





BULLETIN OF THE **Dipterists** Forum

Affiliated to the British Entomological and Natural History Society

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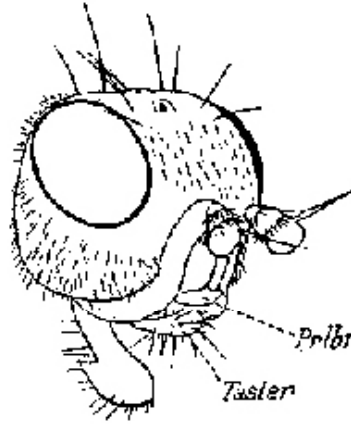
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Forum News

Editorial

Darwyn Sumner

Recording Schemes

Somewhere amongst all the back copies of the Dipterists Bulletins stacked on your shelves is the one which you most frequently head for as it's packed with useful reference material - such as names and addresses of members. Hopefully this is another if I've been successful in my attempts to make the current status of the recording schemes and study groups as comprehensive as possible. I've taken John Kramer's data survey as the core and packed other useful bits and pieces around it, getting hopelessly lost as to where to italicise my additional comments because in places I have my editor's hat on and in others I'm just me.

I do hope the condensed notes regarding the state of the Empid and Dolichopodid initiatives are intelligible, they are condensed from numerous letters on the subject over a wide time scale, one of Roy's to me was 4 pages long. I've used the symbol ☐ throughout the text to indicate records cards or data processing.

An appreciation

The Dipterists Forum has been very fortunate in recent years to have had the benefit of the very able assistance of several tireless contributors to all the activities which we carry out. Of particular note, perhaps not so much realised by members who don't attend the Dipterists Field Week, is the terrific amount of very thorough preparation which Malcolm Smart has put into the arrangements for these meetings. Not simply the locating and booking of our accommodation nor just the finding of all the sites and the obtaining of permissions to visit them but the whole bundle of well-organised information packs which has made the Field Weeks such a terrific success over the past few years. His researches would have done credit to the work of a Local Records Centre, indeed the Cornwall LRC and other agencies will receive an enormous boost to their data holdings once the results have been processed. Malcolm was persuaded to continue in his post for our second visit to Cornwall in the expectation that it would be a relatively simple task; FMD put paid to that expectation and by all accounts his task was just as labour intensive as previously. He has now ceased to organise these field weeks, having resigned from his post in order to do some actual Dipterology. I am sure that all DF members will join me in expressing our thanks to Malcolm for all the work he has done for us over the past few years and in wishing him success and satisfaction in pursuit of his Diptera interests.

Heritage Lottery Fund Grants

In the National Biodiversity Network Trust's recent "Linking LRCs" newsletter (concerned with regional Biological Records Centres - LRCs) is an item about a new scheme launched by the HLF, a sort of fast-track method of obtaining grants from them provided they are small sums in the region of £5,000 to £50,000 (that's small in their terms). Sara Hawkswell of the Wildlife Trusts (and NBN) wrote the item in relation purely to Local Records Centres; they have a good deal of experience in chasing HLF grants and since they support LRCs, are offering their expertise in helping LRCs to make applications for these grants. It's not a simple matter to be successful with one of these applications, there are forms of words they like to see before making the grants, along the lines of providing services to the community and increasing audience rather than focussing purely on specific projects or the environment. The NBN are offering their assistance to LRCs in the form of one Rosie Garwood, the NBN Trust Business Manager.

The focus of the NBN is shifting now to NSSs like our own (National Specialist recording Society) and my enquiries revealed that the above HLF support applies also to the Dipterists Forum. The NBN intend to produce a guidance booklet in the near future to help with such applications and HLF themselves produce an information pack entitled "Your Heritage" obtainable by ringing 020 7591 6042. Rosie Garwood was unaware of other NSSs chasing this particular scheme at the moment although some had taken the labour-intensive route of full applications in order to fund their projects.

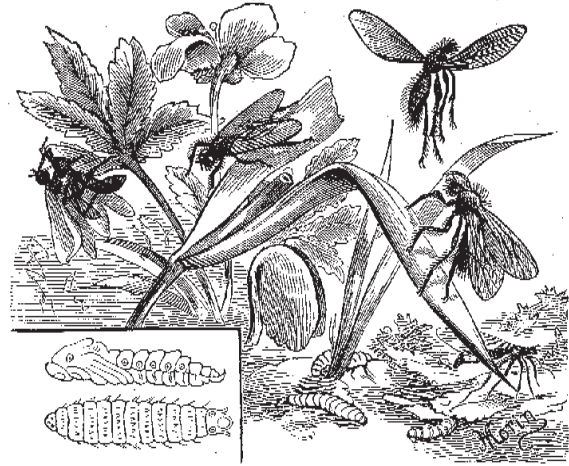
Perhaps the Dipterists Forum might see this as an opportunity, there are certainly two projects discussed in this and the previous issue of the Bulletin which seem to fit the bill.



Diptera Recording Schemes

This Bulletin gathers together a number of items of particular relevance to the Diptera Recording Schemes and Study Groups. Some rather interesting opportunities for support for our schemes will crop up in the near future which we would do well to take advantage of.:

- Paul Harding of the BRC has convened a conference in November at which point it is clear that the focus of the NBN regarding biological recording will be upon National groups such as our own (alongside others, for example The Mammal Society and BSBI).
- The situation regarding our own Diptera Recording Schemes is considerably clarified by John Kramer's survey of the data backlog.
- Details of the current status regarding each Recording Scheme are again included in this Bulletin, note there are one or two changes, with the responsibility for Empids shifting from Roy Crossley to Adrian Plant plus the proposed new Tachinid Recording Scheme.



Support for National Specialist Societies

A full-time post has been created whose function is to look after some of the needs of all National species recording initiatives such as our own suite of recording schemes. A recent National Biodiversity Network Trust's (NBN) newsletter carried the following item:

“NBN Trust (the consortium of Wildlife Trusts, English Nature and many others) has been successful in its application to HLF (Heritage Lottery Fund) to fund a Development Officer to work with the National specialist Societies and recording Schemes (NSS) (The Dipterists Forum and its schemes are one of these). The full-time post will be an NBN Trust employee based at the Biological Records Centre (BRC) (the Biological Records Centre headed by Paul Harding) at CEH (Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, formerly the ITE - Institute for Terrestrial Ecology) Monks Wood, near Huntingdon, and will be for 3 years.

The NSS Development Officer will build on work with individual NSS already being piloted by BRC staff. (S)he will be helping individual societies and schemes to develop their capacities in recording and in contributing to NBN. A particular focus of this capacity building must be to involve more people in recording. Training of new volunteers and outreach to a wider community of interested naturalists, to get them more actively involved, will be an important part of any NSS development plan.

