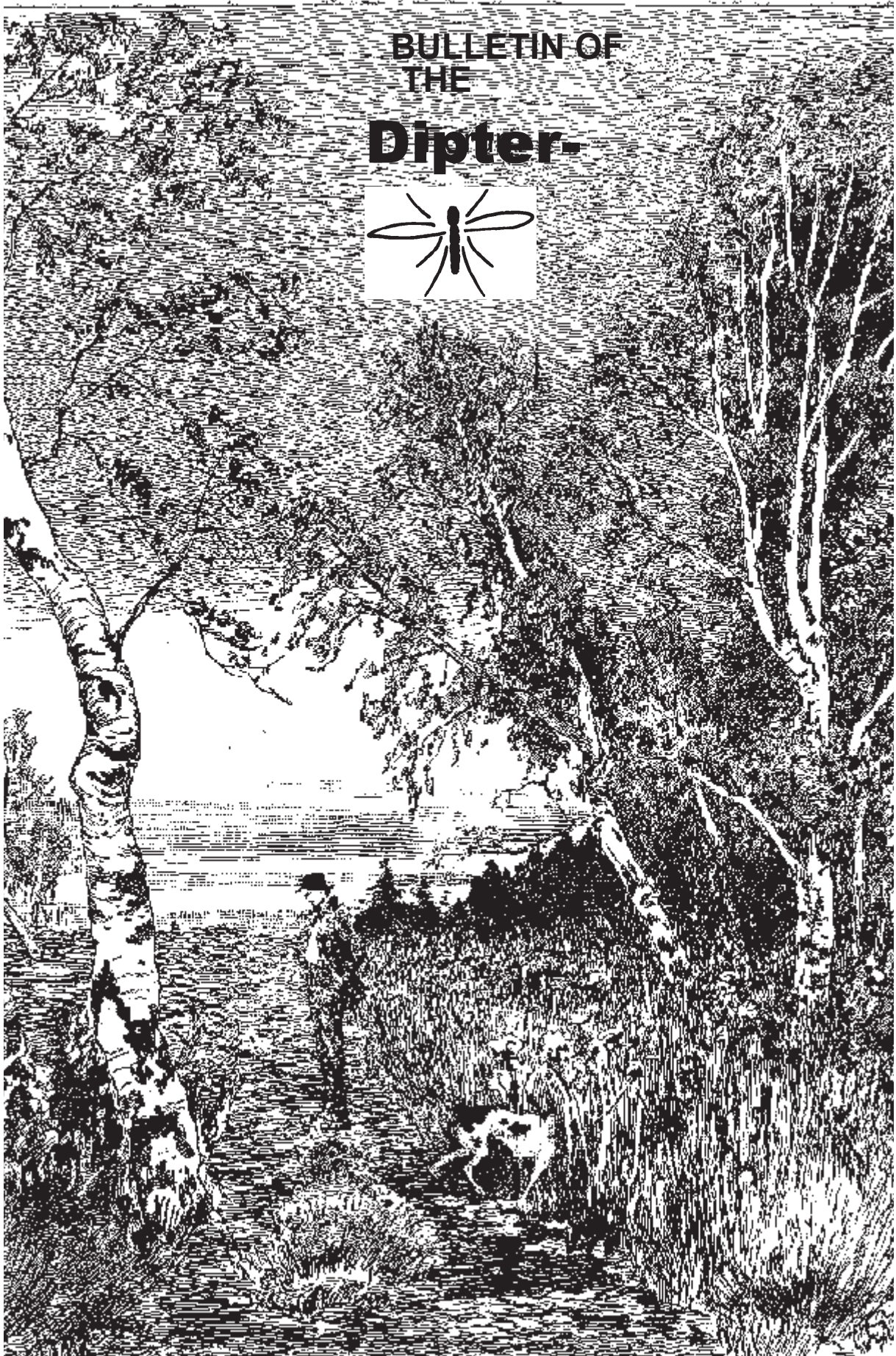


BULLETIN OF
THE
Dipter-





BULLETIN OF THE **Dipterists** Forum

Affiliated to the British Entomological and Natural History Society

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Forum News

Editorial

Darwyn Sumner

With such a wide variety of publications at our disposal we Dipterists are in a fortunate position in that almost any item of interest can be disseminated around the Forum. Inevitably I get involved in the "to whom shall I send this item" discussions and I think it useful to outline the procedures for anyone wishing to make contributions, no matter how small. The last thing we want to do is discourage anyone from making contributions because they are unsure as to where to send it.

If your item is of general interest then your Bulletin editor will deal with it. If it concerns a particular group, for example a list of interesting finds for the year, then the appropriate scheme organiser should be your first port of call. As particular experts in their fields these organisers are able to provide additional support in these areas such as help with tricky identifications or tactfully suggesting that *Helophilus pendulus* doesn't really warrant inclusion in a list of most exciting finds for your region this year. If the scheme or study group is one which only produces newsletters infrequently (e.g. Sciomyzidae) then it would be useful to send an additional copy of your letter to the Bulletin editor as well. I'm then in a position of being aware that there is material to be published and can contact the scheme organiser and offer to assist in compiling a short piece for incorporation directly into the Bulletin if, say, he's not got enough material for a full newsletter. It is, of course, their prerogative to retain such material for inclusion in a Newsletter. I am in regular contact with these scheme organisers which increases the likelihood of something being included in the Bulletin. I'm also in regular touch with Peter Chandler so if your item seems to suit the Digest rather than the Bulletin then he gets first claim on it. So please don't be put off sending in your items of interest, we can even find a home for single reports of something unusual in a group for which there is no scheme organiser or study group.

Supplier of European entomological equipment

Passed on to me recently by a Coleopterist colleague a catalogue of entomological equipment contains several curious items not encountered in catalogues of our dear friends Bob George and David Henshaw. Alongside the more usual items, Lydie Rigout sells a range of pins from Japan, Czechoslovakia and Germany, some rather smart pre-cut mounting cards (Austrian) of various standard sizes, pinning blocks shaped like a flight of stairs, French Museum boxes and Swiss forceps. I'm tempted to buy one of their pinned glass flasks ("Fiole de Sauvinet") in the hopes of determining its function. Lydie Rigout can be contacted at 1 Hillside Avenue, Canterbury, Kent CT2 8ET. Tel: 01227 769924. e-mail: lr@insects.demon.co.uk

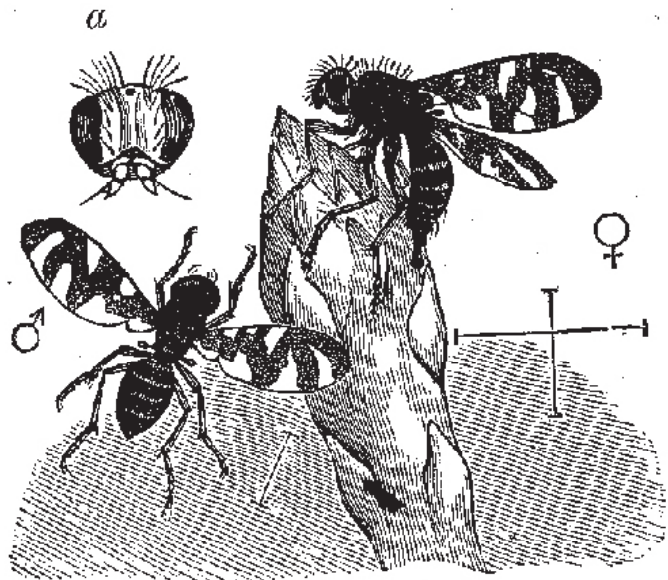
New Secretary required

At the AGM the Secretary only agreed to continue until a replacement can be found. In particular he needs to off-load committee administration and reporting. Moves are now being made to set up an Invertebrate

Amateur Entomological Society

The Amateur Entomological Society is keen to promote a better and more varied range of articles in its *Bulletin*. The idea is to have a link person for each of the main orders who will canvas for suitable papers. This initiative sounds very promising and it certainly offers a constructive chance to promote the study of Diptera. Laurence Clemons has agreed to be the link dipterist.

Speaking of whom, the latest newsletter of the Lancashire and Cheshire Entomological Society publishes an appeal by the same gentlemen for records or specimens of Tephritidae. Laurence even offers an identification service in order to progress his work on an update of the 1997 provisional atlas. Contact him at 14 St. John's Avenue, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 4NE



Developing the Forum

.... your ideas please

How we should promote the Forum? The matter has vexed the General Committee, which does not hold a monopoly on trying to come up with ideas.

The Constitution sets the framework (everyone should have a copy, and the basic aims are stated on the membership form). In essence the Forum aims to promote the study of Diptera and provide a network to help each other in that endeavour.

We can carry on confined to the same routine, which has been productive in increasing the fund of knowledge of Diptera and in helping a good number of people to become more confident in their studies. Though there has been a very welcome recruitment, the perception is that we could do with a faster inflow of younger people to take up the running. Such concerns are not unique to our society, but we need to reflect whether more could be done to promote Diptera and act as a better catalyst for the next generation of Dipterists.

The Forum has issued some advertisements, but where is it best to target these, bearing in mind the cost/benefits? Possibly we should do more to get articles into widely read natural history and conservation journals/newsletters, so as to put flies in a positive light and to spark latent interest in their study; if so, then more local dipterists could take up the running with local publications.

In this Bulletin, please also look at the News item about the Amateur Entomological Society, and don't take the 'And Now' too seriously.

Incidentally, there is a draft Starter Pack with details about the recording schemes and advice on how to get-going. This got stuck in the bottle-neck at JNCC but hopefully it will soon be dusted down and get clearance for publication at BRC.

So, let's have your ideas, including what you personally would find helpful. And the matter of how to promote Diptera outside our present ranks is clearly of major concern. The Forum may be able to take-up some new ideas itself, but in other cases the solution may lie in a wider sphere of influence involving other societies.

Respond to me please in the first instance. Feed-back will be via the *Bulletin*, as collated ideas plus perhaps some contributions given in part or full.

Alan Stubbs

News from the schemes

There are no schemes or study groups for some Families but don't let that put you off collecting them or making some sort of start on identifying them. It's encouraging to note that there are a few people who seem to catch and identify a very wide range of Families, so amongst Forum members we have a modicum of expertise in more groups than the list of schemes might suggest. It would be a good idea to simply collect and pin samples from such groups this year in anticipation of there being better keys available or a specific workshop planned. The workshops are much more enjoyable if you're able to take along a box of unidentified material. The two groups I would suggest this year are the Tachinidae as Robert Belshaw's workshop will no doubt fire our

enthusiasm and recent work by John Ismay on the Chloropidae have made these a more realistic proposition for identification.

