



BULLETIN OF THE **Dipterists** FORUM

Affiliated to the British Entomological and Natural History Society

NO 46

AUGUST 1998

ISSN 1358-5029

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DIPTERISTS' ANNUAL MEETING, 14-15 NOVEMBER 1998, THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF WALES, CARDIFF

As you will all be aware by now, the 1998 Annual Dipterists' Meeting is to be held in Cardiff this year and will be spread over a whole weekend. On Saturday 14 November we will be having the usual Dipterists' Day events, with a Dipterists' Supper in the evening, whilst Sunday 15 November will be given over to workshops, demonstrations and other events. We hope that many of you will be able to stay locally and attend on both days.

Programme - Saturday 14 November

The Museum will be open from 10.00am. Delegates to the meeting should register at the main entrance reception and can either come directly into the Entomology Department or get a pre-meeting cuppa in the restaurant. Delegates wishing to come into the department to examine the collections before 10.00am can do so by prior arrangement from 9.00am onwards (phone number at end).

We shall have the use of large recently-refurbished meeting rooms in the museum, and the collections will be available throughout the day.

There will be no entrance fee to the museum, but a small fee of £2.00 will be charged on entry to the department to cover costs - for example, for tea and coffee during the day.

The morning session will begin at 11.00am, and will be as follows:

- 11.00 Brief welcome to the NMW/Introduction and announcements by the morning Chairman, Liz Howe
- 11.05 Roger Morris - **The Hoverflies of Surrey**
- 11.35 Mike Howe - **An Overview of Welsh Diptera**
- 12.05 Graham Rotheray - **The Aquatic Flies of Bromeliads in Trinidad**
- 12.35 David Clements - **The Hornet Robberfly in Wales**
- 1.00 lunch - bring your own or use the excellent museum restaurant next door to the department, or forage further afield. We hope to arrange a discount for delegates using the restaurant, and the organisers can advise on local pubs etc.
- 2.00 Informal exhibits and access to collections
- 2.30 Annual General Meeting
- 5.30 End of the day (the museum will close at about 6.00pm)
- 6.30 Dipterists' Supper (details below)

Exhibits

Saturday afternoon is, AGM aside, reserved for informal exhibits. Poster boards and bench space will be provided, so do bring along a box of your best catches, your favourite fly family or anything else which you think will interest others. It might be the results from a survey of one special site, or your back garden, or some work on the ecology of a single species, or photographs of flies, or drawings or whatever: we want to see your stuff, and so will others! There will be a prize of a store box for the best exhibit on the day.

Getting there

We assume most people will arrive by car and there is lots of cheap car parking near the museum (see below). Cardiff Central train station and the main bus station, both of which are close together, are about 15 minutes walk from the museum (see map).

Parking

There is a large car park behind the museum which costs just £1.00 for the whole day, and which closes at 6.00pm. Drive in through the barrier and then collect an exit token at reception. Alternatively, there is roadside parking in the streets all around the museum and university (see attached map). This requires scratchcard tokens to be displayed, which are available from the museum shop. You can stop briefly in front of the main entrance and come in to collect some scratchcards, which cost 60p each. Parking periods vary as indicated on the street signs, but behind the university parking is available for up to 10 hours for two cards displayed (ie £1.20). There are also multi-storey car parks nearby, as shown on the map.

Accommodation

There is abundant accommodation varying from guest houses, small hotels and larger, fancier hotels all within walking distance, to the large 'international' hotels a few minutes drive away. Costs are likely to start at around £20-£25.00 per night. A list of local hotels and phone numbers is attached at the end of this bulletin.

Dipterists' Supper

This will be held in the University of Wales Main Building, next door to the museum, and will begin at 6.30pm. It will take place in the Main Dining Room near the Porter's Lodge (see map). The cost of tickets will be £13.00 per head, inclusive of wine, soft drinks, tea and coffee. Cars may be parked in the main university car park after 6.00pm.

Tickets are obtainable from David Clements. Please send ticket reservations with cheques made payable to 'UWCC' as soon as possible, so that we can gauge numbers. Cheques will not be cashed until the first week of November.

We are delighted that, once again, Dianne Henshaw has kindly agreed to create a dipterological cake for your enjoyment and admiration!

Sunday, 15 November

Details for the Sunday session will be finalised closer to the time of the meeting, and will depend to some extent on the numbers attending and demand. However, the department will be open from 10.00am to 4.00pm and entrance for delegates will be free. The museum galleries and restaurant will also be open and from 10.00 until 5.30pm.

Workshops – provisionally arranged themes; others may follow

- John Deeming/Dave Clements: making preparations of male and female genitalia: specimens for dissection will be provided.
- Dave Clements: introduction to picture-winged flies (Ulidiidae etc) and/or Conopidae, with slides of the species.
- Steve Falk/Alan Stubbs: identifying *Cheilosia*.
- John Deeming: introduction to some selected acalypterate families.
- Peter Skidmore: subject to be decided

Demonstrations

- flies under the Scanning Electron Microscope.
- cladistic analysis and automated taxonomy software.
- the new Recorder software package.
- Diptera sites on the Internet, with terminals available.
- the work of CCW in Wales.
- photographing insects in the field.
- poster displays from the department, the university and elsewhere.

Other items

- trips to local field sites, with demonstration of suction samplers and traps (weather and demand permitting). This could include a trip to the renowned Welsh Folk Museum.
- selections of interesting Diptera from the collections.
- identification consultancy by experienced dipterists always willing to help identify awkward specimens.
- recording schemes progress reports.

In addition, the collections will again be available for examination, with microscopes and bench space

provided. The collection is reasonably strong on the 'popular' British Diptera, and has good world coverage, mostly in modern, accessible storage cabinets.

There will be rooms available for any small sub-groups that wish to go off to discuss particular issues, such as progress in the recording schemes.

We hope to arrange for one of the specialist entomological booksellers to set up a stand selling new and secondhand Dipterological books, and we should also be able to arrange a discount for delegates in the museum shops.

Contacts for further details

At the museum - access and facilities:

Mike Wilson 01222 573263 (Dir)/John Deeming: 01222 573272 (Dir)

Local organisation, general enquiries and supper reservations:

Dave Clements: 01222 307878 (Tel/Fax)

7 Vista Rise, Llandaff, Cardiff CF5 2SD

DIPTERISTS FORUM ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Dipterists Forum will be held at 2.30 p.m. on Saturday 14 November 1998 at the National Museum of Wales, Cardiff.