The inter-relationship of individual NSS with LRCs (Local Records Centres) is central to the success of NBN. This new post will help build on the work of the Linking LRCs project (in which I was involved - Ed) in the last 3 years.

With more than 70 NSS, each of which is different, the NSS Development Officer will have plenty to do! (S)he will prepare plans for some of the more active societies and generic guidance on development for the smaller recording schemes. We hope these will help to serve as models for other NSS. This will provide a considerable boost for BRC's services to the recording community.

NBN will be sponsoring a national conference for NSS in the autumn (DF has received an invitation and a committee member will be attending), with financial support from DEFRA. BRC is already planning this conference, which will be an important opportunity for NSS representatives to meet the Development Officer.

We will be recruiting very soon, so for further details about this post keep an eye on the News section of the NBN web site.” (www.nbn.org.uk.)

Paul Harding, BRC

Paul tells me that the NSS support officer has now been appointed, Trevor James of Hertfordshire Biological Records Centre and a stalwart of the NFBR.

Darwyn Sumner

Forum News

News from the schemes

Survey of data held by the Diptera Recording Schemes

Please notify Paul Harding of changes:
BRC (CEH)
Monks Wood, Abbots Ripton,
Huntingdon, PE17 2LS
p.harding@ite.ac.uk

In order to assess the size of the data-handling problem that is faced by recorders, and as a prelude to attacking this problem, the DF Committee asked me to carry out a survey. A request for data was sent to Recording Scheme Organisers on or before 3 Jan 2001. Recorders gave an estimate of the amount of data currently held by them and awaiting entry onto a database. Their responses are indicated (☐) below. John Kramer

Conopidae, Lonchopteridae and Otitidae

Mr D K Clements
7 Vista Rise Radyr Cheyne Llandaff Cardiff CF5 2SD
david.clements1@tesco.net

☐ CONOPIDS; about 10,000 records in paper format. ie. an 8 inch stack of Gen13's, and about 4 inches of the Conopid RA69's, plus a lever arch of paper records.

☐ LONCHOPTERIDS & OTITIDS: A few hundred records.

Culicidae - Mosquitoes

Prof. K Snow
Dept. Environmental Sciences
University of East London Romford Road London E15 4LZ
k.snow@uel.ac.uk

☐ The scheme no longer active since the publication of the 'Provisional Atlas' in 1998. The records are stored on an Excel spreadsheet.

Dixidae - Meniscus midges

Acting scheme organiser
Dr R H L Disney
University department of Zoology
Downing Street Cambridge CB2 3EJ

☐ The Notebooks and papers on Dixidae of the late Kathleen Goldie-Smith are in the Insect Room at Cambs University. There are envelopes full of completed record cards, most of which are marked as having been sent in to the BRC. The record cards, and perhaps files and notebooks could be checked.

Drosophilidae - Fruit Flies

☐ This scheme seems to be inactive.

Dr B Pitkin
Dept of Entomology, Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road London SW7 5BD

Larger Brachycera Recording Scheme

☐ An estimated 5,000 records are not entered on a database. There is a large pile of GEN 7s and RA 66s, plus a pile of other paper records

Simon Hayhow
15 Brookfield Road, Thornton Cleveleys, Lancashire FY5 4DR
simon.hayhow@btinternet.com

Mycetophilidae and allies - Fungus gnats

☐ My fungus gnat data is mainly on site cards but I have some data mainly from museum collections still arranged as lists under species, awaiting transfer to cards. A rough estimate of the volume of site cards is that I have 7,800 so far completed. In my as yet unpublished Review of Scarce Species I estimated that there were 60,000 species/site records on them at that stage (1995). With other data now at my disposal I estimate that the actual total is probably nearer 80,000

Mr P J Chandler
43 Eastfield Road Burnham Slough Berkshire SL1 7EL
chandgnats@aol.com

Sciomyzidae - Snail-killing Flies

☐ There are currently about 3,000 records on Gen 7's and paper, awaiting processing. Earlier records are on Recorder 3.1 and these will be transferred to Recorder 2000, perhaps late this year.

Dr I F G McLean
190 Miller Way Brampton Huntingdon Cambs PE18 8TZ
mclean_i@jncc.gov.uk

Mr A.P. Foster
22 The Downings, Cradwell, Melms
esbury Wiltshire SN16 9HE

Sepsidae

☐ After the publication of the Atlas in 1987 few records came in. There is a pile of Gen7 cards, about 1/2 inch thick, remaining to be entered.

Mr. Adrian C. Pont
38 Gatahampton Road Goring-on
Thames RG8 0EP
pont.muscidae@btinternet.com

Syrphidae - Hoverfly Recording Scheme

☐ No response yet. Perhaps all the data is entered, for the publication of the atlas.

Dr S G Ball
255 Eastfield Road Peterborough
PE1 4BH ball_s@jncc.gov.uk
Mr R K A Morris
241 Commonsides East Mitcham
Surrey CR4 1HB

The "Provisional atlas of British hoverflies (Diptera, Syrphidae)" by Ball & Morris can be obtained from the usual book-seller sources.

Have you got specimens of *Heringi heringi* with extensive white hairs? Then you need to watch for the next issue of the BENHS journal where Richard Jones ponders the nature of some British specimens.

Volucella inanis has turned-up in Peterborough. It obviously took the wrong turn at Watford, but seemed unaware that it had travelled so far north. - Alan Stubbs

Newsletter number 32 included with this bulletin

Newsletter editor -
David Iliff
Green Willows, Station Road,
Woodmancote, Cheltenham,
Gloucestershire GL52 4HW

Tachinid Recording Scheme

☐ *New scheme - not surveyed by John Kramer - Ed*

Chris Raper
22 Beech Road, Purley-on-
Thames, Reading, Berks RG8 8DS
chris.raper@hartslock.org.uk
Matthew Smith
24 Allnatt Avenue, Winnersh,
Berks RG41 5AU
MatSmith@compuserve.com

An announcement regarding the setting up of this new scheme was published in Dipterists Digest 2001 Vol.8 No. 1.

Robert Belshaw will be helping at the autumn workshop at Dinton Pastures (BENHS 22nd September)

Tephritid Flies Recording Scheme

☐ No response yet.

Laurence detailed the current status as regards records in Bulletin #51. He seems to be on top of the data he possesses and is actually keen to receive more. In his covering letter last year which enclosed his "bumper fun pack" he adds: "General records have largely dried up and I am desperate to get as much data as possible so that a proper atlas becomes a viable project within the next two years or so." - Ed

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

Tipuloidea & Ptychopteridae - Cranefly Recording Scheme

☐ An enormous amount of data is awaiting entry onto a database. This includes a stack of RA 11 record cards nearly six feet high, and a three-foot stack of records on A4 paper, but there are very many other records in addition to these, from journals, museums, and from other recorders.