Hoverfly Recording Scheme

David Iliff

[Newsletter accompanies this issue]

Larger Brachycera Recording Scheme

Martin Drake

After ten years as the organiser of this scheme, I feel that it is time for me to move aside and let someone else take over the reins. I found a willing successor in Simon Hayhow who has contributed to the scheme

for many years and attends field meetings. New management often brings new enthusiasm, and together with the impetus that we hope "British Soldierflies" will bring, I think we can expect to see some interesting developments on the Larger Brachycera front. So please support Simon by continuing to contribute both records and articles for the Newsletter.



Forum News

The BENHS collection of Diptera

The Diptera collection of the British Entomological and Natural History Society is currently being transferred to new cabinets, which permit about twice the space previously available. The new cabinets, which are 15 drawer units with interchangeable drawers, also have deeper drawers which accommodate pins of up to 40mm length. This will enable the more effective incorporation of additional material and give the opportunity to expand the collection.

A few years ago I circulated with the Bulletin a breakdown of the composition of the Society's Diptera collection, indicating the strengths of the collection on a family basis. This was heavily dependent on the interests of the collectors, most of the material originating from the collections of Henry Andrews and Cyril Hammond, with Tipulidae donated by Ron Payne and smaller amounts from other donors. Syrphidae, "Larger Brachycera" and calypterates are well represented, empids/dolies and acalypterates with notable exceptions like Tephritidae less so and Nematocera other than craneflies poorly. Altogether 1800 species are already in the collection.

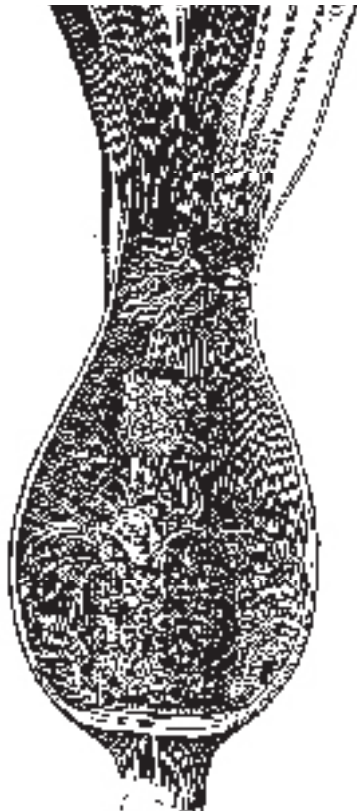
In the new arrangement space is being allocated for all currently known British species in all families with three exceptions. In the absence of any material, space considerations preclude the coverage of Cecidomyiidae, Chironomidae and Phoridae, so the 1500 species of these families have been omitted from the layout. In other families additional species will be incorporated wherever possible from my own collection, which was difficult previously as I have been standardising on 38mm staging pins in recent years.

Donations from any Society or Forum members are also welcome and anyone able to donate material of value to the collection and help fill the gaps should get in touch with me. Those members who have already donated material are acknowledged in my annual reports published in the Society's journal.

All members who are unfamiliar with the BENHS collections will, of course, be welcomed at Society Open Days or Workshop meetings. I look forward to seeing all those who have not yet taken the opportunity to see the Society's facilities at Dinton Pastures Country Park.

Peter Chandler

Identification of Ceratopogonidae



This family remains notoriously difficult to identify. With the exception of *Culicoides*, the only genus biting vertebrates in this country, there has been little published on the British species since the revision by Edwards (1926), which remains the standard work on the British species of the family.

John Boorman has prepared a draft handbook on the British species of the family, which includes notes on identification of all species and keys to subgenera and species in those genera where this was feasible. There are introductory chapters including notes on collecting and preservation. Figures of wings and other diagnostic characters are included. There are also figures of the male genitalia, which are the most reliable means of identification at the species level, for most species. While publication is not yet appropriate, John is happy to provide copies on disc for anyone who wishes to make some progress with identification beyond what is possible with the existing British literature.

The text files are in Wordperfect 5.1 format, while the figures are *pcx files written into the same format. Text files can be readily downloaded with all formatting into Word or MS Works programmes, but some difficulty may be experienced with the figures.

Anyone requiring a copy of this work should contact John Boorman at 6 Beckingham Road, Guildford, Surrey GU2 6BN (or by e-mail: midge@culicoides.freeserve.co.uk). Three discs should be sent plus postage to cover costs of returning them.

Peter Chandler

National Biodiversity Network

Data Exchange Principles

I recently attended one of the National Biodiversity Network conferences at the Wildlife Trust's central office in Newark. The purpose of this particular get-together was to debate the issues surrounding the exchange of biological data between different organisations and its wider dissemination through mechanisms such as the internet. Alongside the usual major players in such conferences were delegates representing such diverse interests as the Copyright Licensing Agency Ltd., Butterfly Conservation, BSBI, the Wildscreen Trust, British Dragonfly Society and Dr. Peter Kirby (as an independent wildlife consultant). The issues debated were of a wide interest and were outlined in a consultation paper entitled "NBN Biodiversity Exchange: a framework of principles - consultation. Just to add a little substance to the concepts under debate, I list the following principles which formed the basis of the day's deliberations:

1. Biodiversity data should be easily accessible to enable their use for not-for-profit decision-making, education, research and other public-benefit purposes.
2. Making biodiversity data available should reduce the risk of damage to the environment. If, exceptionally, it is likely to have the opposite effect, availability may need to be controlled.
3. Biodiversity data should be released with accompanying information (meta-data) on its ownership, methods and scale of collection and limitations of interpretation.
4. A clear transfer of authority should be made when a biodiversity data resource is put together, to allow biodiversity data managers to act on behalf of the biodiversity data owners.
5. Managers of biodiversity data should work in accordance with a publicly-available framework of terms and conditions, allowing biodiversity data owners to have confidence that control will be exercised in the management and use of their data.
6. Personal data must be managed in accordance with the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998 and/or any subsequent legal provisions.
7. Any charges should be set at a rate that does not prevent the use of biodiversity data.

A detailed account of the proceedings would be premature at this time since the draft documentation is currently in the process of rewriting in the light of many useful and interesting contributions made by the delegates. If you want to know more, contact the NBN, preferably by examining their web site at www.NBN.org.uk or The NBN secretariat, c/o The Wildlife Trusts, The Kiln, Waterside, Mather Road, Newark, NG24 1WT.

Darwyn Sumner

BENHS Fly Publications

British Hoverflies has again sold out (overall total 3000) and is being reprinted.

The year 2000 version will be under one cover including the 1983 original, the 1996 *Second Supplement* and a short *Update on the British List*. The latter will be included in a future *Hoverfly Newsletter* as the editor sees fit. In practice the *Newsletter* and *Bulletin* have previously covered most of the contents, including some of the four extra species. The British list now stands at 267 species with firm names, plus two valid 1983 species still without names, and 6-10 species pending publication by European specialists.

British Soldierflies and their allies should soon be ready to go to press. The main controlling factor is completion of scanning in c.800 sketches into the keys, and this is well advanced. Most of the rest of the text is in late draft page proof. The book is significantly bigger than the one on hoverflies since there is so much more on the natural history of the different families, and there are keys to larvae and pupae for some families.

The Sales Secretary is Gavin Boyd, 91 Fullingdale Road, Northampton, NN3 2PZ. As a hard pressed volunteer he does not want to be overwhelmed by replying to enquires. Hence, there is a very efficient way of helping Gavin.

If you order the 2000 version of *British Hoverflies*, wait until publication is announced by BENHS on their web site, or be patient for the next *Bulletin* announcement.

If you want to be informed of the cost and availability of *British Soldierflies and their Allies*, send him a stamped & addressed envelope for return so that he can send you an order form when available.

Note that the discount price is available to BENHS Affiliated groups, Dipterists Forum and BWARS included. Thus you need to say that you are a DF member.

There are ways in which a few of you may be able to help, since having two large fly books on the go, in addition to the other society publications, is a major undertaking.

1. We are looking for one or two volunteers to help Gavin with fly publications distribution. Clearly you would

Forum News

need to be within range of stock transfer being manageable, and have space to store some stock.

2. Storage of stock is becoming a problem as more books come in print. You imagine the size and weight of the next reprint of 500 hoverfly books, let alone 1000 bigger soldier fly books. Dinton Pastures is full and the cost of commercial storage is too expensive. Thus, if there are people able to help with storage, preferably within range of Dinton Pastures or Northampton, please let Ian MacLean, Gavin Boyd or myself know.

Alan Stubbs

Forestry Commission Permits

The problems met by the Forum last summer with Forest Enterprise are being pursued by BENHS and JCCBI.

The conditions of a permit include Clause (6b) which makes the permit holder legally liable even for incidents arising out of FC negligence.

No one should sign such a permit.

The conditions also make a party leader legally responsible for the actions of the whole party.

The main point of permits is to control activities that may infringe on forest management, safety of machinery and staff/wider public, and wildlife conservation. For instance, one has to agree not to camp or light fires, unless the permit specifically allows such activities. It is those without permits (the general public) who are most likely to cause problems so to impose permits on people studying flies is a nonsense.

Whilst parties or individuals of rambblers, ornithologists, botanists etc would presumably not trouble to get a permit for access to FC land open to public access, dipterists are being treated differently.

As things stand with the bye-laws, the collecting of Lepidoptera, dragonflies and Orthoptera requires a permit, but the bye-laws do not mention any restriction on collecting flies.

That interpretation, incidentally, almost certainly follows the advice of NCC to FC some years ago that in general there should be no need for permits to collect invertebrates. The exceptions were in the named orders. The key point is that butterflies/dragonflies/Orthoptera can be identified in the field without collecting, so restrictions would not affect recording. In particular, FC had some of the best butterfly and moth sites for national and regional rarities, which ought not to be totally open-house for sometimes weak easily collected populations.

The main point at issue is holding and using a net. A member of the public may swat a fly without risk of going to jail, but if a dipterist nets a fly to identify it, and then releases it, or even kills it, is this a hanging offence?

FC maintains that it has licensing control over the whole of the New Forest and of course many other significant sites.

At a personal level, last year I told the local Forestry Commission staff that I will not be seeking further permits, and it was verbally accepted by a ranger that he could not demonstrate why I should need a permit.

Meanwhile, at a society level the whole matter needs formal resolution. If FC/Forest Enterprise are serious about their image as being in the conservation fold, then it is for them to help rather than hinder those who can supply wildlife information on which sound conservation management should be based.

Alan Stubbs



Reflections on the end of the last ...

The media will have been taking stock at the end of the Millenium, but you can be sure that the perspective of dipterists will be omitted. In this article I shall reflect back, and in the next, look forwards.