Agenda

- 1 Secretary's report
- 2 Treasurer's report
- 3 Membership Secretary's report
- 4 Dipterists Digest Editor's report
- 5 Election of officers. The following people have agreed to stand for these posts:

Chairman	Graham Rotheray
Secretary	Alan Stubbs
Treasurer	Jon Cole
Membership Secretary	Liz Howe
Field Meetings Secretary	Malcolm Smart* [elected Nov 1997]
Indoor Meetings Secretary	David Heaver [election, co-opted March 1998]
Bulletin Editor	Darwyn Sumner
Publicity Officer	Patrick Roper
Ordinary members	John Dobson* JCCBI representative [elected Nov 1997]
	Peter Grainger* [elected Nov 1997]
	Stuart Ball [re-election]
	Steve Falk [re-election]
	Roger Morris [re-election]
	Chris Spilling [re-election]

Unelected members:

BENHS representative	Peter Chandler*
Dipterists Digest Editor	Peter Chandler*

- 6 Any other business

We move from the Forum's initial period of low turn-over of post-holders, allowed for in the Constitution to provide stability, to a pattern of more frequent elections of each post. Ordinary Members of the Committee, including those with specific roles, can stand for no more than 2 years without re-election whilst the principle officers (Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer) require annual election. We intend that the post of Chairman should be a one or two year stint only, with a view to passing on that role through the years.

Roy Crossley retires as Chairman and Martin Drake as Bulletin Editor. The Committee proposes Graham Rotheray and Darwyn Sumner to be elected to those respective posts. Last year John Dobson, Pete Grainger and Malcolm Smart were elected as Ordinary Members of the General Committee, John with the role of JCCBI representative and Malcolm as Field Meetings Secretary. David Heaver was co-opted during the year as Indoor Meetings Secretary, mainly to arrange the workshop programme, and now stands for formal election. Stuart Ball, Chris Spilling, Liz Howe (Subscriptions Secretary) and Patrick Roper (Publicity Officer) have completed their elected term and are willing to stand for re-election.

All the above-named people need election except those with an asterisk*. If any alternative candidates are proposed (and willing to stand) the Secretary should be notified in good time so that the membership can be informed 28 days before the AGM (by 17 October, in accordance with the Constitution).

FORUM FIELD MEETINGS AND WORKSHOPS

Autumn foray: Glamorganshire 8-13 October 1998

This meeting will run from Thursday night to Tuesday afternoon. An accommodation base has yet to be clarified pending knowledge of the size of the party so early indication of interest will be welcome.

The aim is to record in the coastal belt and lowlands from the Gower to Cardiff, and reach into the uplands, weather permitting. Though Glamorganshire has been reached from an autumn meeting based near Brecon and in the summer from Abergavenny, the southern part of the county has had little effort from the recording schemes.

Those interested in joining the party should contact Alan Stubbs.

Preston Montford Larger Brachycera Workshop

Following hard on the heels of the long and eagerly awaited Larger Brachycera book, these two workshops are given over to this group of flies, with an advanced and introductory workshop being arranged. The date is **12 - 14 March 1999**.

As with many events that run over some years, they are always subject to price increases and PM have gone for an across-the-board £5 increase. The full course rate is thus £80. To secure one of the limited single rooms a **night rate** of £7.50 is charged (a departure from the previous arrangement). The non-residential rate stays at £12.50 a day.

To spread the load on bank accounts, I suggest a £40 deposit be paid over the coming months, with the remaining £40 reaching me by late February 1999. Cheques should be made payable to **Dipterists Forum: Workshops**, and sent to me. As always SAEs are appreciated.

So, if you have only been working on hoverflies and fancy branching out, or you still have problems with

your therevids, please come along. The number of overall places will be limited to 30 people, so book early.

David Heaver
Indoor Meetings Secretary

Summer Field Week 1999, Grange-over-sands (Cumbria), 12-20 June 1999

A provisional booking has been made at the Castle Head Field Centre operated by the Field Studies Council (the same organisation that operates the Preston Montford Field centre).

A complete wing (of an old building) comprising 24 bedrooms, 5 multiple bath/shower/toilet rooms, two common rooms and a laboratory has been allocated to us. The bedrooms are equipped to accommodate two or more people, but single occupancy is possible. There are no en-suite bathrooms but all bedrooms have wash basins.

In contrast to the last few meetings, the accommodation has been booked for 8 nights (Saturday-Saturday inclusive) so that a full 7 days can be spent in the field, fully utilising both weekends.

The provisional prices we have been quoted are based on the 1998 price schedule. 1999 prices are expected to be similar to 1998 adjusted for inflation. Confirmation of the actual figures is awaited.

	Cost per person (£ for 8 nights incl. VAT @ 17.5%)	
	1998 price schedule	Estimated 1999 @ 3.5% inflation
Single occupancy	278	288
Double occupancy	231	240

Anyone wishing to attend as a non-resident can be provided with full meal service and use of facilities for £16.25 per day (also subject to inflation adjustment).

These prices include full board and lodging including a packed lunch each day (self served/packed buffet-style after breakfast from provided ingredients) and use of a laboratory. The establishment also has a bar (opening time to suit group, e.g. for pre-dinner drinks, closing time 23.00 hrs).

The centre is strategically ideal, being in a rich area on the coast rather than boxed into the hills. This will be an advantage if the weather is poor and it allows us to avoid much of the tourist traffic. It is within striking distance of the edge of the Yorkshire Dales National Park and the Orton area. Various habitats on the limestone here are of great interest, notably woods, limestone pavement and springs and seepages. The Pennine fringe also has fine upland meadows. The Lake District National Park has three main geological formations, thus adding variety to the valley lakes, marshes and fens, alder and oak woods, and rivers and streams. The southern coastal area has raised bogs, saltmarshes and, in the south-west, a major dune system. Biogeographically, southern faunas reach to the climatically advantageous Morecambe Bay, yet northern habitats such as raised bogs reach south, and the rapid changes in altitude over short distances lead to close juxtaposition of upland and lowland faunas. We shall be visiting some relatively well recorded places but also many poorly known districts. Suffice it to say that an area with the hoverflies *Doros* and *Sphaerophoria loewii* and the robberflies *Dioctria oelandica* and *Pamponerus germanicus* must have plenty of potential.

In order to enable me to confirm the booking and planning, I would appreciate it if everybody planning to attend would write to me as soon as possible giving the information listed below. I will send out the

details of the actual cost and deposit required as soon as that information becomes available:

Names(s), address and contact telephone number of expected attendees.

Single or shared room preference.

Malcolm J. Smart, "Southcliffe", Pattingham Road, Perton, Wolverhampton WV6 7HD. Tel 01902 700228.

OTHER EVENTS

Fourth International Congress of Dipterology, Oxford, 6-13 September 1998

As stated in the last Bulletin, a special day rate is being offered for those unable to attend for the entire week. There is a registration form and timetable of events on the back of the Bulletin.

If you have any queries or require further information, please contact the Congress Secretariat (Oxford International) or the Congress Secretary, Dr A. C. Pont, University Museum, Parks Road, Oxford OX1 3PW.

BENHS Annual Exhibition, Saturday 31 October 1998, Imperial College, South Kensington, London.

The meeting will be held in the Sherfield Room at Imperial College, from 11.00 to 5.00.

Hoverfly Workshop, BENHS meeting at Dinton Pastures, Reading, 6 February 1999.

