

# Cranefly Recording Scheme Newsletter

Newsletter 17

Autumn 2008



## Geoff Hancock reports from the Isle of Islay 2008

On 2 July 2008 I was on the Isle of Islay and saw quite a few *Dicranomyia goritiensis* ('normal' kind) sitting and bobbing on tufa seepages at Ardnave (NR294735). Exactly same kind of situation as described by Howe in the Dipterists Digest.

We have only one other specimen in the Hunterian Museum (Zoology) (University of Glasgow) collected by Geoff Hosie, from Spout of Ballagan, nr Strathblane, (NS5679) 26.6.1967. What is interesting about this latter record is that it is not a coastal locality, but it is a site where a waterfall flows over lime-rich rocks. So, it may be the one British exception so far about not being known from inland sites, unless other sites are now known here as there are for mainland Europe.

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## Dipterists Forum Summer Field Meeting, Glenmore Lodge, Aviemore, Cairngorms, Scotland

28 June - 5 July 2008.

### A History of Records from the Aviemore Area.

This is one of the best recorded areas in Britain and records go back over 100 years. One of the first dipterists to take the train to Aviemore was James Joseph Francis Xavier (**J.J.F.X. King**), (See below) who visited the area several times in 1903-6. He recorded many species, such as: *Nephrotoma aculeata*, and *N. cornicina*. *Tipula bistilata* was a first for Britain, recorded by King at Nethy Bridge on 21/6/1923. *T. coerulescens* and *T. nodicornis (juncea)* were also recorded by him. In 1903 he caught the pediciines *Tricyphona schummeli*, and *T. unicolor*. Limoniids which he caught include, *Arctoconopa melampodia*, *Symplecta meigeni*, *Pilaria meridiana*, *Dicranomyia consimilis* and *D. rufiventris*. His specimens in Glasgow, and in the NHM have been checked by F.W. Edwards, and by Alan Stubbs. **J.H Wood** recorded *Molophilus ater* in 1904, and **Col. J.W. Yerbury** recorded *Dicranomyia omissinervis* in 1911. **F.W. Edwards** (see#16) visited in 1931 and 1934 and recorded *Schleroprocta sorocula*, and *Tricyphona schummeli*. **R.L. Coe** recorded *Tipula montana*.

After the war, from 1947 onwards Ralph Coe continued to visit the area, with **Len Parmenter**. In addition, the eminent virologist and amateur entomologist **Sir Christopher Andrewes** (Biography in next edition) did a lot of collecting of Diptera in this area, from 1949 up until about 1965. The very rare *Tipula bistilata* was recorded by him in 1949, and also *Tanyptera atrata*, *T. nigricornis*, *Nephrotoma dorsalis*, *Tipula montana*, *T. nubeculosa*, *T. nodicornis*, *T. montium* and others, were captured in the district.

More recently, Alan Stubbs and Ivan Perry have collected from the area. It is therefore well worked, and there are over 100 species of crane fly recorded from this region of the Highlands.

## Field Meeting 28 June - 5 July 2008.

Although there was little rain during our Field meeting week and we were able to work every day, the weather in the first half of the week was cool and blustery, making collecting from open habitats difficult. There was also evidence that the weather had previously been warm and dry, perhaps causing early emergence in May, and in my experience, species numbers were low in the exposed biotopes. There is of course an abundance of excellent habitats in the area, and 29 members and wives attended to man the nets.

The sandy river margins of the Spey yielded interesting species. The genus *Nephrotoma* were well represented by *N. guestfalica*, *N. submaculosa* and *N. scurra*. although I did not record *N. aculeata*, *cornicina* or *dorsalis*, which have been seen on previous visits. Andy Halstead recorded *Arctoconopa melampodia*, and *Symplecta meigeni* from near the R. Spey/ R. Nethy junction, and Darwyn Sumner captured *Hexatoma bicolor* from the same area.

A Lake margin *Carex* bed yielded *Pilaria meridiana*, and *Prionocera turcica*.