Whilst the year zero is of enormous significance in the Christian faith, the change from 1999 to 2000 is of no significance at all except in terms of human psychology. Yet in human technology and impact on global ecology we are clearly imprinting a time marker into the geological record of time, one of those quickly transitional boundaries that in future rocks will seem abrupt.

The Diptera fauna of the first Millenium can only be guessed at. Some flies had names, such as the Roman name for mosquito, *Culex*, and no doubt there were local dialect names for various troublesome flies. Human modification of the landscape was not comprehensive and the style of agriculture primitive by todays standards. Peat diggings in Norfolk were among the impacts which in the course of time we would identify as an advantageous legacy for the Diptera fauna, but of course in many cases we have little idea what may have been lost. But the archaeological/geological record in deposits such as peat includes the remains of fly larvae/puparia, so there is some partial knowledge of the fly fauna and the pollen/plant remains enables analysis of climate and ecological changes.

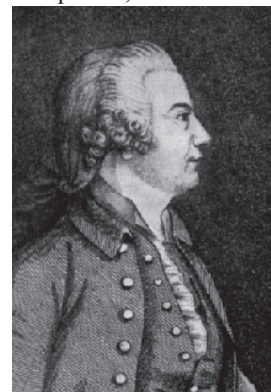
But main consideration here is for the Second Millenium. Fortuitously, the Norman Conquest of Britain in 1066 rapidly led to the Domesday Book which gave a pretty good record of the human population and its land use for at least much of England. One tends to be vaguely aware that there was a lot of forest in Medieval times and that starting seriously in about the 1600s, forest and wetlands became lost at an increasing rate. However, it is important to realise that all the ills of rapid habitat loss did not await the era of EC subsidies or giant diesel bulldozers. The destruction of forests was on an enormous scale even in the 1500s/1600s, partly through the rapid growth of iron smelting, which included charcoal production, as well as the demand for large trees for naval and commercial ships and for buildings. The Highland clearances (destruction of forest so that there was no hiding place for rebellious Scots) must have had enormous ecological consequences. The collapse of the wool trade was only one of the many ups and downs of farming. The drainage of the Fens of East Anglia was essentially complete by the mid 1800s. One could go on.

In the first half of the 1900s, agriculture was in the doldrums. The consequences of the Second World War were profound. A submarine blockade made it essential to make Britain more self sufficient in agriculture and forestry, and with a Third World War almost inevitable, the drive for self sufficiency was relentless. With increasingly refined heavy duty machinery and the development of pesticides, herbicides and the rest, the statistics for habitat loss and deterioration are appalling. The post war development of conservation bodies was too late and too weak to counter the powerful momentum to intensification of land use, including the industrial demands for land to develop the economy and employment. Conservation has been forced to compromise all too often, and the habitats for Diptera compromised.

Almost suddenly in the late 1990s, the tide has started to turn towards conservation, the Rio Earth Summit having led to a Biodiversity Action Plan that is gaining momentum and support from many quarters. Even flies are accepted as part of biodiversity, the current buzz-word, some with their own Action Plans apart from the wider possibilities within Local Action Plans and national Habitat Action Plans. In the 1980s Diptera had been part of a behind-the-scenes opportunity to get invertebrates into mainstream conservation, but now they are up in a more public arena.

Goodness knows if there were dipterists in 1066. Perhaps there were interesting observations on behaviour but who else would be interested? Apart from local dialect names for some pests and a few other species, there was no means of conveying what kind of fly one was speaking of. It was the development of printing and hence the means of describing and better communicating information that led to advances in natural history. No doubt there are various historic stepping stones one could mention. The binomial system of Linnaeus, and the application of that system by Fabricius, named quiet a number of flies but definitions were very primitive. Moses Harris published better descriptions of some flies, including hand coloured line illustrations of whole insects. Meigen in the early 1800s published descriptions of a large number of flies, with colour illustrations. However, a black fly, or even a yellow one, has so many look-alikes that there is often dispute as to which species was originally described. The concept of type specimens helps enormously, providing the type is accessible or indeed survives.

I have recently been scanning journals and have come across various very old papers on Diptera that would have otherwise escaped my notice. Last century it is clear that



Millenium Review

Diptera were very difficult and very few people seemed to study them. Meanwhile Lepidoptera and Coleoptera were romping away, and ironically the early major papers with colour illustrations in the Entomological Society of London (to become the Royal) covered faunas of newly discovered far away countries which was where the excitement lay.

It was Verrall we have to thank for getting the British fauna sorted out. It is amazing to see his papers at the end of the last century with even common craneflies new to Britain and his efforts in the early 1900s to sort out the confusion of reputed British species. By 1920 his confirmed British list stood at a mere 2500 species plus 500 still questionable. It was Verrall who published monographs on hoverflies (1901) and the larger Brachycera (1909) bringing in a major advance in descriptions and keys. One must acknowledge the efforts of Wingate (1906) in publishing a complete set of keys to the British fauna which must have been essential to dipterists for many years afterwards.

There were a number of other people we have to thank. Collin (Verrall's nephew) was a the dominant figure as an all round specialist (less so for Nematocera), but now best known for his monograph of the empids published towards his death in the early 1960s. At the British Museum, F W Edwards (1888-1940) sorted out and increased the British list of Nematocera enormously,

and we should also recognise that Coe as a junior member of staff published significant new keys to hoverflies and pipunculids. I single out two others, Colyer and Hammond, who as amateurs did what the professionals said would be impossible for them. Their illustrated book on Flies of the British Isles opened up the subject so that the study of Diptera was no longer impenetrable, the text being easy to read for the non-specialist, the family keys



still among the best. That book eased the way into the various keys in the literature, including the Handbooks that have been progressively published by the Royal Entomological Society starting with part of the Nematocera in 1950 as far as Diptera are concerned.

One only has to look at the way that the British list has increased leaps and bounds to appreciate that there are now a lot of people studying Diptera in Britain, as well as residents of other countries whose studies take the British list forwards. In truth the development of recording schemes since the early 1970s has probably made only a small percentage difference to the total British list, but it has been the momentum of those schemes which has assisted in making the study of Diptera far more accessible to the amateur, and the collation of records is now so much more organised than in the past. And, of course, we now have a society of dipterists, and our own journal.

The other aspect to focus on is the development of knowledge about species. It always amazes how detailed the knowledge was of various species way back, so there were certainly some very good naturalists. However, even though life histories and habits may have been detailed, recorded information was generally exceedingly weak or lacking on what we would now call habitat. It was the development of ecology as a concept, leading to academic research within the literature on flies and the wider ripples of awareness through to the modern naturalist that has opened new horizons. It has been the application of ecological principles to conservation (the maintenance or enhancement of what ecological systems remain, and of species which are all habitat dependent), that in turn is pressing naturalists to apply an ecological approach to recording. As the old Millenium turns into the new, even politicians and the general public are becoming more genuinely aware that biodiversity (that includes flies) is facing an increasing crunch and only time will tell whether the Biodiversity Action Plans in Britain and world wide will have had any real influence in stemming the downward spiral of species and habitat status. Historically everyone has tended to see everything in local perspective. It was not many years ago that conservation in Britain could be thought irrelevant since surely there was more than enough of everything on mainland Europe? The world wide scale of habitat and species loss, and the spectre of the consequences of global warming has knocked out some of the complacency. We are at a hinge point in history, like it or not.

Alan Stubbs 1999

The Century is dead, long live the Century

Geologically a thousand years is but the blink of an eye, yet the imperceptibly slow process of change can be disrupted by sudden or fast developing events, with local, regional or global consequences.

The Second Millenium may have started as a period of slow change in Britain and the rest of the world but there were no dipterists to record the fauna in the year 1000, and it is almost impossible to envisage the quality and fauna of the landscape and its habitats. Also, drastic land-use change is nothing new. The destruction of forests was on an enormous scale even in the 1500s/1600s. The collapse of the wool trade was only one of the many ups and downs of farming. The prolonged history of drainage of the Fens of East Anglia was essentially complete by the mid 1800s. We have only a hint of what may have been lost by the track record of extinction of mammals, birds and plants, and in the last few centuries butterflies.

In the 1800s Diptera were generally regarded as difficult and very few people seemed to study them. It was Verrall we have to thank for getting the British fauna properly sorted out in the late 1800s-early 1900s. It is amazing to see his papers at the end of the last century with even common craneflies as new to Britain and his efforts in the early 1900s to sort out the confusion of reputed British species. By 1920 his confirmed British list of Diptera stood at a mere 2500 species plus 500 still questionable. Yet by 1998 the list stood at 6668 named species, plus some others. History will certainly show that the 20th century was the one when the study of Diptera became firmly established, just as the 19th century closed with a strong foundation for Coleoptera, Lepidoptera and aculeates,

That lateness in knowledge of our Diptera fauna means that we have only a very partial understanding of what may have been lost. Very often it has been wars that have plunged the economy and agriculture/forestry into extremes of doldrums or feverish activity. Above all things, it was the submarine blockade of the Second World War that triggered an unrelenting drive to self sufficiency, and the political turmoil of the War in Europe led to the devastating EC agricultural policies. And it was that war and its aftermath that boosted the pace of technology, pesticides etc that made it possible to change Britain and other parts of the world at an amazing pace. Certainly the world has never changed so fast in the Second Millenium. The Millenium boundary may well be close to the approximate hinge point in the future geological record, when man had disrupted climate and environment at an identifiable scale, and had triggered species extinction at possibly a period or epoch horizon level.

Our recording schemes were valuable, but in essence too late to set a base line before these changes. Yet we moved from having a rather few dipterists with a mainly local or very patchy knowledge to a substantially larger co-ordination of effort towards a national understanding. Also ecological and biological knowledge has advanced considerably, and set the basis for applying knowledge to conservation. The latter aspect of dipterology was virtually non-existent until the late 1900s.

Perhaps future generations will look back to 1999 and reflect how primitive our knowledge was at this stage, and indeed there will not be one amongst us that would deny that our understanding remains incomplete. But, hopefully, Verrall would not have been disappointed with us.

... hopes for the next

The Millenium hype is subsiding, perhaps! Might one conjecture that in the year 3000, the Dipterists Forum may be holding its week long field trip on the planet Ugg of some as yet un-named star the other side of our galaxy, having made a group booking for a return trip down a worm-hole. But it is not far fetched to predict that this century will be one of accelerating change, with both positive and negative aspects.

