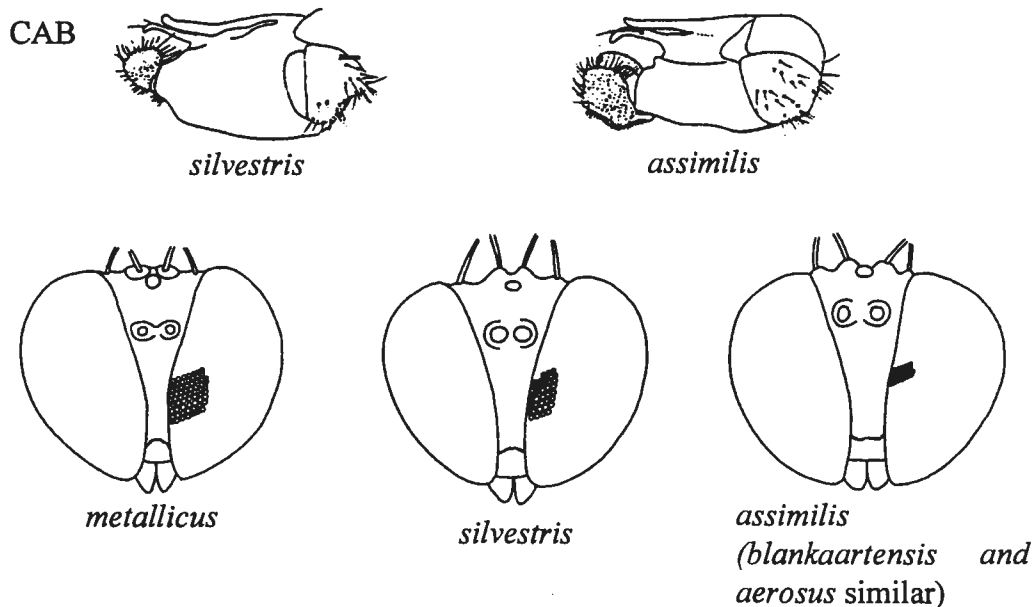
My key starts at couplet 13 of Fonseca's key, but obviously the following couplets will become mis-numbered. The first couplet will probably not work for wet specimens. The genitalia figures are Pollet's; the faces are of my specimens.



Key to males

- 13 Face matt black [face moderately broad, tapered; femora darkened dorsally; genital lamellae black; small species] *aerosus* (Fallén)
- Face with grey or white dust or pubescence. 14
- 14 Face narrow and almost parallel-sided towards the bottom, as wide as three large eye facets at its narrowest; all marginal bristles of the genital lamellae similarly slender; lamellae usually pale at the base; large species. *metallicus* (Stannius)
- Face more tapered and broader than three large eye facets (usually about 5-6 facets wide); genital lamellae with some marginal bristles stouter than others, dark or yellow; medium-

- 15 Lamellae yellow (like *celer*); caudal appendage of basimere (CAB of Pollet) brown, not translucent; medium-sized species. *blankaartensis* Pollet
- Lamellae dark or pale only at the base; CAB pale and translucent; small species. 16
- 16 Lamellae shining black, large relative to the depth of the hypopygium (their depth well over three-quarters the depth of the black part of the hypopygium below the pale brown ridge); in side view, the lamellae are inserted apparently almost at the bottom of the hypopygium; femora entirely pale. *assimilis* (Staeger)
- Lamellae shining dark brown, small (their depth just over half the depth of the black part of the hypopygium), inserted apparently well above the bottom of the hypopygium; femora often darker dorsally but not consistently so. *silvestris* Pollet



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