Mr A E Stubbs
181 Broadway Peterborough PE1
4DS

Newsletter 10, circulated with this Bulletin, comprises a further key which completes the first draft of test keys to Tipulidae s.l. - Alan Stubbs

Anthomyiidae

24 The Moors Kidlington Oxfordshire OX5 2AJ

Chironomidae

Mr Michael Ackland
mackland@btinternet.com

South View Sedlescombe Battle East Sussex TN33 0PE

Empididae & Dolichopodidae

☐ *Not included in John Kramers survey since this was never a Recording Scheme Ed.*

Forum News

Dr P.P. Roper

☐ Empid cards: ca 550 field recording cards and ca 100 Gen 13 species cards, plus a collection of computer produced species/site lists (plus photocopies of personal record cards), and lists submitted by a number of people over the years, including a comprehensive set of data for Kent produced by Lawrence Clemons. Most cards relate to the 1980s and earlier

Mr Roy Crossley
1 The Cloisters
Birker Lane
Wilberfoss
York
YO41 5RF

☐ Dolichopodid cards: ca 600 field recording cards and 45 Gen 13 cards, with additional material as in the Empid cards. The major individual contributor of 10Km cards to both families is Martin Drake. Apart from Adrian Plant, the principle empid and dolie enthusiasts nationally have submitted few, if any cards at all. Few cards have been sent to me in recent years and I am concerned that so much information, which represents considerable time and effort, is unused, but I cannot think how to proceed from here. (*this same letter was sent to Paul Harding and I have a copy of his reply in which reassurances are made to Roy - Ed.*)

The Empididae and Dolichopodidae Study Group and its Newsletter has now been discontinued by Roy and reconstituted (at least in part) by Adrian Plant as an Empid Study Group or Recording Scheme - we await developments.

Empidid (? and Dolichopodid) Study Group (reconstituted)

☐ Current recording efforts by Adrian are based on Mapmate (www.mapmate.net)

Adrian is currently calling in all records of Empis:

“If you have any records of *Empis* s.lat I would be very grateful to receive them. I think we should restrict ourselves to post 1975 records (although earlier ones would also be welcome) and I would like to suggest January 2002 as a cut-off date for receipt of records in order to facilitate rapid collation and feedback. Records can be submitted on Recorder, or as lists, photocopies of notebooks, scraps of paper etc. If you use mapmate for recording we can simply arrange to synchronise files. I will undertake to assimilate and enter the data and generate the feedback as soon as possible.”

Mr Adrian Plant
c/o Somerset Wildlife Trust
Fyne Court
Broomfield
Bridgwater
Somerset
TA5 2EQ

Pipunculidae

181 Broadway Peterborough PE1 4DS

Simulidae

c/o Dept of Entomology Natural History Museum Cromwell Road London SW7 5BD

Stilt & Stalk Fly Study Group

Mr A E Stubbs

(NERIOIDEA: Pseudopomyzidae, Micropeziidae. DIOPSOIDEA: Tanypeziidae, Strongylophthalmyiidae, Megameriniidae & Psilidae)

There has been a gratifying response to my notes on this group in the last Bulletin. Amongst them a very kind offer from a Dipterists Forum member to carry out a small amount of translation from Russian.

Dr R. Crosskey

Mike Hackston put together some keys and checklists of Afrotropical Diopsidae and Psilidae which he collected whilst on a visit to Pietermaritzburg museum when he was teaching in Zambia and has very generously sent me copies.

Mr. D. Sumner



☐ Amount of Data to be Processed

Amount	Recording Scheme
Very Large Amounts	Mycetophilidae, Tipulidae
Large Amount	Sciomyzidae, Larger Brachycera, Conopidae.
Some	Sepsidae, Dixidae ?, Lonchopteridae, Otitidae
None	Syrphidae, Tephritidae, Drosophilidae, Drosophilidae, Culicidae

John Kramer

A request to Study group organisers

Newsletters from Study group organisers arise only at irregular intervals since, presumably, their authors are awaiting something of substance to publish. Would organisers please consider the submission of smaller items to the Bulletin for inclusion in the Study group section. My experience of the Stilt & stalk fly study group is that maintaining some sort of note in the Bulletin sustains the interest. There has been quite a good response from a small handful of people interested in the subject. So how about some notes on these study groups, please - or even a new study group if someone's so inclined, there's no formal procedure to go through.

Darwyn Sumner

Dipterists Forum data holdings from the Field Weeks

An account of the more recent data which has been amassed as a result of our Dipterists Field Weeks.

1997 Abergavenny (published)

Mike Howe states that there are 10,657 species records held on the RECORDER (presumably 3.1) database at the CCW headquarters in Bangor.

The sites were in the main, specifically selected from CCW's database so all the site details are also presumably at CCW headquarters.

1998 Dorset (published)

Again Mike tells us that 9120 species records are on a RECORDER database and remarks that the nomenclature is not current (Peter Chandler published his checklist this year)

The 107 sites are detailed in the published document.

1999 North West England (unpublished)

I have 5640 species on a Microsoft Access database (compatible with the Recorder 2000 data model) with 4 contributors still to add to the list (I would guess we would reach between 7,000 and 7,500). I'm introducing a record validation system with these records so contributors at some point will receive a print-out asking them to confirm that the data-enterer has correctly interpreted their contributions - particularly in respect of the new Chandler checklist.

Sites were more of a problem this time since they were taken from several organisations. They are in MapInfo format and again compatible with Recorder 2000. English Nature's publishing of digitised boundaries on their website has proved to be a great help with this task.

2000 Cornwall (unpublished)

Still mainly in paper form. Contributors were asked not to hurry since we were going to the same place again the following year. Numbers will be low due to poor weather.

Sites partially digitised as above but awaiting the 2001 material.

2001 Cornwall (unpublished)

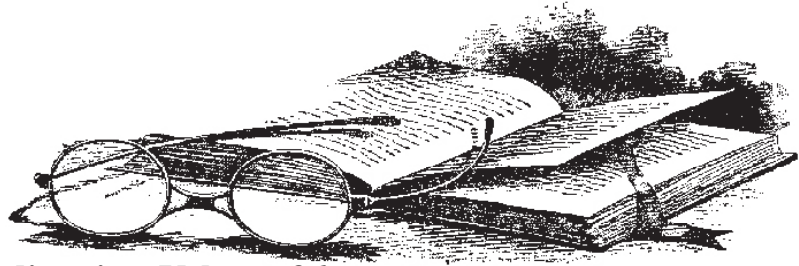
Incredibly, Richard Underwood sent me his 314 records on 27th July. I haven't even got mine off the setting boards yet. Weather a little better, and numbers will be boosted by the two malaise traps which were run. Doli-chopodids dominated the second trap which we did not empty until we were en-route home, they are with John Kramer at the moment but we shall bring them to various meetings in the hope that members will volunteer to do one or two groups from them (Dichlorvos-killed, dry stored)

Sites are on their way to me from Malcolm Smart.