The meeting starts at 10.30 and closes at 4.00. If you would like to attend, please contact Ian McLean, the BENHS indoor meeting secretary (109 Miller Way, Brampton, Cambridgeshire PE18 8TZ).

Midges - BENHS Indoor Meeting, South Kensington, 10 March 1999.

Steve Brooks will be talking on *How midges play a key role in our understanding of global climate change*, at the Royal Entomological Society Rooms, 41 Queen's Gate, South Kensington, London. The meeting starts at 6.30, with tea and chat from 6.00.

DIPTERISTS DIGEST

I would like to thank all those who contributed papers and notes or assisted in other ways in the production of the first part of volume 5 which was published in June. Special thanks are due to Mike Pugh for his meticulous checking of the final text for that issue.

Contributions for the next issue are coming in slowly although a good number of items have been promised. It is appreciated that the field season is usually not the most productive time for writing papers and notes, but a steady stream is necessary if the publication schedule is to be maintained. It is hoped that the second part will be available for the November meeting but for this to happen the text will need to be complete by the end of September.

I would therefore urge everyone who has anything suitable for the Digest to submit as soon as possible. Short notes to fill the inevitable gaps at the end of papers are particularly welcome. It would also be nice to have enough items to carry over to next year.

Peter Chandler

FORUM NEWS

Bulletin Editorial

This is the last Bulletin I will be editing. Your new editor, Darwyn Sumner, will be elected at the next AGM. Please send your contributions to him (address at end of Bulletin). Under the old regime that I inherited from Ian McLean and Alan Stubbs, the next Bulletin would be out in about February, and until Darwyn has had time to change the system, the deadline for newsletters and contributions will stand at about the end of January 1999.

Martin Drake

Diptera summer field meeting records

There was some discussion at Dorchester about the production of reports on the summer field meeting, following the report on the Abergavenny meeting produced by Mike Howe. The following table summarises my (SGB) knowledge of the situation in relation to the information collected during the Dipterists summer field meetings which I have attended:

Year	Venue	Status
1998	Dorchester	participants to send data to MH
1997	Abergavenny	MH (dataset completed and report distributed)
1996	York	SGB/RKM (SGB has data that input so far- some that was input by RKM needs incorporating)
1995	Ayr	MH (dataset completed? - no report produced)
1994	Preston Montford	MH (almost no documentation with co-ordinator; data required from all participants)
1993	Norfolk	SGB (dataset completed, prelim. report produced - comments from participants need incorporating)
1992	Stirling	SGB (dataset completed, prelim. report produced - comments from participants need incorporating)
1991	Muir of Ord (and a few people for the previous week in Skye)	(AES has the papers)
1990	Winchester	? (I don't think the data was ever collected together)
1989	Bideford	SGB (dataset complete but no report was ever produced)
1988	Galashiels	SGB (dataset complete but no report was ever produced)
1987	Bangor	(Joan Morgan had the papers - data amongst that captured by CCW?)

Abbreviations:

SGB Stuart Ball
MH Mike Howe
RKM Roger Morris
AES Alan Stubbs

Could anyone who has records from any of these field meetings they have not submitted please send

them to SGB for meetings up to 1993 and 1996, and MH for 1994, 1995, 1997 and 1998. We intend to try and get things finished off and all the records into a single Dipterists field meeting dataset before next year's summer meeting!

Mike Howe, Ger-y-Parc, Tynyngogl, Benllech, Ynys Mon, Gwynedd, LL74 8NS
Stuart Ball, 255 Eastfield Road, Peterborough, PE1 4BH (Email: StuartBall@aol.com)

DIPTERISTS FORUM

Income & Expenditure Account to 31st December 1997

<u>Income</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
Subscriptions		
Forum 1997	936.00	
Forum 1998	588.00	
Forum 1999	<u>6.00</u>	
		1530.00
Dipterists Digest 1997	1212.00	
Dipterists Digest 1998	802.00	
Dipterists Digest 1999	<u>8.00</u>	
		2022.00
Alliance & Leicester		
Sale of Flotation Shares		1334.25
Net Interest		66.28
Dipterists Day Door Receipts		191.00
Donations		<u>18.36</u>
		5161.89
<u>Expenditure</u>		
Dipterists Digest Volume 3 pt2	519.30	
Volume 4 pts1 & 2	1004.72	
Bulletin 43	297.00	
Bulletin 44	109.20	
Tephritid Atlas	315.00	
Membership Secretary's Expenses	142.40	
Secretary's Expenses	13.83	
Bank Charges Foreign Credits	7.50	
Travel Expenses	<u>5.00</u>	
		<u>2413.95</u>
Surplus of Income over Expenditure		£ <u>2747.94</u>

DIPTERISTS FORUM

Balance Sheet as at 31st December 1997

CASH DEPOSITS

Alliance & Leicester Building Society	5660.60
Giro Bank	<u>2076.36</u>
	<u>7736.96</u>

GENERAL FUND

Balance at 1 st January 1997	4989.02
Surplus for the year	<u>2747.94</u>
	<u>7736.96</u>


Jonathon Cole
Honorary Treasurer

Auditor's Report

We have examined the books and records of the Dipterists Forum for the year ending 31st December 1997 and confirm that the above accounts are correct and in accordance therewith.



R.A. Bell
Honorary Auditor



A.J. Pickles, F.C.A.
Honorary Auditor

16th February 1998

REPORTS OF MEETINGS

Dorchester Field Meeting (June 27- 4 July 1997)

The meeting was fully subscribed, all 27 residential places being taken including two by people from the Bees Wasps and Ants Recording scheme. A few other local entomologists joined us for part of the time. Our base in the agricultural college at Kingston Maurward proved ideal, and being just off the Dorchester by-pass we were well placed for the road system which radiates out from Dorchester.

Mick Parker was the local organiser who did a superb job in lining up access to over 100 sites in Dorset. Pinned to the lab wall was a mosaic of 1:50,000 maps showing site boundaries and parking places, accompanied by a file of larger scale site maps and descriptions.

In a season more noteworthy for atypical weather than typical insects, we had the good fortune of dry weather, though temperatures were generally low and the sunshine often limited. However, such conditions were reasonable for hoverflies at flowers even in early afternoon, though generally too cool for the heat active horseflies.

Everyone seemed to find plenty to interest them so the overall results should prove impressive when collated. On heathland the hoverfly *Pelecocera tricincta* proved to be locally common on quite a number of sites, as also *Paragus tibialis* and the spectacular bee-fly *Thyridanthrax fenestratus* on several sites. Some china clay pits on Creech Heath had a remarkable fauna of craneflies and some very interesting dolis. The bogs were in a lull phase, and few horseflies were few seen under the unfavourable collecting conditions, although *Tabanus sudeticus*, *Chrysops sepulcralis* and other interesting species did appear. By searching *Sphagnum* a pupa of *Atylotus fulvus* was found and reared, and candidate larvae of undescribed *Chrysops sepulcralis* obtained for rearing.