1. BRC and others are already predicting that it will not be long before field recording is simplified as the cost of gadgetry falls. Satellite navigation will give the grid reference, you will speak your observations into a voice recorder, and plug into the computer to down load, and the data will be routed electronically to where required. Some people are probably within an inch of doing this already.
2. Taxonomy will be much better understood as the means to use genetic finger-printing and other techniques become cheaper and simpler. It would be nice to know what we are dealing with in complexes such as *Pipiza*, or ecologically different populations of *Tipula varipennis*.
3. Internet and electronic mail are bound to grow. It will be possible to access far more of the sources of information we seek, and to communicate more readily. Electronic publication is going to increase, updated information easier to come by, and illustrations more readily produced. Certainly test keys and the like will be more readily circulated.
4. On a world scale there will be massive extinction of species, with little time left to find out what is there, and where conservation effort should be directed. While NASA and others will deploy enormous funds

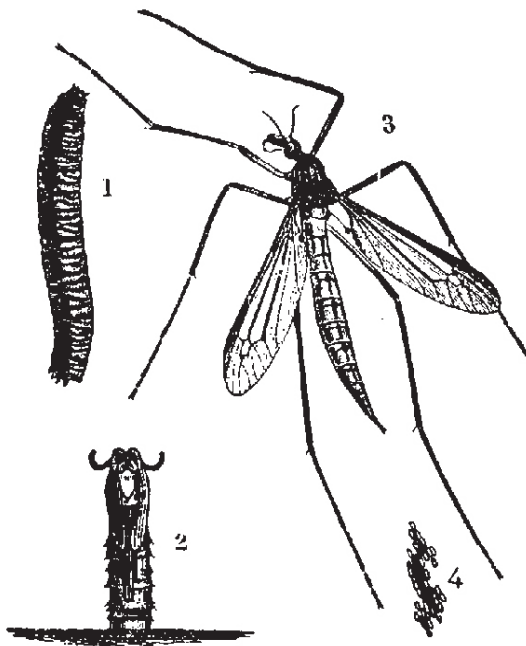
Millenium Review

- and expertise to reveal life-forms beyond the Earth, the budgets and priorities to reveal the fast vanishing life-forms on our own planet will almost certainly remain pathetically inadequate.
5. Climates are rarely stable, but there is now little doubt that man has triggered a fundamental change that is unlikely to be sufficiently reined in by 2100, if at all. As far as Britain is concerned, whilst we may be getting warmer in keeping with global warming, some analyses suggest that the Gulf Stream may stop or divert, plunging us into very cold winters (one prediction is that 0.5% increase in freshwater input to the North Atlantic from melting of Greenland & NW Canada ice will do the trick! - and it is the poles that are warming fastest). In any case, a catastrophic volcanic explosion or two could throw any projection in turmoil. Diptera recording will certainly be in interesting times.
 6. There are many consequences of rising sea level, forcing abandonment of low lying areas where it is un-economic to hold back the sea. Dune systems and saltmarsh will have to re-adjust, much of the best levels habitat will possibly be abandoned to inundation, and some of our best soft rock cliffs for flies will erode faster causing demands for coastal defences.
 7. Farming has always had major ups and downs. We just happen to be in a crisis over grazing at present, too much sheep grazing in the uplands and a disruption of cattle grazing in parts of the lowlands. The economics of arable crops are chaotic, with immense distortions from subsidies. Will minor concessions to wildlife grow or will world food politics force us back to another round of intensification?
 8. The GMO (Genetically Modified Organisms) debate may be new, but it clearly portends techniques that will become far reaching. It does not just refer to plants and vertebrates. since it may yet be used to produce genetically modified flies that will zap super-pests, or pollinate crops twice as efficiently. Of course, the genetic bits and pieces come from all sorts of unexpected sources, so even flies may have that essential bit of code that work wonders in completely different organisms. And just as the pharmaceutical industry now recognises that the world plant flora might hold all sorts of miraculous chemicals, the wonder chemicals of insects, even flies, have scarcely been considered as yet.
 9. Even changes in human social structure, as well as population, have consequences. For instance the government speaks of the need for 4 million new homes, over much of Britain (mainly generated by the breakdown of traditional family units). What does this mean for land use (including the oases of derelict land with important faunas of flies and other invertebrates of ruderal habitat), for water supply (further groundwater abstraction will dry up fly rich seepages), or the implications of new roads, and the public pressure impact on fragile habitats where housing encroaches to their borders?
 10. In the wider world there are so many political imponderables. The human population looks set to increase by another few billion (easily slips off the tongue, but it's an immense increase). What are the implications as regards water and other resources? What at are the implications of such over-use of the land that

it becomes useless? And what are the implications of heavily populated areas, or even nations, being flooded out by rising sea level? These and other issues are bound to cause a much greater increase in mass movement of human populations, including economic migrants, so that countries such as Britain will find it difficult to resist accommodating more people, with all the environmental pressures that entails.

No doubt there are other topics and choices. There is the Chinese curse, 'may you live in interesting times'. It will certainly be an interesting time as regards recording how Diptera respond and adapt. At least we enter the 21st century with a much greater public will for conservation, and the outlook for habitat management, restoration and re-creation offers some major positive opportunities. When there is so much conservation effort, and public interest in what is happening to wildlife, the Dipterists Forum will have many opportunities to convey its members recording and other studies as relevant to understanding the natural world, and giving notice to how man is unseeingly producing changes of profound consequences.

Alan Stubbs 2000



Daddy Long-legs.

Sweep Net

Contact Darwyn Sumner on
Darwyn@sumnerhome.freereserve.
co.uk

I've taken the time to do a little looking around web sites recently. It's rather frustrating simply to use the various search engines because there is such a high preponderance of High School "What is a fly?"-type sites and serious information is hard to come by. Please let me know, therefore if you happen across anything that might be of interest.

Malcolm Storey's site,

<http://195.166.55.201/vfg-uk/> suggested in the last Bulletin was a pleasant surprise. He has indeed got lots of pictures there. You weave your way down the branches of his taxonomic tree which encompasses a vast range of examples of the plant and animal kingdoms to arrive at a choice of several colour views of Diptera images (or Fungi or flowering plants or Tardigrades if you get sidetracked). The range of Families covered is quite extensive and you could spend quite some time exploring. Converting his images to black and white ones which would do them justice when reproduced in this

bulletin, however, has proved to be beyond my graphics skills: you will have to visit his site.

American curiosities

One or two sites dealing with American Diptera are worth a browse, particularly if you have an interest in world species.

The **Diptera Site of the Systematic Entomology Laboratory (USDA)** at

<http://www2.sel.barc.usda.gov/Diptera/diptera.htm>

can be a little frustrating, there are, for example, a handful of interesting illustrations of Syrphidae which promise much but deliver little information behind the pictures. Connecting to their **Biosystematic Information Database** will lead you into a list of world Families. Perhaps all the failed connections are a feature of my system or ineptitude, I wish you better luck with them.

Newsletters

The following sites provide newsletters on the web, let me know if you succeed in obtaining a subscription to them. Postal addresses supplied as requested, Roy.

The **Tachinid Times Newsletter** is an annual newsletter for persons interested in research on parasitic flies

(Diptera) of this family. The newsletter acts as a forum for informal communication about current projects, recent research findings, field trips, and similar types of information relating to the Tachinidae.

<http://res.agr.ca/brd/tachinid/times/index.html>

Jim O'Hara, editor
Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada, Biological Resources Program
Eastern Cereal and Oilseed Research Centre
C.E.F., Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1A 0C6



Fly Times began in October 1988 as a biannual newsletter for North American entomologists interested in research on Diptera, and its existence fostered the subsequent formation of the North American Dipterists Society in 1989. The newsletter reports on communications about current research projects and findings, field trips, techniques, areas of research cooperation, news of meetings and conferences, reviews of major publications on Diptera, and job opportunities etc.

<http://res.agr.ca/ecorc/program2/entomology/flytimes/flytime.htm>
Jeffrey M. Cumming co-editor Systematic Entomology Section, ECORC Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada C.E.F., Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1A 0C6

Catalog of the Diptera of the Australasian and Oceanian Regions

The web version of this catalogue is intended to present the most up-to-date version of each Family chapter of the (presumably printed) catalogue originally published in 1989.

It recorded approximately 16,000 species of flies occurring throughout Australia, New Zealand, New Guinea, and the Pacific. Its editor has striven to maintain the catalogue as up-to-date as possible by publishing on the web:

<http://www.bishopmuseum.org/bishop/ento/aocat/aocathome.html>

Dr. Neal L. Evenhuis requests published articles dealing with Diptera of this area should you happen to work the antipodes. Dr. Evenhuis can be contacted at:

Department of Natural Sciences, Bishop Museum, P.O. Box 19000, Honolulu, Hawaii 96817, USA.

The title of the catalogue might suggest that it has little relevance to our fauna but I found this not to be the case. There are some very interesting accounts of various Families, in particular those about which little is known in the UK due, perhaps to their relative scarcity here. For example, Dr. Evenhuis himself writes the chapter on Strongylophthalmyiidae and provides just a couple of clues as to what their larval habitats might be together with an observation that they mimic ants as adults (Graham Rotheray's currently working on our Scottish species). Browse further through the huge list of Families and you will find our own Brian Pitkin has written the Family account of the Neriidae. Combine this sort of thing with the references cited and the lists of species and this is a site which could keep you busy for some considerable time.

Darwyn Sumner

Notice board

Letters

Second Hand Equipment

One of our SUMMER FIELD WEEK 2000 attendees, Tony Lee-Magee, has sent me the following message with his deposit cheque.

"May I take this opportunity to ask if you know of any decent second-hand collecting equipment. This coming summer will be my 2nd studying inverts. (especially Hoverflies & Craneflies). Particularly a net and binocular microscope."

I think it important that we should do all we can to encourage new dipterists. Does anyone have an old microscope for sale or know where one might be found? Since Tony doesn't have an e-mail address and his address is not in the Feb. 99 membership list, replies had better be sent to me for forwarding.

Thanks,

Malcolm Smart

Symphyta status

I contacted Andrew Halstead recently, asking him about the statuses of British Symphyta, rather hoping that there was a "Review of the scarce and threatened sawflies of Great Britain" in the JNCC's "Research & survey in nature conservation" series. I hadn't seen one and assumed it was simply an oversight on my part. Andrew tells me "*There is no currently accepted status list for Symphyta.*" and adds that "*Previous summer field meeting reports have not attempted to show the national status for sawflies and this is probably the easiest solution. I will indicate if there are any species that I consider noteworthy, but they were thin on the ground in Cumbria.*"

This is a pity since these statuses are increasingly proving valuable in the conservation work. If there is ever a glimmer of a list I feel sure that the relatively large number of Dipterists who collect Symphyta would like to know; keep me informed if you ever hear anything.