Invertebrate Conservation Trust

The new trust is making good progress with its groundwork. A National Conservation Officer post has been advertised (*New Scientist*, 4 August, p.86), anticipating being operational before the end of the year.

Review



Fauna Entomologica Scandinavica, Volume 36

The Flat-footed Flies (Diptera: Opetiidae and Platypezidae) of Europe

Forever putting my foot in it, I happened to comment to Peter Chandler, as he unpacked his equipment in preparation for this year's Dipterists Field Week, that I hadn't seen a new Fauna Ent. Scand. book for some time. "What's the latest book they've published, Peter?" "This one, Darwyn, the one I wrote." he replied, thrusting a copy into my hands.

You've all probably seen or got one of this series on one topic or another so I needn't tell you how thoroughly they treat the subject. Combined with Peter's meticulous approach and another colour plate from Steve Falk we have a remarkable book. I'm always keen to slot these small families into the overall picture of Diptera and Peter's treatment of the Phylogeny is particularly informative in this regard, his Checklist has them sitting alongside the Phoridae in the Superfamily Platypezoidea, one of three in the Muscomorpha Aschiza in which Syrphidae are to be found and the book's text gives a blow by blow account of various authors' phylogenetic thinking over the years. So if you're a hoverfly enthusiast you might find these not too unfamiliar; those illustrations certainly look very much like unidentified specimens I have in my collection. Platypezidae are, of course, the subject of the Bulletin's only Dipterological poem so far (#48). The volume can be obtained from usual booksellers such as Pemberley books (www.pembooks.demon.co.uk - £52 + postage) or directly from the publishers (Brill Academic Publishers, P.O. Box 9000, 2300 PA Leiden, The Netherlands for EUR 87).

John Coldwell drew my attention to the Bookseller magazine of 12 March which mentioned Peter's title as one of the nominations they had received for the "Diagram Prize for the Oddest Title of the Year" alongside *Electronic Noses and Olfaction 2000: Proceedings of the Seventh International Symposium on Olfaction and Electronic Noses* and *Outwitting Fish*. Scatological titles seem to go down well with these chaps, perhaps one of our workers on coprophagic diptera can beat their 1989 winner: *How To Shit in the Woods: An Environmentally Sound Approach to a Lost Art* (Ten Speed Press).



Darwyn Sumner

British Soldier Flies and their Allies

The long awaited BENHS book, British Soldierflies and their Allies, went to the printer in July. The price has still to be decided. There is optimism that the book might be in print before our AGM in November.

Membership Matters



Dipterists Forum continues to attract new members to its net! Thanks to all of you that are passing the word; letters from inquirers often include reference to having being told about the Forum by you. Perhaps we should embark on a recruitment competition with a suitable prize? The use of standing orders has crept up slowly this year and despite a few problems, is helping to cut down on the administration burden. Reminders for 2002 will go out as usual with the February issue. I would be grateful if you could send any changes of address by January or July each year, so I can amend my address labels

Liz Howe

Sweep Net

Contact Darwyn Sumner on

Darwyn@sumnerhome.freemove.co.uk

Identification keys on your computer?

Our host at previous meetings at the National Museums & Galleries of Wales, Mike Wilson mentioned such a system which had been developed at The University of Queensland. I duly logged on to their website (www.lucidcentral.com) in order to find out more about the software they had developed. "Tools for Identification and Diagnosis" they call it. Due to extraordinary ineptitude on my part I was unable to download the free sample of the older version of this software but an e-mail to Matt Tyler in Australia and a few days later I was in possession of a demonstration CD and a couple of brochures.

The simplest way to describe what it's like is to ask you to recall some old-fashioned methods of identification. In one which I was taught but have never seen in action, character descriptions are arranged around the outside edge of a series of cards and a hole punched close to the edge in each of these positions. One card is made for each of the species you are working with and on each card, where the character is negative, you take a pair of scissors and snip the hole to turn it into a slot. Now take a knitting needle and push it through the appropriate hole in your bundle of cards, shake, and all species cards without the character you have selected will fall to the floor. Continue until you are left with a single card. Spreadsheet users will readily see how this sort of system can be turned into a scissors-free computer-based system simply by matching your sample against a matrix of characters of known species. The Lucid system extends this idea by adding a lot of bells and whistles. One of the strong points is that, to a degree, it allows for more than just yes/no responses; it will also of course, allow you to retrieve the "fallen cards" if you change your mind about a character. For each decision you make it lists the remaining taxa which gives you a good visual guide as to whether you are on the right track. Additional facilities include the ability to add diagrams and pictures and it also provides website publishing routines.

There is still the hard slog of gathering together all the characters you need to build up the matrix in the first place and such matrices are a little unforgiving about large quantities of "don't knows". Existing binomial keys, of course, don't provide you with all the characters



necessary to complete such a matrix, you need either full descriptions or access to a comprehensive collection.

Darwyn Sumner

Biological Recording

As the NBN shifts its focus away from Local Records Centres and begins work on National Specialist Societies such as our own this seems a useful time for members wishing to know how things might develop to have a look at the work that Biological Recording agencies have done so far. Most naturalists will be familiar with the work of the BRC (www.brc.ac.uk) "the national custodian of data on the distribution of wildlife in the British Isles" who are part of the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (www.ceh.ac.uk) and are deeply involved with the

NBN (www.nbn.org.uk) in developing the NBN Gateway (www.searchnbn.net), a pilot version of a website giving access to the NBN species dictionary and 10-km distribution maps and "allows you to access and view the information that is available within the National Biodiversity Network".

Dr Mark Telfer's BENHS lecture in February should give members a chance to catch up on the BRC's current work with species data.

The NFBR (National Federation for Biological Recording) is the "premier UK organisation for practitioners involved in biological recording" (www.nfbr.org.uk). I would make a special plea for you **not** to view their photo gallery.

Darwyn Sumner

German Dipterists' Group

www.ak-diptera.de

It's a very professional site, full of information about the members, their activities, group projects, etc. It is perhaps a lesson to those who advocate a Forum website, because it clearly involves an enormous amount of work to set up and dedication to maintain.

For the First Announcement of the Fifth International Congress of Dipterology, Brisbane, Australia, 29 September - 5 October 2002, visit the Congress website:

www.uq.edu.au/entomology/dipterol/diptconf.html

(full advertisement on inside front cover - Ed)

Adrian Pont

pont.muscidae@btinternet.com

Notice Board

Letters

Plant Gall Society

In your Editorial of Bulletin no. 51 you mentioned that there might be "treasure troves" of Diptera data languishing somewhere.