Coastal landslip cliffs yielded some nice rarities, including the cranefly *Arcticonopa melampodia* and the large reed chloropids *Lipara rufitarsis* and *Platycephala umbraculata*. The saltmarsh around Poole Harbour yielded some of the typical fauna, and the rarities included the horsefly *Atylotus latistriatus* and the freshwater seepage cranefly *Dicranomyia complicata*. However, Chesil Beach and Portland were disappointing under the prevailing conditions.

Woodlands were productive for hoverflies, with *Volucella inflata* being seen frequently. Along a woodland stream the scarce stratiomyid *Oxycera terminata* was found commonly and an expedition to find larvae was successful. The little known robberfly *Dioctria cothurnata* was found at several sites. Woods with streams and seepages are a Dorset speciality, notably the presence of calcareous ones; this was rich cranefly country and a special search at one site yielded a female of a species taken new to Britain a few years ago whose identity needs confirmation. At the wet meadows that were often associated with the woods were various stratiomyids such as *Vanoyia tenuicornis* and *Stratiomys potamida* (a puparium of the latter emerged in the lab). On a woodland edge adjoining heathland a specimen of *Callicera aurata* was taken by Malcolm Smart: to say he was rather excited would be a considerable understatement but he did eventually calm down sufficiently to drive those less fortunate to the next site.

The chalk grassland fauna seemed to have been retarded by the weather but more likely the grassland types and management were less than ideal for Diptera. The scarce robberfly *Machimus rusticus* was common at only one site, and *Leptarthrus brevisrostris* surprisingly infrequent. The hoverfly *Cheilosia intonsa* was found at several sites, a species that is generally rarely found.

Such a quick overview does little justice to the great range of species taken. The cranefly total was in

excess of 110 species and that for fungus gnats 101; the totals for hoverflies and larger Brachycera are also likely to be impressive. Certainly there will have been many new county records, for instance, the crane fly *Ptychoptera longicauda*, the first recent (historic?) records of the robberfly *Eutolmus rufibarbis* and the first record of the crane fly *Erioptera limbata* for the county since it was found new to Britain in about 1840. Pete Grainger has a possible candidate muscid new to Britain. The coming months will give time for more goodies to be identified.

Overall this was a successful meeting both socially and for studying flies. Thanks go to Liz Howe as administrative organiser and Mick Parker as local organiser. Those present are urgently requested to send Mike Howe a complete list of the sites they visited together with note of habitats and grid references of the location of their personal recording. Records for the meeting should also be sent to Mike (for those with Recorder, advice on the procedure to transfer records should be cleared with him).

Alan Stubbs

Report of the Abergavenny meeting, June 1997

Mike Howe has produced a report of this meeting (Field meeting of the Dipterists Forum at Abergavenny, June 1997, *CCW Natural Science Report 98/5/2*). It has involved an immense amount of effort, not only by those who have submitted results but also by Mike who has put data on Recorder (the computer data handling package).

The outline totals for some main groups speak for themselves.

Sites visited	131
Vice-counties visited	8
10km squares visited	47
Number of records	10,700
Species	2,111
Species of flies	1,487 (63RDB, 141 Notable)
crane flies	169
fungus gnats	126
larger Brachycera	76
empids	165
dolis	119
hoverflies	153
sawflies	122
aculeates	152
beetles	219

Not bad for a party of 27 resident for the week during indifferent weather. There are still some late entries of data and some people have yet to submit theirs. Though basically a Diptera recording week, it will be noted that over 600 species of other orders were recorded, partly through inviting BEWARS to join us (which pushed the aculeate list) and through Andrew Halstead's prize for the most sawfly 'points'. It has to be said that this was one of the most productive and widely ranging field meetings. However, most of our recording weeks have also been very successful in gaining large amounts of data and many goodies.

Those who attended the meeting have copies of the report. Thank you Mike and thank you CCW for many-faceted support.

Alan Stubbs

NEWS FROM THE SCHEMES

Cranefly Recording Scheme

Two pages of wing illustrations are circulated with this Bulletin, as available at the cranefly workshop in March. One page includes all craneflies with an open discal cell, thus circumventing the problem of naming veins in the absence of the discal cell. The other page covers the Chioninae (=Eriopterinae), the only group for which keys have not yet been issued. The Large Brachycera book will be published later this year, after which the remaining keys can be devised. A unified key to genera is intended which will circumvent the problem of higher groupings often asking if spurs on the tibiae are present or absent, which is not always as simple as it sounds.

Alan Stubbs

Fungus Gnat Recording Scheme

There was a slow start to fungus gnat recording this year due to the weather, and my trip to Scotland in late May produced relatively low numbers. However, a visit to Morrone Birkwood, Aberdeenshire (in the company of Ivan Perry, Graham Rotheray and Iain MacGowan) on 31 May was productive in small *Boletina* species, the catch including six species of the *sciarina* group (all separated only on male genitalia). Further material of *B. populina* which Ivan had added to the British list last year and of the scarce species *B. silvatica* were among them; in addition *B. minuta* Polevoi, another addition to the British list, was recognised. I later found that I had two older specimens of *minuta* from southern England that had been confused under *moravica* - *minuta* like *populina* was only recognised three years ago. In the same paper Zaitzev & Polevoi recognised two more new species of this group so close examination of small *Boletina* is essential. This was confirmed when I also found that I had a previously unrecognised example of another little known member of the group, *B. nigrofusca* from the Birks of Aberfeldy in 1990.

Ivan stayed in Scotland until mid June and did well for fungus gnats despite the variable weather, obtaining 160 species altogether and among these was a male *Sciophila* from Rannoch that is apparently undescribed so Scotland continues to produce surprises. This specimen is black bodied with yellow legs and has very distinctive genitalia, with a narrowly produced tip to the ninth tergite and a long blunt ended lateral process to the claspers.

As reported elsewhere the Dorset field meeting only just topped the 100 mark for gnat species and numbers were generally low with the exception of the cliff woodland above the landslips at The Spittles, just outside Lyme Regis which produced a total of 61 species from two visits. The most Notable find for the week was obtained at this site by Jonathan Cole, i.e. *Monocentrotia favonii*. It had been found at Brenscombe Cliff on the other side of Lyme Regis a few years ago by Alan Stubbs. Records for this species continue to be near the coast.

The gnat list at California Country Park (now 113) continues to catch up Dinton Pastures (128 at the last count). The latest addition was the uncommon bog species *Macrocera fascipennis* found in the Everglades swamp there on 8 July.

Peter Chandler

Hoverfly Recording Scheme

Newsletter No 26 is circulated with this Bulletin.