The montane bog habitat yielded *Tipula (Vestiplex) montana*, caught by Kim Goodger, and *Tipula (Savtshenkia) alpium*. The mountain streams are habitats for aquatic Pediciine larvae and adults of *Dicranota (Ludicia) lucidipennis* were emerging commonly from many of them. *Pedicia occulta* and *Dicranota simulans* were also taken. *Tricyphona schummeli* was common and *Euphyllidorea phaeostigma* and *Eu. meigeni* were identified.

Lowland Bogs and Woodland habitats provided many species. *Phyllidorea longicollis* is perhaps worth a mention, from by a woodland stream in Glen More.

The *Carex* beds fringing lakes yielded *Pilaria meridiana*, and *Prionocera turcica*, but not *Idioptera pulchella*, which has been recorded in the area by J.J.F.X. King. *Idioptera linnei* has never been recorded from here.

Anyone wanting more details of the Craneflies recorded apply to me.

John Kramer

## Species Notes

### Notable Records

Among the records worth especial mention is the second British record of *Ormosia ruficauda* (Zetterstedt). This, very much resembles a yellow *Molophilus*, until it is examined closely and *Molophilus ochraceus* was caught nearby. A number of specimens were collected (by JK) along the small tree-fringed stream near its junction with the R.iver Spey near Aviemore. It was first recorded by Mike Edwards from The Abernethy Forest in 2000. (Vide Bulletin 51, Spring 2001.



*O. ruficauda*: Antennal segments



*O. ruficauda*: Terminalia

The diagnostic characters are the cleft outer dististyle, the 'forked tail' on tergite 9, and the characteristic single prominent bristle on the mid antennal segments

### Reference:

Stubbs, A.E., 2001. Test key to species with an Open Discal Cell. p18

## ***Ctenophora ornata* in the New Forest**

As a keen contributor to moth recording in Hampshire, I have been running a mercury vapour light in our garden in Ashurst since we moved here in 1999. Although interested in other insects, the challenges of getting to grips with the ~700 species of moth recorded to date has hindered systematic recording of the other insects often found in the trap. Nonetheless, I was quite certain that the spectacular insect in my front garden trap on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2008 was one I had never seen before; a second individual in the back garden trap only added to my surprise. As I was struggling to define the family let alone the species, I posted the photograph below on the BWARS website, thinking it was an Ichneumon wasp. Within hours I was very pleased to be pointed in the direction of it being a *Ctenophora* sp. by Charles David.



With this information to hand it was then easy to locate photographs suggesting specific identification as *C. ornata*, which was then confirmed by others. This crane-fly is thought to be a mimic of large Ichneumon wasps. Martin Harvey indicated he has seen males attracted to MV light in the New Forest and at Windsor Forest (the females don't seem to be attracted to light).

The New Forest records are sparse, and as best I can tell it has not previously been recorded from my 10 km square. Recent woodland restoration work in the local enclosures might perhaps have made conditions more suitable. After my sightings in June, in spite of running the MV daily I did not see the crane-fly again for some weeks, but then had 2 further individuals on the night of 26<sup>th</sup> July 2008.

**Keith Godfrey**

## Identification Problems - Look-alikes

### *Euphylidorea meigeni* (Verrall 1887) v. *Euphylidorea phaeostigma* (Schummel 1829)

Both of these species are black, found on bogs and mires, and are members of the same genus. When the genitalia are examined, the difference is clear, but is it possible to distinguish the two species in the field, or 'in the hand', using a hand lens? I have never been sufficiently confident and so have always done a genitalia preparation, before making a record.