I have been interested in Galls since 1975 and am the Isle of Wight Gall Recorder (for the I.o.W. Natural History Society). I have sent summaries of my Diptera Gall records to John Robbins, the Recording Officer of the Plant Gall Society (123b, Parkgate Road, Coventry CV6 4GF) and he will have many Diptera records from all over England.

Since 1992 I have also been studying leaf-miners, Laurence Clemons has all my Tephritidae records.

I do have however records of 71 *Agromyus* (sic ? *Agromyza*) species and 8 Anthomyiid species of leaf miners recorded here on the Isle of Wight (as well as a few others of other families).

If anyone wants photocopies of my records (which are all on cards) he or she would be welcome to them if maps were being contemplated nationally for the families.

Dr. D.T. Biggs

Plum Tree Cottage 76 Albert Road Gurnard Cowes Isle of Wight PO31 8JU

Translation (Shatalkin - Psilidae)

Top marks for originality in your 'translation', but I think I can do better than that. A fairly literal translation is: Determination tables of genera and species of the family Psilidae.

1(2) Face not angled backwards, with profile concave forming an anterior angle at the edge/margin. Cheeks under the eye narrow. Microtrichia of wing surface long. Thorax in principle with 6 strong (? scutellar) bristles. Genus Chyliza.

Jonathon Cole

Many thanks for that, Jonathon, I'm constantly impressed by the lengths some Dipterists are prepared to go to to acquire the skills necessary for the pursuit of such knowledge. Ed

Sage green psilids

On the same topic, Peter Chandler commented:

Your translation of Shatalkin's key was quite impressive if less than intelligible. I did know that Rod in this context means genus, so I looked it up in my pocket Russian dictionary and find it translated as kind or gender. No mention of jack-in-the-box but perhaps one needs the several volume edition to find this translation.

he also informed me that he had recently received a communication from Anatole Shatalkin:

"Now I am compiling revised keys to Palaearctic Psilidae. I want to include all Chinese species, described by Wang et Yang (more than 30 species). I have almost fin-

ished *Psila* s.l. key. In this key I will give my sense about subgeneric structure of *Psila*."

From what I've seen of the Psilidae so far, they appear to be rather tough to work with so Mr. Shatalkin's work when it is published will be quite a feat. The group, of course, is particularly important to some since they are of economic significance as crop pests.

For those interested in this group the references I have so far stretch to 4 pages, send me an e-mail and I'll pass on the information as a Snapshot file. Ed.

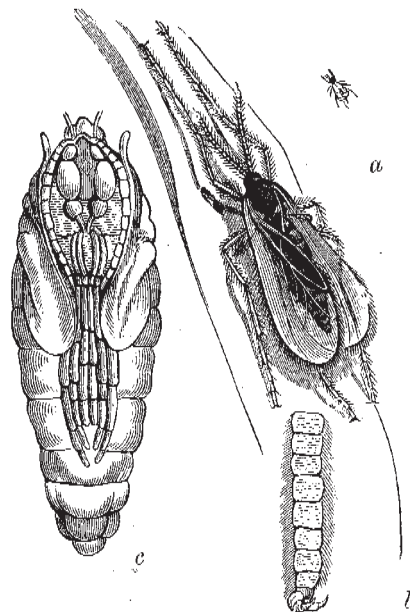
Yorkshire Hoverflies

In a postscript to a letter on other matters, Andrew Grayson tells me:

I have been working on a book about the Syrphid fauna of VCs 61-65 for the past 6 years. This will probably be published by the Yorkshire Naturalists Union, and any help you give will be acknowledged in the book. There are various loose ends to be tidied up and publication will not be for at least a year or two from now.

The publication of the "Provisional atlas of British hoverflies (Diptera, Syrphidae)" by Ball & Morris is a significant milestone in such attempts to publish regional accounts. Hopefully many more such surveys are currently being contemplated. Andrew can be contacted at

56 Piercy End, Kirkbymoorside, York, YO62 6DF



Reports**Workshops****Preston Montford - March 2001****Empids and Dolichopodids :-Tutor - Roy Crossley**

This workshop provided an excellent introduction to the Empid and Dolichopodid groups of flies ably led and tutored by the enthusiastic and erudite Roy Crossley.

Twenty participants from all quarters of the country arrived Friday evening March 16th at our usual workshop site. Many were the usual core of participants. The foot and mouth crisis situation was still growing and visitors cars to the Field study centre had to negotiate the disinfectant impregnated straw mat at Centre's front gates. There were no major restrictions over the Centre's site but it wasn't really the weather for venturing out and about. In previous years the blackthorn had been well advanced so that some outside identifications were made during the weekends. However, this weekend there was no sign of blossom or even bud burst along the hedges bordering the site.

After unpacking tea and cake was available in the common room. Renewal of old acquaintances; general set up of equipment in the laboratory and chat ensued before the evening meal at 6:30pm. The after dinner lecture and slides from Roy Crossley provided an introduction to the Empid and Dolichopodid families. We were very grateful to have access to the Liverpool Museum Empid and Dolichopodid collections which had been carefully transported down from Liverpool museum by a number of stalwarts plus a further collection of Roy's showing examples of species from the different families. Roy had brought a number of reference sources with him with the keys by Collins and Fonesca being the main one's used throughout the course. He had also brought reference papers on biology and distribution. After the evening's introductory talk a brief start was made on identification before the lure of the bar brought a halt to proceedings for the night.

We awoke on the Saturday morning to 1 - 2" of fallen snow and snowing heavily but most of snow disappeared during the day. Following a hearty breakfast the day's identification sessions started in earnest. Specimens previously collected by individuals were keyed out and where difficulties with identification arose these were compared with named specimens from the official collections. Roy had prepared a number of handouts showing updates and corrections to keys plus additions to the British list. Recording cards were also made available.

A lecture and slides followed the evening meal with the emphasis on habitats.

During the course of the workshop those with active, or slightly warped, minds developed humorous English names, as a play on the Latin names of the Dolichopodids and Empids. These were duly captured on the whiteboard to provide yet more mental challenge.

We awoke to further heavy snow falling on Sunday morning but this did not settle. Identification sessions continued through the morning supplemented by a session from Roy on the current status of the recording schemes.

Most participants left around 3:00pm in further snow showers.

These workshops, held each year in good accommodation with lab facilities and ably organised by David Heaver, are a very useful introduction to the various groups of Diptera. I find it is very useful to be able to focus one's attention on one or two groups for the weekend in the presence of an experienced, enthusiastic specialist.

Chris Spilling



Meetings

Field Meetings

Cornwall & Devon Field Week 2001

17 people attended the 2001 Summer Field meeting, based at Launceston again after the disappointing weather last year.