Larger Brachycera Recording Scheme

No new species have turned up in 1998 so far, but some rare species have been seen again. One from last year (but only confirmed this year) is *Neoitamus cothurnatus* from a hillside in south Wales, where a male and female were caught by Mike Howe - the first record since 1921. I have at last reared the elusive larva of *Vanoyia tenuicornis*, from two sites in south Wales. It looks very like *Oxycera nigricornis*, so no wonder it got overlooked. *Eutolmus rufibarbis* has turned up during the summer field meeting in Dorset. I also took *Eutolmus* by pure serendipity beside a weedy arable field next to a conifer plantation on the sandy soils just west of Oxford; what is more remarkable is that this site is probably within a mile of a 1939 record which is an extraordinary outlier in the provisional atlas.

Our hope of getting the book (now titled *British soldierflies and their allies*) ready for the Diptera Congress was predictably over-optimistic, and a more realistic target for publishing is now about Christmas. However, we will very shortly have selected a printer. Malcolm Storey is undertaking the mammoth task of type setting (as it is still quaintly known). Please read Requests for Help below.

I have not produced a newsletter with this issue of the Bulletin (the book taking up 'Brachycera' time), so I am breaking with normal practice and putting the only note I have received here.

Martin Drake

Leptarthrus vitripennis (Mg.) (Dipt., Asilidae) in East Kent by Laurence Clemons

During a visit of the Kent Field Club to Bredhurst near Gillingham on 28 June 1998, I swept a single male *Leptarthrus vitripennis* from a *Prunus* bush growing beside a rough track at TQ80006185. It was readily distinguished from *L. brevirostris* whilst in the net on account of its smaller size, more conspicuous grey pollinosity and absence of the pinkish shade at the wing apex. Immediately adjacent to the track was an area of calcareous hay meadow dominated by *Bromus erectus* and with good stands of *Leucanthemum vulgare* and *Anacaptis pyramidalis*. The track itself led onto beech woodland. The hay meadow seemed a likely habitat for *brevirostris*, particularly at that time of year, although none was seen.

Tephritid Recording Scheme

Since the last newsletter I have received several batches of records, mainly from people who had previously not contributed to the scheme. Mike Paskin provided a magnificent updated list of records, with abundant biological information, from his Compton Dando patch and if all recorders were as meticulous in their observation as he then we would be in a very good position. A letter from Anthony (A. A.) Allen in May listed the tephritids taken in his former garden at Blackheath Park, EA London - 30 species, making it the best list for a single site in the British Isles!

Despite ample field work, I have been finding relatively few tephritids in Kent this year. Most have been species of *Tephritis* and whilst *Urophora quadrifasciata* seems to be having a good year I have seen not one *U. cardui*. Elsewhere there have been a couple of further sightings of *Chetostoma curvinerve* from Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire by Peter Chandler and Martin Harvey, and Jill Mears reported *Crytaciura rotundiventris* from Caen-y-Coed in North Wales, taken in 1997.

In elucidating grid references from data labels in old collections, I have frequently made use of the A. A. Ordnance Survey road atlases. Even so there are several sites which I am unable to define. Enclosed with this Bulletin is a list of those for which a 10 km square and VC number are sought. If

anyone can help fill in a few gaps, please complete the table and return to me. Postage will be refunded if required.

Laurence Clemons, 14 St. John's Avenue, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 4NE

OTHER NEWS

A new genera of muscid possibly new to Britain

Whilst working with the Dipterists Forum field trip in Dorset this summer, I obtained a specimen of a striking muscid that Peter Chandler and Jon Cole informed me was probably a specimen of the genus *Atherigona*. Whilst this is yet to be confirmed, Adrian Pont of the Oxford University Museum has provisionally confirmed it over the phone for me!

This genus was previously purported to be British but was later struck off the list as a misidentification. There is a single European species - *Atherigona varia* Rondani which is present in France. Adrian tells me that the genus is well represented in tropical areas where some species are considered a pest of cereals.

I intend to write a more detailed description for the *Journal of British Entomology and Natural History*. In the mean time, however, be on the look-out for specimens of a small muscid (about 3 mm long) that gives the appearance in the field of being mainly bright yellow (my specimen has black front tibiae and tarsi but this is possibly not usual). The thoracic dorsum has a grey background with yellow dusting and has poorly differentiated dorsocentrals and undifferentiated acrostichals. The abdomen is pale yellow other than for small paired black spots on tergites two and three.

The specimen was collected from Stoborough Heath near Wareham in Dorset on 30 June 1998.

Pete Grainger

REQUESTS

BRC Cards

When you need more cards, contact Vicky Appleby using your preferred method of communication (see addresses at end of Bulletin). It makes her job more straight forward if you let her know how many cards you want (more precisely than 'a few', 'some' or 'a batch').

Request for records of *Norellia spinipes* (Scathophagidae)

This species was added to the British list by Chandler & Stubbs (1969) (*Proc. Trans. Br. ent. nat. Hist. Soc.* 2: 120-124) from specimens taken in Surrey in 1965 and Bucks in 1967. The larvae mine the leaves of daffodils and adults are found in gardens and woodlands with wild or cultivated daffodils. Because it is such a distinctive species, and no earlier specimens have come to light, it is thought that it was accidentally imported by the bulb trade sometime not too long before this discovery. There have been a number of subsequent published notes charting its spread and it now appears to be well established in southern and eastern England and spreading.

During the Dipterists summer field meeting in Dorchester this year Alan Stubbs took a specimen not far from the Dorset-Hampshire border and participants were surprised that it had reached so far west. This prompts me to ask fellow Dipterists to send me any observations they may have (locality, grid ref. and date). I will try and compile a map showing the spread of this fly for publication in the Bulletin or

Dipterists Digest. I would be grateful for all records, even if they are repeated dates for the same locality or for areas where you know records have already been published. The more records I can get, the better job I should be able to do!

Stuart Ball, 255 Eastfield Road, Peterborough, PE1 4BH. *Email:* StuartBall@aol.com

Packers for British Hoverflies and supplement

Stubbs & Falk and the supplements continue to bring in a steady income to the BENHS who published it. Their sales secretary, Gavin Boyd, has the task of mailing these out. We previously advertised for some help from the Dipterists Forum to lend a hand in packing these, to ease the strain on Gavin, and Peter Langton came forward to help. Gavin has now moved to Northampton so another more local helper is requested. Any takers? Please contact Gavin at 91 Fullingdale Road, Northampton NN3 2PZ.

Larger Brachycera Book

In order to make the cover as attractive as possible, it will be hard-back laminated with a colour photographs. The front will have a large picture with the title overlain; the back will have up to twelve small pictures of live insects representing the range of families. Inside there will be a plate mosaic of horsefly eyes. We would like to make the final selection by late August.

Some slides have already been forwarded for consideration. If anyone else feels able to loan good candidates, please contact Martin Drake, Ian McLean or Alan Stubbs.

CONSERVATION

Fungi Conservation Code / The Fungi Pickers Code of Conduct

Your secretary has been trying to insert some entomological perspective into a code which will be published shortly by a consortium of conservation organisations and the British Mycological Society.