Darwyn Sumner

Quill skill

Modern technology seems to have introduced new concepts into the art of writing. The traditional method of conceiving a clear discourse and penning it word-perfect in a single operation in the form of a hand written letter is now augmented by the facility to endlessly rearrange small, concise themes into a lucid whole. The "small concise themes" skill seems to have evolved into one which forms the core of the etiquette of E-mail writing. Possessing neither skill I shall continue to stir random words up a bit to make them marginally less unintelligible, as readers of this Bulletin will no doubt have already noted.

Textual gems from contributors to the Bulletin come in many forms and I include, as an example, the complete text of Roy Crossley's recent letter, a skillfully woven gentle diatribe aimed at us technophiles.

ROY CROSSLEY F.R.E.S.

Consultant Entomologist

1 The Cloisters, Wilberfoss, York, YO41 5RF

Telephone (01759) 388809

St. Vincent de Paul 1999

Darwyn Sumner Esquire

Dear Sir,

Heartiest and profound congratulations on producing another informative and excellent Bulletin. I have, however one small request for your kind attention. For those of your readers who, like me, do not receive fan-mail, hate-mail or 'E' mail (whatever that may be), and do not suffer from slipped discs, wax discs or 'floppy discs' (likewise, whatever they may be), and have only recently dared to tangle with a new-fangled typewriter (and failed!), in future issues would you graciously consider appending postal addresses to the various notices etc. in addition to the hieroglyphics which on their own mystify -, and oblige

Your ob't servant,

Roy Crossley, Esquire.

Post.script

Enclosed are my spp. lists for Grange produced with a modern ball point which I am gradually mastering, and which may eventually supersede my trusty quill pen.

Reports**Annual General Meeting 1999****Reports from the Dipterists Forum Annual Meeting held on Saturday, 6 November 1999, National History Museum, London**

The Annual Meeting was held at the Natural History Museum, South Kensington. The Forum paid for hire of the Demonstration Room and for the first time offered free attendance. The Museum kindly allowed us 10% discount in their bookshop.

About 55 people attended for the talks and AGM.

The meeting followed the published agenda (*Bulletin* no.48, pp.15-16)

Chairman: Graham Rotheray.

Apologies were received from Austen Brackenbury, Mike Howe and Ian MacLean.

1. Secretary's report

The year has seen completion our usual range of events and implementation of some new ideas.

The workshop at Preston Montford in March was on larger Brachycera. The beginners course was not viable so we have still not resolved publicity outside the Forum. David Heaver nobley continues as our workshop convener and has arranged for a course on tachinids in March 2000. We hope that 20-24 members will welcome the chance to get to grips with this family.

The summer field meeting at Grange-over-Sands had 26 people attending all or part. In Mid June we hit something of a flat spot after an early spring and the weather was poor in the mountains. However, results were worthwhile and the potential is so good that we must return in a few years time.

The autumn field meeting was arranged by Peter Chandler, Martin Harvey and John Ismay at Oxford, based at Hill End Field Centre to the SW of the city and using local B & B, including the AA "Landlady of the Year" for 1998 (the first meeting where there has been free whisky in the rooms!). 10 people attended all or part of the meeting including some new faces for the autumn.

This year our AGM has returned to London with the hope, after last year's highly successful Cardiff venue, that we shall in future meet out of London on alternate years. Potential venues around the country are being sought, and offers to investigate options are welcome.

The recording schemes for the most part continue satisfactorily. The mosquito scheme has gone into abeyance since the Mosquito Group (outside DF) was unable to muster enough support (Dixidae and Sepsidae were put in abeyance last year). These three schemes all produced atlases as an end product, incorporating ecological notes, and recent keys were published. The big schemes have all been receiving many contributions of data. The cranefly scheme has produced another batch of test keys (Limonini), the hoverfly scheme is polishing the atlas and the Larger Brachycera scheme is poised to produce an atlas. The catalyst at a local level has seen publication of excellent atlases to the hoverflies of Somerset and Surrey, and the North Midlands Cranefly Group has been producing Newsletters.

The General Committee has made a number of decisions on behalf of the membership.

- We have formally endorsed the JCCBI code on collecting insects, which is a useful point when applying for permits (broadly this means following the country code of sensible behaviour and not endangering fly populations by over-collecting).
- Re the JCCBI code, the Committee is considering the issue of a guidance note including a very few endangered flies which ought not to be collected.
- The Forum has responded to an English Nature questionnaire supporting the need for a co-ordinator of the conservation effort from invertebrate societies.
- The Forestry Commission is to be requested to simplify their unsatisfactory and counter-productive permit conditions, probably in conjunction with BENHS.

We have finished the year with some significant loose ends.

- National Reviews on Diptera. This is the third AGM at which concerns over publication delays have been expressed. Very recently JNCC has confirmed the need to publish and has offered better hope of progress.

- National Biodiversity Network. On paper this is an impressive re-incarnation of the old system, at present fo-

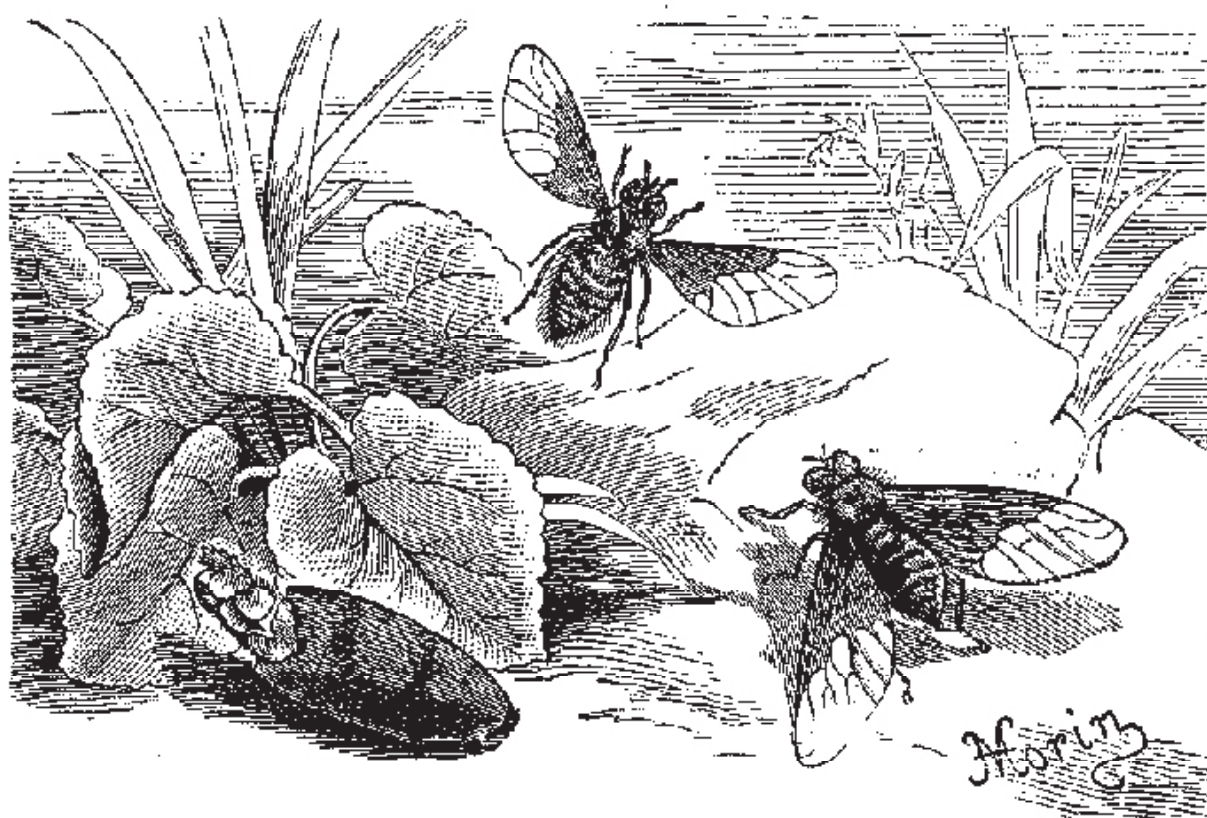
Meetings

cused strongly on Local Records Centres. BRC is clarifying the current state of recording schemes; discussions over the Diptera schemes were postponed but the Secretary hopes to meet with the Head of BRC shortly.

- DF Starter Pack. Submitted to BRC/JNCC in late 1997, it has been stuck in JNCC for ages, and then overtaken by the Secretary's period of poor health this year.

The Secretary hopes to step down, being a *Dipterosaurus* of the late second Millenium who feels the dawn of a new epoch is a time to hand over.

Alan Stubbs



2. Treasurer's report

DIPTERISTS FORUM

Income & Expenditure Account to 31st December 1998

	1998	1997
£	£	£
Income		
Subscriptions		
Forum 1998	826	936
Forum 1999	725	588
Forum 2000	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>
	1557	1530
Dipterists Digest 1997	64	1212
Dipterists Digest 1998	1140	802
Dipterists Digest 1999	852	8
Dipterists Digest 2000	<u>22</u>	<u> </u>
2078	2022	
Alliance & Leicester		
Sale of Flotation Shares	-	1334
Net Interest	140	66
Girobank	<u>1</u>	<u>-</u>
	141	1400
Dipterists Digest back issues	240	-
Countryside Council for Wales-Grant	1350	-
Dipterists Day Door Receipts	-	191
Donations	<u>219</u>	<u>18</u>
Total Income	5585	5162
Expenditure		
Dipterists Digest		
Volume 5	(1207)	(1524)
Bulletin 45	(238)	(406)
Tephritid Atlas	-	(315)
Administrative Expenses		
Membership Secretary	162	142
Secretary	17	14
Workshop Secretary	5	
Treasurer	8	5
Bank Charges Foreign Credits	<u>-</u>	<u>8</u>
	(192)	(169)
Disbursement of CCW Grant	1350	-
Store box prize	29	-
Field Studies Council deposit	50	-
Field Meetings maps	13	-
Int.Congress of Dipterology	38	-
Dipterists Day, Cardiff	<u>28</u>	<u>-</u>
	(1508)	(-)

Meetings

Surplus of Income over Expenditure	£2,440	£2,748
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DIPTERISTS FORUM

Balance Sheet as at 31st December 1998

	<u>1998</u>	<u>1997</u>
	£	£
CASH DEPOSITS		
Alliance & Leicester Building Society	7151	5661
Giro Bank	<u>3026</u>	<u>2076</u>
	<u>10177</u>	<u>7737</u>
GENERAL FUND		
Balance at 1st January 1998	7737	4989
Surplus for the year	<u>2440</u>	<u>2748</u>
	<u>10177</u>	<u>7737</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 1998 and confirm that the above accounts are correct and in accordance therewith.