Despite the earlier outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) our very efficient Field Meetings Organiser had arranged access permission to a large number of sites, with the addition of some from the Woodland Trust which were not available last year. FMD regulations were strictly adhered to and we are indebted to the school staff who generously provided a laundry service so field clothing could be washed rapidly. Fortunately the access restrictions were being lifted as the meeting began and apart from avoiding sites where there was the possibility of encountering susceptible livestock the meeting was not significantly affected by the FMD crisis.

The helpful staff and the food at St Joseph's School (and the adjacent Guest House) were again up to the standard set last year. This time the weather was rather better, although seldom ideal and probably the poor preceding year together with the wet winter resulted in less than the expected numbers of insects on apparently excellent sites.

Among the initial interesting records were the Tephritidae *Orellia vectensis*, *Urophora spoliata* and *Acanthophilus helianthi* on Sawwort at Tintagel. Among Larger Brachycera *Villa modesta*, *Berris fuscipes*, *Bombylius canescens* and *Oxycera morrisii* were recorded. Craneflies and Sawflies were disappointing in numbers and species, only 41 Sawfly species were recorded and the debate about whether Malaise trap material counted towards the Honey-pot challenge became irrelevant as the 2 Malaise traps that were setup during the meeting did not catch many Sawflies (*they caught more than me - Ed*).

Fungus Gnat numbers were also lower than expected, although at one unpromising-looking coastal site where only 2 fungus gnats were taken, one turned out to be only the 6th British record of *Monocentrotia favonii*. Later in the week another was taken in a more inland woodland site, which was also otherwise unproductive for fungus gnats. Among the numerous species of hoverfly recorded were *Criorhina berberina*, *Volucella inflata* and *Xanthandrus comtus*.

To those who had not seen them before, *Ranatra linearis* the Water Stick Insect; *Tettigonia viridissima* the Great Green Bush Cricket and the large Tachinid *Tachina grossa* were spectacular sightings. Over 30 rolls of film were used, mostly by one photographer.

As is becoming traditional there was a visit to a local Indian Restaurant, which was enjoyed, even by the person who tried the unfamiliar dish called "Bengalor" and discovered it was correctly described on the menu as "Very Very Hot" (*and had to use his honey prize as tongue salve ? - Ed*)

Ken Merrifield with additional bits by Chris Spilling

Forthcoming

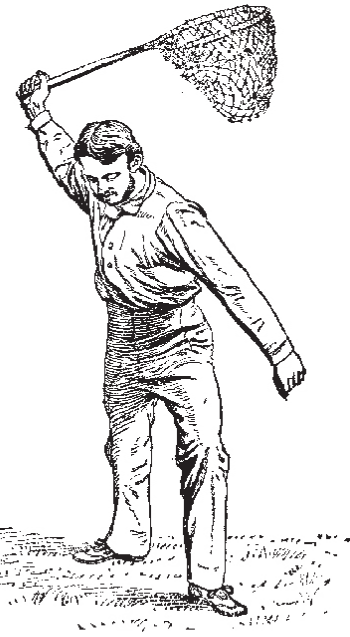
Autumn Field Meeting - Warwickshire

Wednesday to Sunday (10th to 14th) October 2001

It is confirmed that the 2001 autumn meeting will be held in Warwickshire from Wednesday 10 October until Sunday 14 October. We will be using the Moreton Morrell Agricultural College near Wellesbourne for evening sorting; a charge of £25 per evening (i.e. £100 overall) is being made for this facility, of which the cost will be shared between the participants, so the more who attend the less this cost will be. Bed and breakfast accommodation will be arranged in the area. Could everyone who wishes to attend please let me know as soon as possible so that an appropriate number of rooms can be booked.

As stated in the previous Bulletin, the county has plenty to offer for autumn collecting, with soils ranging from calcareous in the south (with some good damp woods) to more acidic and peaty in the north (with some good alder woods). Steven Falk will be assisting with site access and advising on those to visit.

Peter Chandler (01628-664111, chandgnats@aol.com)



Annual Meeting

Dipterists Forum, Saturday 24 November 2001,

Demonstration room at the Natural History Museum, South Kensington, London from 10.20am

The meeting is free to members, being paid for out of DF funds. Once again the bookshop is offering a 10% discount to members, so **MAKE SURE THAT YOU BRING ALONG YOUR MEMBERSHIP CARDS** if you wish to purchase any books. Your card, or a copy of this bulletin will also be needed to get past the museum pay-desk, to reach the meeting venue. To gain access to the Demonstration Room, go to the gallery containing the fossil marine reptiles and ring the door-bell at the end of that gallery. There will be no Dipterist's Supper, but for those with time, there will be the opportunity for informal groups to meet in local pubs and restaurants.

PLEASE BRING AN EXHIBIT IF YOU CAN

As usual, there will be a book-voucher as a prize for the exhibit judged to be the best.

Demonstration Room open to members. Please try to stage your exhibits as early as possible, leaving some room at the back for latecomers.

Alan Stubbs Changes in the UK Diptera fauna over the last 25 years

Richard Smith Mountaineers en masse: the population ecology of Arctic-alpine craneflies

Population dynamics of craneflies on mountain tops.

Roger Morris & Stuart Ball Future direction of the Hoverfly Recording Scheme

Peter Skidmore Flies and archaeology

Peter Skidmore is an all round Dipterist and a specialist on muscid flies and their early stages. In recent years he has become a leading light in the use of Diptera remains in archaeological deposits as an aid to interpreting the past of man and his environment.

BREAK FOR LUNCH

Bring sandwiches, use the Museum cafeteria, or local cafes or pubs.

Informal session, a time to meet people and view the exhibits.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Informal session. Viewing (and judging!) of exhibits.

Don't let the competitive nature of the exhibition put you off!

To many this is the most important part of the day, it stimulates endless conversation no matter how presentable or trivial the subject matter so if you're not in a competitive mood bring something mundane and neat or bring something unusual and do your scruffiest. Just about anything relevant is acceptable, photographs, paintings, demonstrations, kit.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Chairman will open the AGM at 2.45pm

1. Minutes of the last AGM and matters arising.
2. Notification of vote on a Change in the Constitution of the Dipterists Forum.

Meetings

Proposal: That the status of Honorary Life Member be created, to be conferred, only on those members who have made a significant contribution to the activities of the Dipterists Forum.'

3. Proposal: That Alan Stubbs be elected as the first Honorary Life Member of the Dipterists Forum, in recognition of his work for British Dipterology.

4. Secretary's Report.

5. Treasurer's Report.

6. Membership Secretary's Report.

7. Dipterists Digest Editor's Report.

8. Election of Officers.

Elections

The Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer and other elected officers with specific responsibilities (detailed below) require annual election. The constitution (7c) requires nominations 120 days in advance of the AGM. No such nominations have been received by the Secretary.