A late draft has adopted some useful messages but it remains to be seen if some further strengthening can be achieved. The code is tight on scientific collecting but then goes too lax on culinary collecting. As I read the current draft, a family of mum, dad and two children have the green light to take nearly a stone (6kg) of fungi at one site visit, which on popular sites amounts to blitzkrieg as usual. Whilst stronger restraint is called for on conservation sites, how is the public to know when it is on an SSSI? The code recognises that habitat protection for fungi is all important and then fails to acknowledge that habitat protection for insects includes the niches in which fungi insects breed. It is one of the few cases where the public are directly eating insects to a homeless state.

Alan Stubbs

Action for heathland BAP flies

Three of the rare flies included on the UK Biodiversity Action Plan live in southern heathlands. These are the hoverfly *Chrysotoxum octomaculatum* and the beeﬂies *Thyridanthrax fenestratus* and *Bombylius minor*. An action plan for *Chrysotoxum* was published in 1995 in *Biodiversity: the UK Steering Group report*, HMSO, and plans for the bombyliids will be published later this year. All three plans call for more survey and for research into the ecology, which are essential to formulating management advice that will recover the populations.

Stephen Miles, on behalf of the Conservation Working Group (CWG) of the BENHS, has put a proposal to the BENHS Council that it takes a lead role in taking forward action proposed in the action plans for these species. The CWG intends to tackle survey and ecology in a rolling programme over five. The cost will be shared between the BENHS and English Nature who will provide a grant, but BENHS will be the lead partner responsible for delivering the results. BENHS Council agreed to this at its last meeting in July. This year will be spent in preparation; work begins in earnest next year.

The government never intended that it should foot the entire bill for the actions given in plans (although it makes a substantial contribution through the species recovery programmes of the conservation agencies and Environment Agency), and it does expect funding to come from other sources. While Butterfly Conservation leads on Lepidoptera, no other amateur invertebrate society has taken on the role of running one of these programmes. BENHS is therefore to be congratulated on this welcome move towards taking forward action on three species.

However, nothing will happen without support from the membership. The intention is that the work will be undertaken by BENHS members and, it is very much hoped, members of the Dipterist Forum. A programme of work will be developed by the CWG. This will involve site visits to map the distribution of the species, and later to investigate their behaviour and ecology. As the constitution of both BENHS and Dipterists Forum prevents members benefitting financially from membership, only expenses can be reimbursed. A more detailed account of the proposal will appear in the BENHS journal. Anyone who is interested in getting involved in this project should contact Steven Miles, 469 Staines Road West, Ashford, Middx. TW15 2AB, 01784 252274.

Martin Drake

South Essex

Rainham Marshes are yet again in the news as another bout of development proposals threaten this grazing levels SSSI. On the wider front in Essex, the coverage of site protection is grossly inadequate in the biodiversity hot spot in the south of the county, as evidenced by outline planning permission for an area containing two first tranche Biodiversity Action Plan species, the hornet robberfly and a bumble bee (and other species of particular concern). Though an impact assessment, including an entomological one, was made, it is said that it was kept out of public scrutiny until the planning decision was made, leaving local entomologists with no chance to comment. Also, there would appear to be no strategic biodiversity action plan to ensure the future of the high profile species in this part of Essex, let alone the other important faunal elements. [Is there an Agenda 21 plan for Essex? - ed.]. The Rio commitment looks a bit of a mirage, which is no credit to national or local government, nor to the conservation bodies that give the impression of not standing up for the biodiversity of insects.

Alan Stubbs

Biodiversity Action Plan

An increasing number of Local Action Plans (Agenda 21) are being published. So far it seems rather haphazard whether Species Action Plans for flies get in, presumably in part because local dipterists have their eye off the ball. It is also noticeable that other important species of flies go unrecognised, and some key habitats neglected. It is the intention of the UK Biodiversity Steering Group that local action should be generated and informed locally, so involvement by local dipterists in local plans is the way forward.

Action plans have been written for the second tranche species and a major hunk has been recently published (UK Biodiversity Group. 1998. *Tranche 2 Action Plans. Vol. 1 - Vertebrates and Vascular Plants*. English Nature). The plans for flies and other invertebrates will be published later this year. The agencies have been contracting various studies on fly species, and are also taking some action plans

Should Dipterists Forum develop its own policies on collecting?

Entomologists finding themselves hauled down the nick for photographing a scheduled insect without a licence might well be tempted to ask for 100,000 additional charges of Culpable Insecticide to be taken into account. Invertebrate conservationists continue to develop and refine ideas as to the most appropriate and effective measures for the protection and management of species and habitats. At the same time, inappropriate legislation, both home- and Euro-grown, is likely to be a continuing feature of invertebrate conservation, as long as we are subject to botched-up versions of 'criteria for inclusion' and misapplied concepts of species protection developed with fur-and-feather in mind (*vis-à-vis* the Biodiversity Action Plan species lists and the (fairly alarming) on-going realignment of Euro-RDB criteria).

While legislators continue to place the protection of individual species at the heart of statutory conservation measure, the clear priority for invertebrates is Habitat, Habitat, Habitat (can't think why I said it three times?). Although the Wildlife and Countryside Act entrains 'disturbance to habitat' for the included species, there is an invisible sub-clause (...unless the site is required for 'essential' development).

No species of Diptera is currently scheduled under the Wildlife and Countryside Act and I cannot for the moment (without employing extravagant mental contortions, the least said about the better) see any circumstances where scheduling of Diptera might be desirable. Are there any habitual over-collectors of large, showy, desperately rare flies out there? Possibly not.

There seems little chance that any Diptera will find themselves scheduled, although BAP species may be politically vulnerable in this respect. Nevertheless, as part of the ongoing development of the conservation remit of Dipterist Forum, it would seem appropriate to make a strong statement against the introduction of any statutory controls on the collecting of Diptera, and establishing the primacy of habitat protection among the instruments of Diptera conservation.

The issue of collecting policy is currently on the table at the JCCBI. Although the Forum subscribes to the JCCBI code on collecting, I am unable to find this set out amongst the Forum literature residing in the Dobson Archive (as an overarching policy statement, perhaps this belongs in the Constitution?). The JCCBI code deals with the basic issues of over-collecting, disturbance to habitat, etc. There is, however, scope for the Forum to develop its own guidelines over and above these, and I believe at least one other invertebrate study group has already done so. This step would be particularly appropriate if we decide to adopt a position on advocacy on particular collecting issues, or if there are taxon-specific criteria to consider. This would not conflict with the JCCBI code but rather enable Diptera- and Forum-specific supplements to the agreed code. With this in mind, I am making a couple of preliminary suggestions here, and I hope that Forum members will let me know their criticisms and additional suggestions.

- (1) Dipterists Forum subscribes to the JCCBI 'Code for Insect Collecting'.

In addition:

- (2) The Forum regards collecting specimens of Diptera as fundamental to the scientific study of the Order. Accurate and reliable identification is only attainable through microscopic examination of prepared specimens in all but a few of the 6,500+ species of Diptera recorded from the British

Isles. All types of amateur and professional study of Diptera require that species are accurately identified.