R.A.Bell
Honorary Auditor

A.J.Pickles
Honorary Auditor

16th February 1999

Please note that the normal format for the Treasurer's Report is that it is prepared directly after the year end and audited soon afterwards. Thus, at the time of reading this the 1999 report is being finalised. It will usually then be distributed with the August bulletin and accordingly available to all members at the 2000 AGM.

The 1998 Report was inadvertently missed out from the August Bulletin. It was presented at the 1999 AGM in the normal fashion, members not present at the AGM have not seen it yet.

Darwyn Sumner

Discussion:

Martin Drake questioned the need to charge extra postage for non European subscribers and the need to maintain the present subscription rate when our fund base was so large.

Since historic and wider policy issues were involved, **the Secretary replied.**

Subscriptions were originally pitched to ensure viable self sufficiency when we had no base funds. In practice we were initially able to get the *Bulletin* printed at very low cost but we have been progressively moving towards commercial rates. Even though BRC still provides free mailing, we can never be absolutely sure a year ahead. We are within sight of expenditure equalling income, especially if we continue with keys and increase the frequency of other publications. The size of our balance partially reflects a substantial windfall on a building society merger at which our account was held.

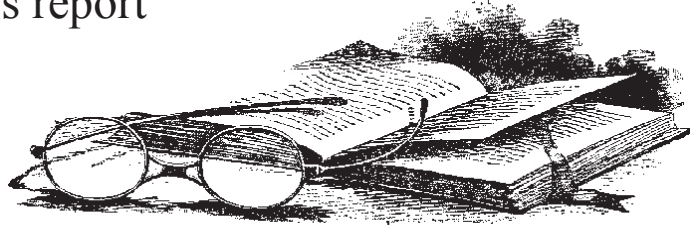
Our flexibility to change subscriptions has been reduced with the recent introduction of standing orders, so to now lower subs and then raise them in a few years time will defeat the object of minimum administration for members and the membership secretary. Thus, noting that our reserve funds are not expected to grow so fast, and that it is sensible to have a strong reserve so that one does not mind flying close to the wire on annual

accounting if the occasion arises, it is best to maintain the present sub rate. That sum is exceedingly modest relative to output and activities, and £1 less will not make any difference to number of subscribers. That this AGM is financed out of DF funds, rather than charge entry, is evidence that the Committee is able to loosen up in serving the membership.

As regards foreign postage at £1 surcharge, this mainly concerns DD at present. At current postage rates Europe is not yet a major problem (2 X 64p per year). World wide, some postage zones make us operate at a higher loss (2 X £1.20). Most subscribers in the latter position are professionals who are subsidised by the British subscribers who are predominantly amateurs. If *Dipterists Digest* is to promote a larger readership, including world wide, then it is sensible to adjust postage surcharge before the number of people on standing orders builds up. As regards the *Bulletin*, as long as the present postal arrangement with BRC holds we are OK, but were that to change as regards foreign mail we could be left with a substantial extra bill twice a year.

4. Dipterists Digest Editor's report

As a second issue for 1998 appeared before Christmas, work on the 1999 issues began on schedule. Thanks to a sufficient number of papers and notes being submitted over the past year, it was possible to produce two issues with an increased total of 120 pages of text. These appeared according to the planned schedule at almost six monthly intervals, the second issue being produced in time for distribution before the annual meeting.



Rapidity of publication of items after submission has remained good and all papers and notes accepted for publication at the time of sending the second issue to the printers were included. There was some uncertainty during the summer whether enough material would be available for the second issue. Although this did finally come together in time for publication on schedule, it is still essential that enough material is submitted during the forthcoming winter and similarly in successive years, to continue to guarantee two issues each year.

It has now become a regular feature of issue No. 1 to include notes on the exhibits at the annual meeting and, in order to facilitate this, it is requested that exhibitors provide notes from which this report can be compiled. Exhibits which also appear at the BENHS Exhibition are excluded from the report in the Digest as notes on those are published by the Society.

Both of this year's issues have included any corrections to errors in the Diptera checklist that have come to my notice and a summary of any significant changes or additions to the British list that have occurred. This will continue although it is hoped that the number of errors discovered will continue to diminish. Information on any corrections or changes is welcomed from anyone bringing them to my attention.

The need to attract more authors remains and the reservations of some potential authors mentioned in last year's report still apply. Consideration was given to changing the size or format of the journal but the consensus was that continuing with those established in recent years was most appropriate. An increase in the page size of the journal would have been too costly as any size larger than the A5 currently used would have been charged at A4 rates, doubling the cost. A significantly larger number of pages might result in the need for more expensive binding, but I will continue to maximise the number of pages published within the limits imposed on us.

A change in the type of paper used was, however, agreed following consultation with the printers and examination of samples of text printed on several alternative types of paper. It was also considered that such a change was essential following the discovery that the 75gsm paper used in the issues of recent years was not acid-free. The 80gsm Laser 2800 paper introduced in Volume 6 No. 1 was whiter and less transparent than the previously used paper and did not significantly alter the printing cost. As I was happy with the resulting issue, it was then decided at the June committee meeting to continue with this paper for future issues. However, despite this being requested for No. 2, a different paper was used. This was taken up with the printers, who accepted that an error had occurred and provided a discount to compensate. They have been asked to ensure that the paper we have requested is used in all future issues.

I would like to thank all contributors for maintaining the standard of the Digest. I am also grateful to members of the editorial panel and others who have assisted with refereeing and editing papers. Mike Pugh has again dealt efficiently with proof reading and has provided other assistance during the year.

I again urge everyone interested in Diptera to contribute to the Digest so that both frequency of publication and quality of the content can be maintained.

Peter Chandler

Meetings

5. Election of Officers

The published list was elected as a bloc, except that Roger Morris has stepped down (representative to BENHS now vacant).

Vacant posts were filled as follows:-

Secretary Alan Stubbs in interim of finding a replacement

Field Meetings Secretary Malcolm Smart will continue

Issues and announcements.

Chairman proposed a DF Special Publications Series, with the Dorset Field Meeting report as the first item, as considered in Committee. General support was indicated.

David Henshaw drew attention to ongoing survey of Epping Forest, for which records will be welcome.

Exhibits

There were a fair number of exhibits, most with good information and plenty of good finds, so judging for the Best Exhibit was far from easy. Laurence Clemons won the store box prize, his exhibit being well presented with good information and containing some excellent material, including two species new to Britain (judges Chairman, Secretary and John Ismay).

Those exhibits also shown at the BENHS Exhibition will be reported in the journal of that Society; those only displayed at the Forum AGM will be reported in *Dipterists Digest*. Peter Chandler co-ordinated this reporting to ensure that there is a permanent record.

Discussion meeting

1. There has been a proposal that there should be a fly collecting code, possibly including a short list of flies that ought not to be collected. What was the view of those present?

The overwhelming view was that nothing too formal was called for. At most some low key guidelines should be considered.

2. Progress with the Hoverfly Recording Scheme. Stuart Ball reported that the atlas should be in print not too far into the new year. The further inflow of data will be welcome, especially for gaps. However, the emphasis would now be on targeted recording, including key sites and refining habitat associations. Attention was drawn to Syrph the Net, with analysis capabilities for 500 species in Europe, including prediction of faunas against which ground truthing could be tested. No doubt further details will be forthcoming.

3. Progress with the Larger Brachycera Recording Scheme. Martin Drake reported that Simon Hayhow has taken over as scheme organiser; Malcolm Smart agreed to help with editing the Newsletter. It is felt that an atlas should await the record boost anticipated from the book (close to going to press). More specialist habitats need to be on Recorder software.



Field Meetings

Dorset, Summer 1998

Mike Howe tells me that the Dorset report is nearly complete. Mick Parker has checked the material through and so it's left to Mike Howe to add the finishing touches. Mike tells me there are 9,000 records from some 1200 species which include 2 new to the UK. Publication is due in the next month or so.

Grange-o-Sands, Summer 1999

Out of the 26 people attending this field meeting, I have received records so far from 11, a total of 2832 records now on the database. This includes 66 Notables, 10 RDB3s, 4 RDB2s and 2 RDB1s. It's perhaps a little too soon to begin analyses or to produce detailed lists but if you're desperate for a few clues in Families with which you are unfamiliar then I can let you know what some of the experts have already determined.

Darwyn Sumner: Darwyn@sumnerhome.freeseerve.co.uk

Oxford, Autumn 1999

The 1999 autumn field meeting was held from 13 to 17 October and was based at Oxford. Twelve people attended. Peter Chandler had arranged B&B at the Gables, whose landlady Mrs Tompkins was the winner of the 1998 "AA Landlady of the Year" award – general consensus was that 1) she deserved to win in 1999 as well, and 2) future dipterists' meetings would do well to seek out similar award-winners!

But what about the insects? Not all the records are in, but so far the meeting has produced 1,003 records of 382 species from 18 sites spread across ten 10-km squares. This includes 5 species of fungi, 13 of molluscs, 1 each of millipedes, groundhoppers and earwigs, 8 psocid spp., 18 bug spp., 30 beetle spp., 2 moth spp., 2 sawfly spp. + hornet, 5 woodlice spp., and 295 species of Diptera from 45 Families.

The breakdown for Diptera is:

Following the categories on the Recorder database the list of species includes 14 Nationally Scarce species (two of which are beetles) and two provisional Red Data Book 3: Rare species (see table below); however, it should be noted that the national statuses given in Recorder for many of the above fly Families are now rather out-of-date. For instance, Peter reports that the two Red Data Book fungus gnats are becoming more widely known from woodlands in southern Britain and should probably now be classed as Nationally Scarce, and some of the current Nationally

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Scarce species should now be classified as Local.