Ordinary elected committee members serve for two years, half of the team standing down each year (7f) Those due for re-election this year are indicated with an asterisk.

The Officers and General Committee proposed is as follows:

Chairman	Chris Spilling	
Secretary	John Kramer	
Treasurer	Jon Cole	
Membership Secretary	Liz Howe	
Field Meetings Secretary	VACANT *	
Indoor Meetings Secretary	David Heaver	
Bulletin Editor	Darwyn Sumner	
Publicity Officer	Patrick Roper	
Ordinary Members	John Dobson*	JCCBI rep. [re-elected Nov. 1999]
	Peter Grainger*	[re-elected Nov 1999]
	Steve Falk	[re-elected 2000]
	Mick Parker	[elected Nov 2000]
	Stuart Ball	[re-elected 2000]
	Alan Stubbs	co-opted
Un-elected Representatives	Peter Chandler	Dipterists Digest Editor
	Ken Merrifield	BENHS Representative

John Kramer

BRC CONFERENCE

New perspectives in biological recording (16th November)

Dipterists Forum has only one official delegate attending this conference so this item is included purely to give the membership an opportunity to raise any issues they consider might be pertinent to it. Paul Harding outlines the Objectives of the conference as follows:

- Help to define the priorities of individual national societies and schemes and of those that seek to work with them (especially BRC and NBN)

- Share experience between individual national societies and schemes, and others.
- Provide information about developments of relevance to national societies and schemes and get their input and feedback on proposed developments.
- Help individual national societies and schemes to understand, contribute to and use NBN.

Contact: Darwyn Sumner

DIPTERISTS FORUM WORKSHOP 2002 - MUSCIDS

Preston Montford 22-24 March 2002

With the land awash with carcasses this may be a good breeding year for muscids so next year's course will be an introductory extravaganza on this group, led by Peter Skidmore. Peter, known to many of you, is a world expert on this group and has done much work, notably on the "hairy canary" (he will explain no doubt!).

PM have kindly held the price to £90 all in, with £15 extra for those precious single occupancy rooms. Cheques payable to *Dipterist Forum : Workshop* and posted off to me. Given that some of you pay the whole amount up front (thank you) I do not bother setting a deposit as the PM deposit (50%) is usually already banked. Your cheque will be returned if you cannot make it. If you do not want to pay the whole amount then send what you can (tones of a Thora Hird charity appeal)



As usual please arrive in time for dinner at 6:30 on the Friday. If you are new to the venue then I can send you PM's brochure. I will try to remember the vegetarians this time!

Hopefully we will be able to utilise the by now invaluable collections from Liverpool Museum.

Tales from a Doli Workshop

What a jolly time! Roy served us well with ice-breaking jokes and good humour and then straight into the habitats and what the flies get up to in them, and then invaluable taxonomic advice and pointers. Once again many thanks to Liverpool Museum for letting us have the relevant part of the collection to work with and to Richard Underwood for ferrying it to

and fro. Preston Montford was the usual splendid venue and the staff were as helpful as ever, photocopying various bits of key and scientific papers. Derek and I again contrived more silly fly names which may make it into another crossword (we will soon have enough for an anthology), and everybody seemed to get a lot out of the workshop. In addition to my "regulars" it was good to see a few new people attend the workshop. Perhaps the lure of bristly flies may tempt some more of you to Shropshire in 2002.

David Heaver

Diary 2001/2

-
- 22 **BENHS** Tachinid Workshop - Dinton Pastures (booking with Ian McLean is advisable)
 - 30 **BENHS** Bedgbury Forest, Kent
-

- 6 **AES** Exhibition at Kempton Park Racecourse
 - 9 **BENHS** Changing patterns of mosquito distributions - **Prof. Keith Snow**
 - 10-14 **DF** Autumn Field Meeting - Warwickshire
 - 11 **NFBR** Council Meeting Medical Research Council, 20 Park Crescent. London
-

- 10 **BENHS** Annual exhibition at Imperial College, South Kensington
 - 16 **BRC** National Specialist Societies conference *New perspectives in Biological Recording*
 - 17 **DF** Committee Meeting
 - 24 **DF** ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
-

- 8 **BENHS** Insects and other animals in the Galapagos - **Dr. Mike Wilson**
 - 17 **NFBR** Council Meeting Medical Research Council, 20 Park Crescent. London
-

- 12 **BENHS** The changing ranges of British insects: using atlas datasets to measure gains and losses - **Dr. Mark Telfer (Biological Records Centre, CEH Monks Wood)**
-

- 12 **BENHS** Annual General Meeting and Presidential Address
-

- 5 **Fifth International Congress of Dipterology**. University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia. Organiser: Dr David Yeates.

LCES = Lancashire & Cheshire Entomological Society.
 Exhibition Secretary Julia Hancell, 4 Priory Close, Halton, Runcorn, Cheshire,

WA7 2BN
 stevemc@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.
NFBR National Federation for Biological Recording
DF = Dipterists Forum
RESL = **Royal Entomological Society of London**
BENHS = British Entomological & Natural History Society.
 Contact **Peter Chandler**. Field Meetings Secretary,
 Dr. Paul Waring. Windmill View, 1366 Lincoln Road, Werrington, Peterborough, PE4 6LS e-mail Paul_Waring@btinternet.com
BES British Ecological Society general@ecology.demon.co.uk or www.demon.co.uk/bes/meetings/dispersal/index.html
AES = Amateur Entomologists Society, PO Box 8774, London SW7 5ZG. aes@theaes.org <http://www.theaes.org>
BRC Biological Records Centre - Paul Harding

Details of events of several societies can be obtained from their websites:
BENHS (www.benhs.org.uk),
RESL (www.rovensoc.demon.co.uk) &
AES (www.theaes.org).

A useful site to gain news of various Entomological Shows and Fairs is <http://www.buzzbugz.co.uk/> - I have no dates for the following:

The Kettering Shows (Spring and ?Winter)

Kettering Leisure Village, Kettering.
 Contact: Jack Harris. Tel: 01455 444 792;
 E-mail: exotica@madasafish.com

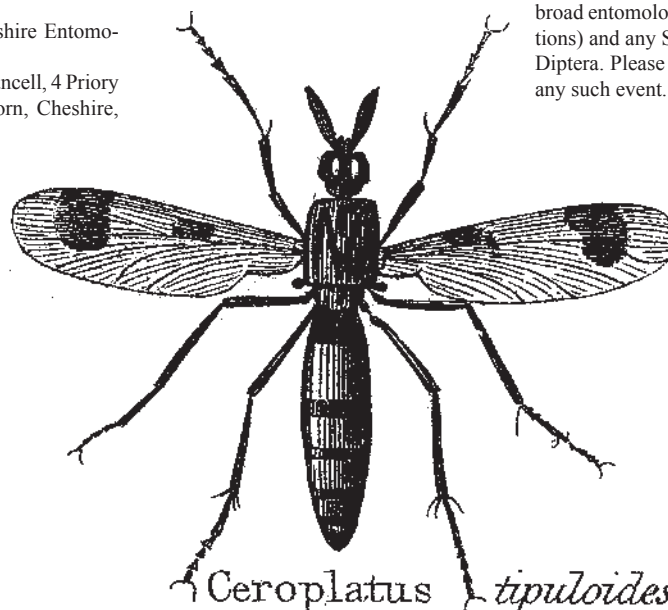
The Creepy Crawly Show (Oldham).