- (3) There are no current instances where Dipterists Forum would recommend that statutory restriction should be placed on the collecting of a scarce species of fly. This applies across the board, including BAP and RDB species.
- (4) The Forum advocates conservation *via* the protection and appropriate management of the habitats of rare species and of biodiverse habitats supporting rich communities of scarce, local or specialised species.
- (5) In the case of scarce and distinctive species, a single specimen from a site is sufficient to provide voucher material for recording purposes.
- (6) Visiting sites where a rare species is known to occur, in order to add that species to a personal collection (twitching) is not generally recommended unless specimens are required for taxonomic research. Better perhaps (and definitely more fun) to record it from a new site.
- (7) The Forum believes that Dipterists subscribing to the JCCBI code should be permitted to collect Diptera freely on all major national land-holdings where the general public enjoy unrestricted access. The requirement for permits under these circumstances is inappropriate and unhelpful.

On a slightly different issue, I feel that (by analogy to the responsible use of moth traps as advocated by the JCCBI code) some guidance on the use of Malaise traps would be useful. For instance, if I were to site a Malaise trap on a direct line between a flush and an adjacent bank of hogweed, and then leave it in place for the month of June, I would regard that as irresponsible. This exemplifies the potential depletion of fauna occupying small and restricted areas of identifiable habitat. In addition:

- The restricted flight period of many species is well known (if not always well documented).
- The adults of many actively flying species may be remarkably local in occurrence, even within extended areas of habitat.
- Fairly well defined hot-spots of 'fly activity' (numerically and taxonomically rich) may occur in the same spot from year to year, even within extended areas of habitat (JRD, pers. opinion!).
- In view of the highly local nature of many Diptera, long-term monitoring using a Malaise trap on one site is likely to produce artefactual data, as a result of the effect of the trap on local populations of certain species.

While pointing out that Malaise traps have the potential to cause significant damage to local populations, I certainly don't advocate a proscriptive approach to their use. I would, however, like to hear views as to the kind of guidelines that would encourage sensitive and sensible use of this blunt instrument.

Among the many complex issues that confront the conservation of Diptera, questions surrounding collecting and the statutory protection of species are generally among the less difficult to resolve. Nevertheless, this is one area where a gulf of incomprehension may occur between entomologists on the one hand and legislators and the general public on the other. Collecting is often the public face of entomology, and by laying down a clear policy advocating the benefits of collecting, Dipterists Forum would play its small part in moulding public opinion of this issue.

Feedback please!

John Dobson (JCCBI representative of the Dipterists Forum)
46 Elmwood Avenue, Kenton, Harrow, Middx. HA3 8AH

Proposed re-introduction of European Beaver into Scotland

SNH sent out a consultation note on a proposal to re-introduce beaver to Scotland which has reached me. A list of reasons against re-introduction has been returned. Beaver relish aspen; creating apprehension over the future of the fauna associated with stands of importance for saproxylic Diptera and other insects. Once released, the highly destructive beaver will be uncontrollable, and the political eminence of cuddly beaver over the risk of destruction of non-cuddly species and their habitats will be overbearing. Beaver dams may create new ponds and marshy areas which could be beneficial, but possibly where they may do damage to other wildlife interests [European beaver rarely makes permanent dams - ed.]. One cannot tell a beaver what it may or may not do.

Scotland no longer has the extent of necessary wilderness. If there were the political will to recreate large areas of wilderness, and we may be talking of whole catchments with plenty of aspen etc, then in 30-50 years time the practicalities could be re-considered.

Surely time, effort and resources should be first directed to ensuring viability, indeed enhancing viability, of Scotland's still-native fauna and flora. When that is done, the luxury of re-establishment of lost species becomes a more valid case.

Whilst the beaver could be a political lever to advance reinstatement of large areas to naturalness, impatience is likely to rule the day. This proposal is premature but let us hope that it focuses a vision and determination to restore significant areas that were deforested in the past.

Alan Stubbs

Changes in the British fly fauna over the last 25 years

Twenty-five years ago the Linnaean Society held a symposium on the changes in the fauna and flora over the previous 25 years. The published report has remained an important reference, though largely unknown to new generations of naturalists.

With the broader establishment of recording schemes and the growing evidence for global climatic change, plus the Biodiversity Action Plan which lays emphasis on decline as a criterion for action, an update is clearly desirable. Therefore, the Linnaean Society is to hold another and even more comprehensive symposium in November. Ken Smith presented the earlier review and I am co-ordinating the new review.

Evidence for the further establishment of hoverflies, especially those associated with conifers, is an obvious theme. For example, *Xylota coeruleiventris* would appear to have spread south. Another example is *Norellia spinipes* (Scathophagidae) which has spread but, in the absence of a recording scheme, we need records to reveal its present distribution. Theoretically, the limit of the distribution of some species should have moved northwards (as in some butterflies and Orthoptera), but can we separate a genuine extension of range from the increasing range of new recording (perhaps those in northern England would be well placed to comment)? Are there examples of shifts in the emergence period (equivalent to the good data on earlier spawning by frogs) or changes in brood pattern? For example, *Merodon* has an autumn emergence in Scilly, but is this new or long running? It is easy to theorise about declines based on the enormous extent of habitat destruction but we need concrete (!) examples on at least a county scale of declines and, to balance these, of genuine increase in range and status despite the environmental odds.

A fairly detailed outline has to be submitted by late August, which does not give much time. It is

tactically expedient to show that dipterists have some solid evidence, rather than belittle our discipline in the face of so many others being better organised. So do not let the Dipterists Forum down - please toss in ideas and information which may help, to me please.

Alan Stubbs

NEW PUBLICATIONS

The Surrey Hoverfly Atlas by Roger Morris should be in print by late July. The new check list to British Diptera (c.6670 species) by Peter Chandler is in press with the Royal Entomological Society. *British soldierflies and their allies* by Stubbs, Drake and Wilson is in the final stages before going to press with BENHS. The latter two should be in print by the end of the year.

Somerset Hoverflies

Ted and Dave Levy, a father and son team, have made a magnificent job of this new county atlas (they previously produced the Dorset atlas). 10,000 records and 200 species are summarised, with maps and comments, and good text to top-and-tail the atlas. See the review in the *Hoverfly Newsletter*. Somerset Wildlife Trust have published the atlas but a minimum 120 sales are needed to recover costs, and the Levys are handling the sales. Copies from them at 9 Chilton Grove, Yeovil, Somerset BA21 4AN , £6 + £1 p&p per copy, cheques payable to E.T. Levy.

North Midlands Cranefly Recording Group Newsletter: Issue no.1

Though not a formal publication (June 1988), it deserves attention as one of the few models for local groups of recording schemes. It includes progress reports on the chosen core area of effort, the Peak District, and an invited review of faunal characteristics of the north Midlands more broadly, prepared by the national scheme organiser. An initial autecological progress report is given for one of the choice Peak species, the Butterbur Cranefly *Dicranomyia ornata*. It is very encouraging to see such clear planning of responsibilities for the future, with adopted special species, habitats and such key issues as vetting and processing records.