**Dististyles** (from Edwards 1938)

*Euphylidorea meigeni* (Verrall 1887)



**Dististyles** (from Edwards 1938)

*Euphylidorea phaeostigma* (Schummel 1829)

*Euphylidorea meigeni* was described by Verrall in the Entomologists Monthly Magazine in 1887 and is the only one of this pair to be mentioned in Wingate (1906). *Eu. phaeostigma* is not mentioned on Verrall's 'List of British Diptera in 1901, but by 1938, F.W. Edwards has got its measure, and he describes the differences between them. He lists various sites in Scotland, including Loch Morlich, as localities from which it has been recorded. He writes, 'Perhaps overlooked elsewhere through confusion with *meigeni*.' He states that the antennae in *phaeostigma* are slightly longer, the flagellum reddish-brown rather than black, and the basal segments more elongate-oval. In *meigeni*, the **mesonotum** is 'somewhat shining', and in *phaeostigma*, 'not obviously shining, even in the middle and in the front.' (I cannot discover where the mesonotum is situated. The metanotum is posterior and lateral to the postnotum, at the back of the thorax. There is also a mesopleuron (See RES Handbook Vol IX Part 1), so perhaps this term mesonotum is used erroneously?) The wings in *phaeostigma* are slightly clearer.

All of the features described above, are not ideal for making a key since they are continuous variables, with no sharp dividing line between them. However, Edwards also used drawings of the structures of the dististyles to differentiate between the two species, and these, shown above, are clearly different.

Coe's RES key (Vol IX, Part 1) published in 1950, repeats Edwards' drawings of the distinctly different dististyles, and notes that the basal segments of the flagellum in *phaeostigma* are light brown, elongate oval, while those of *meigeni* are black or dark brown, with the first few flagellar segments very shortly oval.

These differences are all described in Alan Stubbs' Draft Key to the Limnophilinae, published in 1997 and he also clearly shows, perhaps the best of the diagnostic characteristics, the difference in shapes of the posterior edge of tergite 9, *phaeostigma* possessing a pair of crescent shaped projections, while these are absent in *meigeni*.

So, examine any specimens which you have available. What do you think? Check the antennal and mesonotal characteristics, in males and then look at the genitalia. Even if you have one specimen, let us know your findings for the next newsletter. And is it possible to differentiate between the females of *Eu. meigeni* and *Eu. phaeostigma*?

Currently we have about 50 records for *Eu. phaeostigma* and none of these are in SE England. It was known to Zetterstedt as *Limnobia arctica*, and it may well have followed the retreating Devensian ice-cap northwards. There are about four times as many dots on the *Eu meigeni* distribution map, and many of these are on bogs in SW England, Hampshire and Surrey, as well as Wales, Scotland and Northern England. It is worth looking for, wherever *Sphagnum* moss grows.

John Kramer

## Craneflies in Europe

### A Second Record for *Tipula (Emdotipula) gomina* Dufour 2003.

On 30 May 2007, I caught a male Tipulid, which was identified by Pjotr Oosterbroek as the second specimen found of *Tipula (Emdotipula) gomina* Dufour 2003. A fuller report of this is to be found in the next edition of the Dipterists Digest (Vol 15, No.1). I, together with Phil Withers, visited the Cirque de St. Môme, which lies about 80km ESE of Lyon. There a wooded stream-filled gorge climbs upwards towards the wall of the glacial cirque, down which a waterfall cascades, feeding the stream. The stream can be torrential, with moss covered boulders, and there are seepages from the steep sides of the limestone gorge.

The only previous specimen had been caught by Christophe Dufour near Entraunes in the Alpes-maritimes, which lies about 150km to the SSW of the site described here.

The species is distinguished by the characteristic bristles along the edge of tergite 9. These reminded Dufour of hair that had been combed up using hair gel, hence 'gomina', which is an old brand name.



#### Reference:

Dufour, Cristophe, 2003. Descriptions of four new species of Tipulidae from the Alpes-Maritimes in Southern France. Bull.Soc. Neuchat. Sci. Nat. 126(1): 69-80.

***Molophilus tirolensis*** Hancock. This species was also caught, on the same field trip, in France, in the Gorge de Bruyant, SW France, on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2007. It was described in 2005, by Geoff Hancock and is presently only known from Austria and France.