Family	Species	National status	Site/s
Limoniidae	<i>Limonia (Dicranomyia) ventralis</i> (Sch., 1829)	Nationally Scarce	Pinkhill Meadow Nature Reserve
Mycetophilidae	<i>Anatella lenis</i> Dziedzicki	Nationally Scarce	Spartum Fen SSSI
Mycetophilidae	<i>Rymosia winnertzi</i> Barendrecht	Nationally Scarce	Sydlings Copse (BBOWT reserve)
Mycetophilidae	<i>Exechia cincta</i> Winnertz	pRDB3	Bladon Heath; Shotover Country Park; Sydtings Copse (BBOWT reserve)
Mycetophilidae	<i>Exechia pseudofestiva</i> Lackschewitz	Nationally Scarce	Otmoor RSPB reserve
Mycetophilidae	<i>Allodia barbata</i> (Lundstroem)	Nationally Scarce	Bladon Heath
Mycetophilidae	<i>Mycetophila autumnalis</i> Lundstroem	pRDB3	Bladon Heath

Meetings

Mycetophilidae	<i>Epicrypta linnophila</i> Chandler, 1981	Nationally Scarce	Barrow Farm Fen SSSI; Bladon Heath; Otmoor RSPB reserve; Oxey Mead BBOWT reserve; Pinkhill Meadow Nature Reserve
Lonchopteridae	<i>Lonchoptera scutellata</i> Stein, P.	Nationally Scarce	Pinkhill Meadow Nature Reserve
Sciomyzidae	<i>Psacadina verbekei</i> Rozkowsky	Nationally Scarce	Cothill Fen (Lashford Lane Fen BBOWT reserve); Hill End Field Centre; Pinkhill Meadow Nature Reserve
Chloropidae	<i>Oscinisoma gilvipes</i> Loew, 1858	Nationally Scarce	Cothill Fen (Parsonage Moor BBOWT reserve); Otmoor RSPB reserve; Oxey Mead BBOWT reserve
Chloropidae	<i>Elachiptera austriaca</i> Duda, 1932	Nationally Scarce	Oxey Mead BBOWT reserve; Pinkhill Meadow Nature Reserve
Scathophagidae	<i>Norellia spinipes</i> Robineau-Desvoidyi	Nationally Scarce	Sydlings Copse (BBOWT reserve)
Scathophagidae	<i>Conisternum decipiens</i> (Haliday)	Nationally Scarce	Otmoor RSPB reserve
Col.: Carabidae	<i>Pterostichus oblongopunctatus</i> (F., 1787)	Nat. Scarce/Nb	Wytham Wood: Radbrook Common
Col.: Leiodidae	<i>Leiodes cinnamomea</i> (Panzer, 1793)	Nat. Scarce/Nb	Wytham Wood: Radbrook Common

The Cothill Fen complex produced the highest total of species, and the totals for other sites are shown below (although note that these totals are not really comparable, different numbers of people visited the sites for varying lengths of time). Spartum Fen SSSI provided the second British record of an as yet undescribed species of *Mycetophila* fungus gnat, first found at Epping Forest in 1998 (it has now been found at a site in Hampshire as well). Pinkhill Meadows nature reserve is owned by Thames Water, and has been the subject of wetland habitat restoration over the last ten years, undertaken jointly by Thames Water, Environment Agency and Pond Action. The site now contains a range of ponds, scrapes and wet meadows, and produced the highest total of snail-killing flies of any of the sites (8 of the meeting's 11 species of sciomyzid were recorded at Pinkhill, including good numbers of the Nationally Scarce *Psacadina verbekei*).

Site	Number of species in each national status category					Total
	Unknown	Common	Local	Notable	pRDB3	
Ashdown Park (National Trust)	2	9	4	–	–	15
Badbury Forest	1	12	3	–	–	16
Barrow Farm Fen SSSI	15	52	17	1	–	85
Bladon Heath	10	47	13	2	2	74
Cothill Fen SSSI (includes Ruskin NNR and 2 Wildlife Trust reserves: Parsonage Moor and Lashford Lane)	25	87	23	2	–	137
Dry Sandford Pit Wildlife Trust reserve	–	4	2	–	–	6
Hill End Field Centre	9	50	15	1	–	75
Otmoor RSPB reserve	4	31	8	4	–	47
Oxey Mead Wildlife Trust reserve	3	15	5	3	–	26
Pinkhill Meadow nature reserve	4	25	12	5	–	46
Shotover Country Park (including Brasenose Wood)	16	31	8	–	1	56
Spartum Fen SSSI	11	54	9	1	–	75
Sydlings Copse Wildlife Trust reserve	21	56	11	2	1	91
Warburg Wildlife Trust reserve	–	2	–	–	–	2
Whitecross Green Wildlife Trust reserve	6	20	7	–	–	33
Wytham Great Wood	12	61	8	2	–	83
Total	71	219	76	14	2	382

As usual, the autumn meeting was an enjoyable social event as well as producing an impressive list of records for the time of year. Many thanks to Peter Chandler for organising the meeting, and to Lawrence Bee of the Hill End Field Centre for providing laboratory facilities. Thanks to the following organisations for providing access to the sites: Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust, English Nature, National Trust, Oxford City Council, Oxford University Estates Office, RSPB, Thames Water (and Jeremy Biggs of Pond Action). Copies of the full species list are available from Martin Harvey (preferably via email: martin@kitenet.freereserve.co.uk, tel: 01491 671889), and will be supplied to the relevant record centres and land-owners/managers.

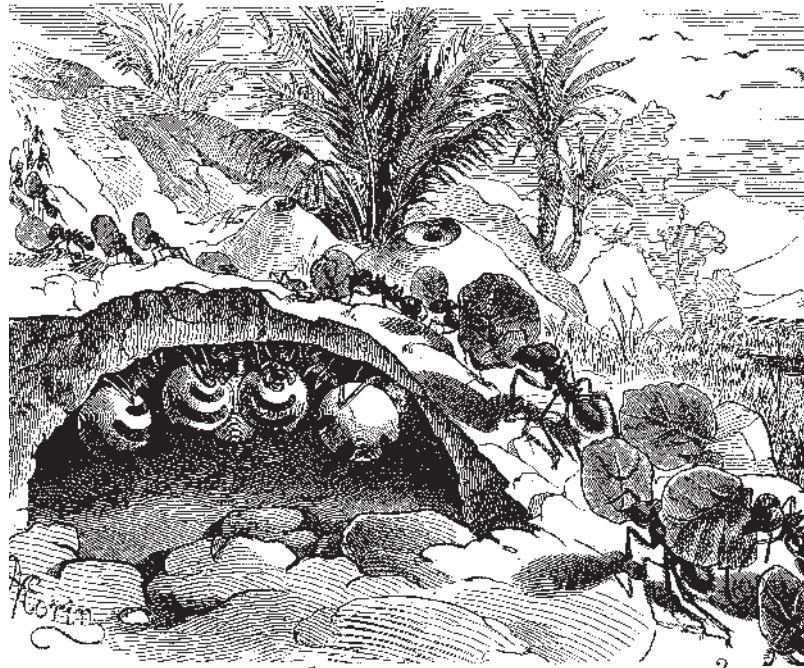
Martin Harvey 12 February 2000

Inqui-lines

Honey Pot Challenge IV

On 12th June 1999 the fourth Honey Pot Challenge began as the usual suspects plus a few new faces gathered at the Castle Head Field Study Centre for the Summer Field Meeting. The aim of this exercise is to persuade everyone to collect sawflies (Hymenoptera: Symphyta) for recording purposes. These can be adult insects or identifiable larvae and/or signs of feeding, galls etc. Points are awarded for each species from a site with bonus points for rarities. At the end of the week the person with the highest tally of points wins the magnificent prize of a jar of honey.

Fifteen people produced at least one sawfly specimen and during the week a total of 99 species were recorded; there are about 500 on the British list. This compares with 77 species during the 1998 Dorset week and 112 from the Abergavenny area in 1997. With the aid of the honey pot chasers, sawflies were recorded from 65 sites scattered throughout



Cumbria and Lancashire. Forty four of those 99 species would not have been recorded had I been the only sawfly collector of the week. Many hands do produce results, even if they make the evening identification sessions far from light work ! A grand total of 325 species records was made from the 65 sites.

No tremendous rarities were discovered but several species are regarded as local or likely to be at the northern edge of their range in that part of the country. The latter includes the iris sawfly, *Rhadinoceraea micans*, found in the grounds of the Castle Head Field Centre, at Leighton Moss RSPB Reserve and at Rusland Moss. The local species were *Xiphydria camelus* at Gait Barrows (Chris Spilling); *Cephus nigrinus* at Red Scar Wood (Malcolm Smart); *Allantus truncatus* at Gait Barrows (the Howes, Malcolm Smart) and at Yealand Hall Allotment (AH); and *Rhogogaster chambersi* at Whitbarrow Scar (AH). *Phymatocera aterrima* is a widespread pest on garden Solomon's seal but it was nice to find larvae chomping away on the foliage of the native *Polygonatum odoratum* in the crevices of limestone paving at Gait Barrows. A bonus point was awarded to Mick Parker for taking *Empria liturata* at Wrynose Pass. This is a common species but it was just about the only insect to be seen on a scenically beautiful but gale-swept hillside. The most productive site of the week, with 20 species, was Sandscale Haws SSSI - a large site of sand dunes and slacks which was visited by many people during the week.

The day of reckoning came on 19th June when the points were totted up. For the second year running the winner was Peter Chandler with 47 points but Malcolm Smart was in close pursuit throughout the week and finished with 45 points. Third place went to Richard Underwood with 29 points while Alan Stubbs, despite not being on best form, managed 26 points for fourth place. Liz and Mike Howe scored 49 points but being a double act (triple act with Megan), their halved score put them in fifth place. A chance to compete again will come at Launceston, Cornwall this summer when, hopefully, the lure of the honey pot will once more send dipterists and aculeate hymenopterists off in a collecting frenzy for sawflies.

Andrew Halstead

Meetings

Forthcoming

Summer Field Week 2000

27 May to 3 June 2000 Launceston (Devon/Cornwall)

Since publication of the August Bulletin there have been some significant changes to the arrangements. Both the location and the period have had to be changed due to renovation work the original venue.

The Field Week will now take place during the school half term holiday week. Arrangements have been made for us to be based at St. Joseph's School in Launceston. The school has 22 single rooms, but can provide classroom/laboratory space and meals for at least 30 participants. Accommodation has been booked for 7 nights from Saturday 27 May to Friday 2 June 2000 inclusive. Single participants will be accommodated in the school, couples in a guesthouse close by. Participants should plan to arrive at the school in time for dinner at 18:30 hrs on Saturday 27 May (aiming arrival between 16:30 & 17:30) and to leave after breakfast (carrying a packed lunch) on Saturday 3 June.

Most of the available accommodation has already been booked, but at time of going to press the following vacancies still existed: 4 single rooms in the school for the entire period and 1 double room in the guesthouse for the nights of Sat. 27/5 to Wed 31/5 only. Anyone wishing to take up one of these vacancies should contact me at the address below as soon as possible. The cost per person is £30 per night (i.e. £210 for the full week) and includes B & B, packed lunch, evening meal and use of classroom/laboratory facilities. A deposit of £70 (payable to St. Joseph's School) will be required to secure a booking which will only be refundable if cancellation is made before 14 April 2000. If you plan to come with a partner, different deposit arrangements apply (contact me for details).

Launceston is a small bustling town situated on the Devon/Cornwall border centrally between Dartmoor and Bodmin Moor in one direction, and between the North & South coasts in the other. The dual carriageway A30 provides excellent East-West site access. Many apparently excellent sites are within easy reach.