Bibliography of Drosophilidae

I am well aware that many entomologists do not consider *Drosophila* to be an insect, let alone a dipteran. For this reason many may not know of the existence of a very complete bibliography of publications concerned with the family Drosophilidae. The scope of this bibliography is the biology of the family Drosophilidae - genetics, molecular biology, taxonomy, morphology, behaviour, distribution, ecology etc. It includes not only conventional journal publications, books and monographs, but also abstracts, theses and, even, newspaper articles and videos. It is updated about once every three months in the public domain and, as of February 20 1998, contained 90,201 records. The bibliography is freely available in a variety of formats (coded field, REFER, comma-separated value) and can be queried through a WWW interface. In addition, two special issues of *Drosophila Information Service* (available from W.M. Gelbart, Biological Laboratories, 16 Divinity Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138, USA) have been published, DIS 74 (1994) for the years 1982-1993 and DIS 79 (1997) for the years 1994-1996 and a supplement to 1982-1993.

Accompanying the bibliography is a file of all journal and 'multi-author' sources.

This bibliography is part of FlyBase, the *Drosophila* database. In the Europe access to FlyBase is best through the European Bioinformatics Institute server (<http://www.ebi.ac.uk:7083/>). The complete bibliography can be downloaded from <ftp://ftp.ebi.ac.uk/pub/databases/flybase/>, which can be accessed

through the WWW interface. Depending on format the bibliography varies between 17 MB and 37 MB in size.

Each bibliographic record is tagged as to whether an offprint exists in the Department of Genetics, Cambridge, FlyBase library. If it does, then copies of obscure publications can (within reason) be obtained by email to flybase-offprint@morgan.harvard.edu.

FlyBase also includes a complete valid species name list for the Drosophilidae (from G. Baechli, Zurich).

Questions about FlyBase to flybase-help@morgan.harvard.edu. FlyBase is supported by grants from the NIH, Washington and MRC, London.

Michael Ashburner
email: mall@gen.cam.ac.uk

Reports to conservation agencies on *Asilus crabroniformis*

The last Larger Brachycera Recording Scheme Newsletter (No. 16) gave the background to work being undertaken on *Asilus* as part of the BAP. Here is another report from CCW's contractors, and the full reference to the work undertaken for English Nature. This latest report from Dave and Peter contains a fund of detail. Their work continues this year, when they hope to find out exactly what the larvae do eat - a frustratingly elusive piece of information.

D.K. Clements and P. Skidmore, 1998. The autecology of the Hornet Robberfly *Asilus crabroniformis* L. In Wales, 1997. *CCW Contract Science Report* No. 263.

Pinchen, B., Denton, J. & Bird, D. 1998. The Hornet Robberfly *Asilus crabroniformis* Linnaeus - adult behaviour at selected sites in Dorset, Hampshire and Surrey in 1997. *English Nature Research Reports* No. 274.

New Check List of Diptera of the British Isles

The final checking phase reported on in the last Bulletin was completed successfully and the check list is now being typeset by David Henshaw. The first deadline of publication in time for the International Congress of Dipterology at Oxford in September is not now expected to be met, but it is still hoped to achieve this in time for the AGM meeting of Dipterists Forum in November.

Even at this late stage it has been found necessary to amend the Irish data. I am grateful to Jim O'Connor and Paddy Ashe for pointing out discrepancies in the Irish list for Cecidomyiidae and aquatic groups respectively. It was desirable that the provenance of all species listed as Irish be checked and this has now been done against the literature for all groups so it is now hoped that this is as up to date as possible.

Peter Chandler

River habitat quality

In May 1998 the Environment Agency published a report titled *River habitat quality: the physical character of rivers in the UK and isle of Man*. For anyone interested in flowing water Diptera, there is useful information and even quite a lot of pictures of various rivers and streams. A map of the catchments in northern England shows the extent of different types of flowing water and such information should be available elsewhere. There is a glossary of terms, including a crude exposed sediments classification of point bar (on inside of meander), side bar (along bank) and channel bar

(detached from bank).

Alan Stubbs

Dipterists do it with nets in Yorkshire

Some weddings just have to be different. And if that Sorby lot are anything to do with it then anything can happen. This Jill Binding, a Dipterists Forum member who has been recording hoverflies and other such things in Lincolnshire, married David Mears at St James's, Thornes, Wakefield in April this year.

Whether they wanted the embarrassment or not, they had a Guard of Honour of nets. No sign of anyone else at the wedding, so one wonders if other guests had vanished in alarm. Bride and groom appear to be smiling - congratulations!

On the right is Austin Brackenbury of hoverfly signal box fame and on the left Derek Whiteley who launched *Dipterists Digest*.



AND NOW..... THE DREAD ARRIVAL OF POSTMAN PAT

As the letter flap on your front door clatters first thing in the morning, do you leap out of bed eager to see what your friendly postman has taken so much trouble to deliver. Perhaps the real enthusiasts are already up bright and bushy-tailed standing just behind the door, waiting to catch the post before it hits the floor.

No one is inspired to receive bills. And it is long since the tax man signed himself as an obedient servant. Then there is the endless flow of junk mail 'You, Mr and Mrs Stubbs, have been selected by our computer as Gold Star Clients for our Special Offer of a *FREE Pooter* with every purchase of a Saga holiday' - in a boring flyless location that no one else wants to be in during February.

Mind, to compensate, there are communications from dipterists and the occasional plop as *Dipterists Digest* arrives. Even the arrival of crane-fly records happens occasionally, and a not infrequent specimen of this and that to confirm. Then there is the impossible letter from a student doing a week's project - 'please tell me all you know about flies'. I never know whether to claim that I do not know everything about flies, which is very true, or to claim instant conversion to another order, such as Strepsiptera, where all I know can be written on one, or at full stretch, two lines.

However, the real dread is a bland card from the postman informing me that an item subject to surcharge awaits collection in some remote inconvenient location in Peterborough, or I can affix stamps of the necessary amount and the postman will deliver it. If I do nothing presumably it goes back to the sender, but someone has felt it worth writing. I have learnt that 25p brings a letter that is just 5p over weight. When it gets to 76p one shudders to wonder whether it will be worth it. Its like a lucky dip at the fair ground - you pay your money wondering whether you will get the equivalent of *Musca domestica* or *Callicera aurata*. So far, the surcharge has been worth it, but it does niggle when £1.58 is shelled out in less than a fortnight for three items which were under-stamped or in one case stampless.

Did you know that BRC can provide post-free labels for sending batches of record cards to scheme organisers? There is no weight limit, unless you are up to full steam in filling in over of 2,000 crane-fly site cards for a seasons effort, which no one seems to have achieved yet. I don't think I've ever received a packet mailed to me this way!

Alan Stubbs

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on 01 487 773 381. Please specify the RA or GEN number of the card and
the quantity required.