*M. tirolensis* - Lateral half



*M. tirolensis* - Aedeagus

#### Reference:

Hancock, E. Geoffrey 2005 Notes on Molophilus (Dipt. Limoniidae) including the description of a new European species. EMM Vol. 141 (2005)

John Kramer

## People and Historical Notes

### James Joseph Francis Xavier King (1855-1933).



The biggest collection of insects to arrive in the Glasgow Hunterian Museum (Zoology) was King's bequest. He was such a prolific collector that much of his material is a resource yet to be fully realised. Specimens date from c.1877 to about 1930. King collected mainly in Scotland but had a particular interest in Ireland and visited there several times. He also collected in the south of England, mainly in the New Forest and in the southwest as far as Cornwall.

King was employed at the famous Glasgow School of Art, where he taught some drawing and perspective and was also librarian. The day the summer term ended he would go immediately to whichever destination had been planned for that year and stay there for up to two months, sometimes more. His holidays were spent in one area, dividing time between collecting, pinning and setting insects. From the field notebooks that cover some of these trips it is evident that generally he did not travel far, usually collecting on foot within just a few miles of each locus. He appears to have been gregarious by nature, visiting local acquaintances and meeting other entomologists on their home ground. He also visited London for the purpose of furthering his insect work. In the early years he went on family holidays in Scotland.

One of the interesting insects from this period is the first British record of the longhorn beetle *Judolia sexmaculata* under the card of which is written 'The first British specimen, collected by my mother, 1877'. In 1875 he had been presented with a copy of Wilkinson's *British Tortrices* (1859) as a prize for 'Anatomical Notes' by the Haldane Academy and the Glasgow School of Art. Presumably his interest in entomology developed in parallel with his career in art. Later he was to teach a short course on entomology for farmers at the local technical college.

King collected on a scale which is quite unusual. Apparently common and widespread species were collected in large numbers in each place. This is an excellent way of finding the rare and unusual 'hidden' among superficially similar kinds. In this way King was responsible for discovering many species new to Britain. Nothing was too obscure and there are large numbers of Psocoptera, quite a few Thysanoptera and even fleas and free-living mites, all carded and labelled. There are particularly huge numbers of the smaller parasitic Hymenoptera, regarding which one of his obituarists recounted how impressed King's contemporaries were with his ability to set such small insects so perfectly.

In the groups he was personally interested in such as caddisflies (Trichoptera) and dragonflies (Odonata) he published the details himself. In the Entomologists Monthly Magazine he wrote 50 items, mostly short notes announcing the discovery of new insects. Possibly the shortest short note ever published appeared from his pen as '*Setodes argentipunctella*, McLachl., occurs in profusion on the Brathay River at Brathay Church, Ambleside' in the *Entomologists monthly magazine* 18: 163. In the other insect orders he provided much raw material that others worked on.

A considerable quantity of material collected by him can be found in other museums' collections such as Edinburgh (National Museums of Scotland), London (the Natural History Museum) and Dublin (National Museum of Ireland). However, the great bulk of his collection is in Glasgow.

As regards the Diptera, F.W.Edwards (Entomologist at the NHM. See short biography in Newsletter#16) saw all the Diptera collections at the the Hunterian Museum, Glasgow, including the Craneflies, and incorporated the data in his work. The NHM have a few of the specimens retained by Edwards.

King joined Glasgow Natural History Society in 1872 and was Honorary Librarian (at least during session 1889-90). Despite his undoubted contribution to the understanding of the British insect fauna very little is known of his private life. This might be resolved by some local history work in Glasgow, such as to establish where he lived, was he married and so on. From the portrait he appears to be quite an affable character (Hunterian Art Gallery; GLAHA 44245. See Hunterian website for an image).

**References:** Obituaries in Ent Monthly Mag., 9:166 (1933) and in The Glasgow Naturalist, 12: 123 (1936)

**Geoff Hancock**  
Glasgow Hunterian Museum

The next copy dead-line for the Spring Edition – Crane-fly News #18 – will be December 31<sup>st</sup> 2008.