St. Joseph's is a small school catering for pupils up to 15 years of age. The accommodation is very basic but everyone will have a private room. There are ample (shared) bath/shower facilities. A series of classrooms (similar to those we used in Grange-over-Sands) situated in the same building will be available for our use. A lounge/TV room and the dining room are also located in that building.

Importantly for some, there is a pub situated only about 150m away from the school entrance

Malcolm J. Smart

Southcliffe, Pattingham Road, Perton, Wolverhampton WV6 7HD.
Tel: 01902 700228, e-mail: malcolm@smart-home.freemove.co.uk

Autumn Field Meeting

11-15 October 2000

We offer advance notice of provisional dates. Present thoughts are to boost the Epping Forest survey effort, a large high quality area even though on the London fringe. There are other worthwhile sites within range, including NT Hatfield Forest (Bishops Stortford) which is varied and of high quality. The convener will be:

Peter Chandler

43 Eastfield Road, Burnham, Slough, Berkshire SL1 7EL. E-mail: chandgnats@aol.com

Postscript:

"As mentioned to Alan I was thinking about Essex as the location this year and have now agreed with Jeremy Dagley at Epping Forest that we can include visits there in the meeting, which would also include the BENHS field meeting to Hainault Forest on 14 October. So Essex is now definite on these dates and we can use their centre for evening sorting, although accommodation etc. will need to be sorted out later." Peter Chandler

Annual General Meeting

25-26 November 2000. Cardiff

The options outside London proved limited this year so we have taken up Cardiff Museum's offer to be host. It will be a residential weekend on a similar format to the very successful event in 1998, with access to the collections. Dave Clements will be local co-ordinator. Further details will be in the August Bulletin.

Any requests/suggestions for talks, demonstrations/workshops, discussions etc to Dave or Alan Stubbs please, preferably by the summer field meeting (when a quorum can deliberate options).



Diary 2000

14 **BENHS Annual General Meeting and Presidential Address**
 18 **LCES** Exhibition at Frodsham Community Centre.
 18-19 **DF Tachinid Workshop** at Preston Montford
 25 **BENHS Rye Harbour Nature Reserve SUSSEX**

3 **RESLEVENING LECTURE:** Automated identification of insects.
 Dr David Chesmore, University of Hull.
 e.mail: e.d.chesmore@e-eng.hull.ac.uk
 9 **BENHS** Developing the activities of BRC with National Recording
 Schemes Lecturer: Mark Telfer
 (Details of indoor meetings to be held after May 2000 will be
 published in May 2000)
 13 **BENHS** Lower Test Hampshire Wildlife Trust Reserve, Totton,
 HAMPSHIRE
 20 **BENHS** Loch Stroan, KIRKCUDBRIGHTSHIRE.
 27-3 **DF** Summer Field Week, Launceston

2 to 4 **BENHS** North Norfolk Coast, NORFOLK.
 A residential joint meeting with "the coleopterists"
 3 **BENHS** Shorne Marshes and Northward Hill RSPB reserves,
 KENT
 7 **RESL ANNUAL MEETING & PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS**
 The cloning experts. Dr R.L.Blackman. The Natural History
 Museum. e.mail add: R.Blackman@nhm.ac.uk
 9 **BENHS** Newton Abbot Racecourse, DEVON.
 10 **BENHS** New Forest, HAMPSHIRE.
 10 **BENHS** Redgrave & Lopham Fens, SUFFOLK
 11 **BENHS** HEREFORDSHIRE (BENHS Conservation Working
 Group meeting)
 17 **BENHS** Llanymynech & Llynelys Hills SSSI, Near Owestry,
 MONTGOMERYSHIRE
 17 **BENHS** Buckfastleigh, DEVON
 24 **BENHS** Leckhampstead Wood, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

1 **BENHS** Spreyton near Bow, DEVON
 8 **BENHS** Knettishall Heath, SUFFOLK
 15 **BENHS** Pagham harbour LNR, WEST SUSSEX
 15 **BENHS** Upton Heath, near Poole, DORSET
 22 **BENHS** Rushy Moors, Kidlington, OXON
 29 **BENHS** Gwaith Powdr Nature Reserve, MERIONETHSHIRE
 29 **BENHS** Old castle Down, GLAMORGAN
 29 **BENHS** Pamber Forest, HAMPSHIRE

5 **BENHS** Tilshead, Salisbury Plain, WILTSHIRE
 12 **BENHS** Formby Sands, LANCASHIRE
 12 **BENHS** Dingle Marshes RSPB Reserve, SUFFOLK
 18 **BENHS** Old Hall Marshes, Tollesbury, ESSEX
 19 **BENHS** Bentley Wood, WILTSHIRE
 20-26 **RESL 21ST INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF**
ENTOMOLOGY, IGUASSU, BRAZIL
 26 **BENHS** Brede High Wood, SUSSEX

2 **BENHS** New Forest, HAMPSHIRE
 8 **BENHS** Marks Hall Country Estate, Coggeshall, ESSEX
 14-15 **RESL ENTOMOLOGY 2000 at Liverpool Hope**
University.
 Convenors: Mr J Delf e.mail add: delfj@livhope.ac.uk and Dr M
 Speed.
 16 **BENHS PERTSHIRE (further details awaited)**
 23 **BENHS** National Moth Night: Rushy Moors, Kidlington,
 OXON
 23 **BENHS** National Moth Night Hamsterley Forest, Co. DUR-

HAM

11-15 **DF** Autumn Field Meeting
 14 **BENHS Lambourne End, Hainault, ESSEX**

12 **BENHS** Annual Exhibition
 25-26 **DF** Annual General Meeting. Cardiff

LCES = Lancashire & Cheshire Entomological Society. Exhibition
 Secretary Julia Hancell, 4 Priory Close, Halton, Runcorn,
 Cheshire, WA7 2BN stevenc@consult-eco.ndirect.co.uk

NMGM = Liverpool Museum. National Museums & Galleries
 on Merseyside, William Brown Street, Liverpool L3 8EN.
 Contact **Steve Judd** on 0151 478 4233.

DF = Dipterists Forum

RESL = **Royal Entomological Society of London**

BENHS = British Entomological & Natural History Society.

Contact **Peter Chandler**. Field Meetings Secretary, Dr. Paul Waring.
 Tel: 01 487 773 381 Fax: 01 487 773 467 Email: p.harding@ite.ac.uk

AES = Amateur Entomologists Society, PO Box 8774, London SW7
 5ZG. aes@theaes.org <http://www.theaes.org>

Many thanks to Malcolm Smart for pointing out that details of events of several societies can be obtained from their websites:

BENHS (www.benhs.org.uk),

RESL (www.royensoc.demon.co.uk) &

AES (www.theaes.org).

Meetings for inclusion in this diary: our own, our affiliate's, any Society which makes specific arrangements with the Dipterists Forum or our affiliates for a joint meeting, major events and exhibitions of a broad entomological nature (e.g. the AES exhibitions) and any Societies lecture on the subject of Diptera. Please contact the editor with details of any such event.

Amateur Entomologists Society

Spring Fair. May 14th

The Entomological Livestock Group Spring Fair at Pattishall Village Hall, Pattishall, near Towcester, Northants. Wide range of Tropical & European Butterfly & Moth Livestock, Sticks, Mantids, Spiders etc. Doors open 12.00 - 4.00pm. Admission: Adults £1.50. Children £1.00. Contact details: Paul Batty, Tel: 01909 565564. E-mail: pwbelg@clara.co.uk

Northern Show. June 4th.

The Oldham Creepy Crawly Show at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, Oldham, Lancashire. Doors open 12.00 - 5.00pm. Admission: Adults £1.00. Children Free. Contact details: Bruce Langridge, Tel: 0161 911 4657. E-mail: ELS.Museum@oldham.gov.uk

Exhibition 2000. August 7th

Kempton Park Racecourse. 11am - 5pm. Over 150 stalls makes the AES show one of the biggest of its kind in Europe. Not to be missed!

continued overleaf....

continued ...

British Entomological & Natural



And now ...

..... rabbits

Yes, you know, those cuddly furry things with a fluffy white tail. To a dipterist they provide burrows around which one may find a few flies, and a corpse may be nicely wriggling with maggots. If hung on a game keepers gibbet, even mummified remains could be interesting for piophilids and friends.

But how does a non-dipterist look upon a rabbit, having got beyond books on the inhabitants of *Watership Down* and the *Adventures of Thumper*. Well, three serious adults have researched what Thumper the Rabbit really gets up to, and, moreover, they have published their findings in a leading academic publication, the *Journal of Animal Ecology* **60**: 154-164. The title? Rabbits killing birds: modelling the hyperpredation process.

The mind boggles. Should I now submit a paper to *Dipterists Digest* titled 'Craneflies killing robberflies: mankind doomed according to inverse leg-shedding theorem'? Will the editor accept such a paper, especially if the content is about cats catching so many robberflies that crane-fly numbers are destroying the vegetation?

But then I ask you, does the *Sun* newspaper with its sensationalised headlines sell more copies than *Dipterists Digest*? Perhaps we have stumbled across the way to get the Dipterists Forum into the big-time public eye, our Publicity officer to note.

Alan Stubbs

Contributors

Thanks to all those contributing to this issue and all the other expressions of support. Particular thanks to those who met the deadlines described in the last issue. Please note the following deadlines for the next two bulletins: August bulletin: contributions by 24th July 2000, printed in August, March bulletin by the end of January 2001, this is printed in February. Would contributors please note that it takes a minimum of 4 weeks to compile, edit, reproduce and distribute each issue. Minor amendments or insertions may be negotiated during the 2 weeks following these deadlines but major items must be in by the deadline.



History Society.

Redgrave & Lopham Fen, Suffolk

I will be leading a BENHS field meeting to Redgrave & Lopham Fen NNR, Suffolk, on 10 June 2000. Meet at the Visitor Centre (TM052802) at 11.00 a.m. There has been very little Diptera recording here for a decade. The fen is undergoing massive restoration work, but there are still areas of old fen vegetation, wet woodland, and bits of dry heath. Even if you don't find any insects, you can gawp at the Tarpan horses. With any luck, it will be very wet under foot, as an offending borehole was turned off last summer and the springs have started running again.

Martin Drake 01778 342298 (h) 01733 455000 (w)

Annual Exhibition

12 November 2000

Usual venue, Imperial College, South Kensington, London.

Natural History Museum, London

During 1999 the telephone numbers changed.

Please note the following:-

Diptera collections (John Chainey/Nigel Wyatt)
020 7942 5197

Brian Pitkin (overall in charge) 5244

These are the main contacts for British and General (world wide) collections apart from some specialist groups of medical importance.