Queen Elizabeth Hall, Oldham, Lancashire.
 Contact: Bruce Langridge. Tel: 0161 911 4657.
 E-mail: ELS.Museum@oldham.gov.uk

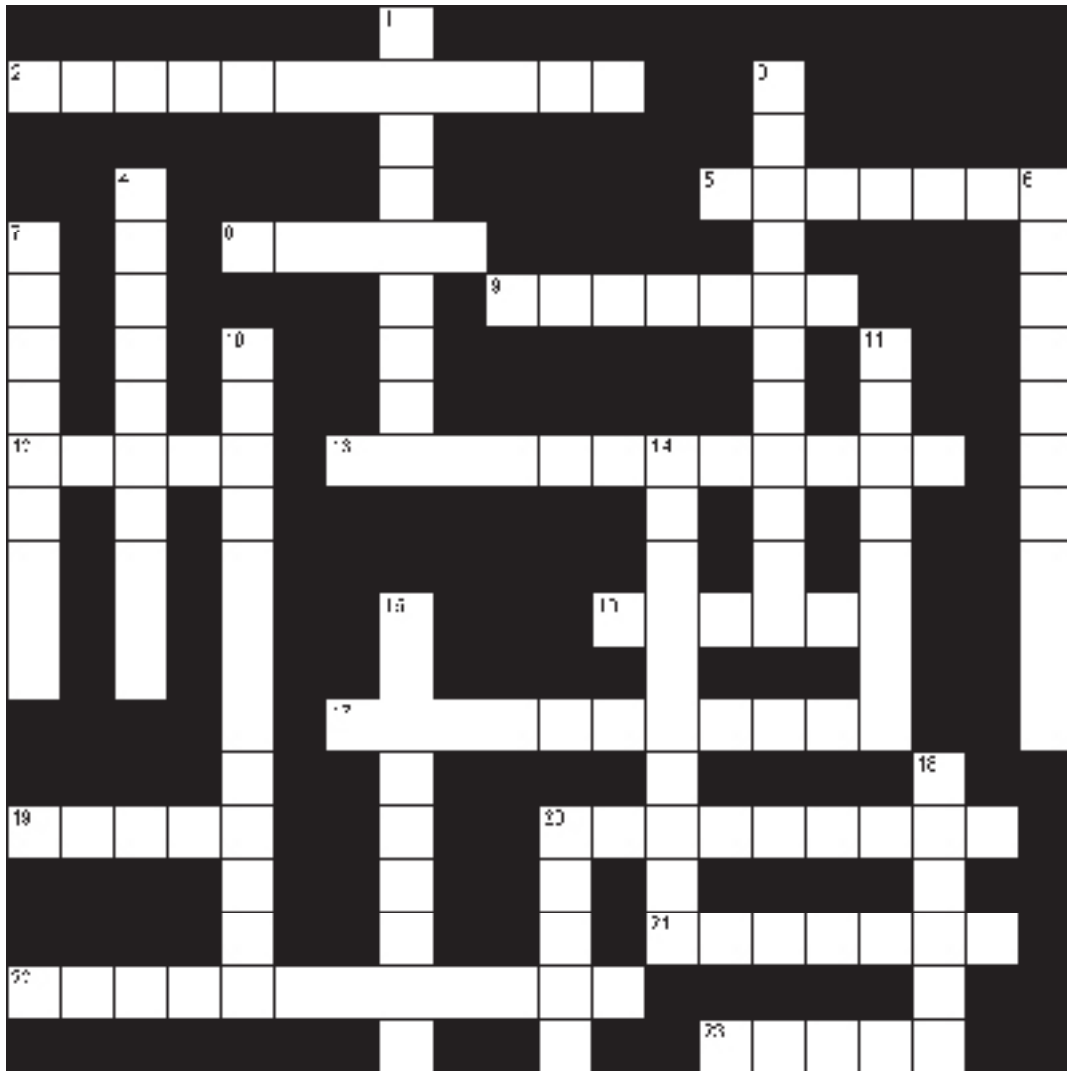
West of England Creepy Crawly Show

Newton Abbot Racecourse, Newton Abbot, Devon.
 Contact: Joe Rogers. Tel: 01803 762 674;
 E-mail: sales@bugsdirect.Co.uk

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.



English names crossword



Empids & Dolichopodids

- 8 The stoned supervisor
- 22 Poorly gay submariner
- 10 Daddies men swear at flies
- 1 A large pan fried - and jump to it
- 4 Small porcine
- 16, 5 Not funny
- 16, 17 North sea funny
- 12 Mike Howe's not in Tennessee
- 7 ... nor is his wife
- 12, 18 ... but he's not cross

- 13, 2 The two-tone headwash
- 3, 9 Stupid fat bloke

Mycetophilids

- 21, 11 The short greeting
- 20, 19 The king of disbelievers
- 20, 23 The black disbeliever
- 15, 14 The red sided first copy

Conopid

- 20, 6 The gut ache

More such clues required for the next one, please.
Topic will be mainly Muscids.

Fly leaf



And now ...

.....The ultimate way to celebrate

Know anyone about to get married, possibly even yourself or a much beloved sister or daughter? Then you need to be up with the latest American craze.

Confetti is old hat. And not environmentally friendly. So why not shower the bride and groom with live butterflies? For a mere £70 you can have a dozen chilled Monarchs, or a pack of 100 assorted butterflies for a snip at £285, plus hefty postage (*Sunday Telegraph*, 12th August).

There are a few hitches, however. In our current climate, the butterflies would stay chilled and simply plop into the nearest puddle. Secondly, lepidopterists are in uproar over the trivialisation of such wildlife, yet alone the matter of releasing species where they do not belong.

A very British solution can be offered. The mass release of bright metallic jewels of the air. The bride can still, dewy-eyed, clutch her posie of flowers, containing a discretely placed bit of rotting fish, so as to encourage the beautiful insects to celebrate joyously about her. I speak, of course, of blue-bottles and green-bottles, which I am willing to provide at £70 a dozen. If you want to save postage, then nip down to the local fisherman's shop for a pint of maggots and rear your own confetti.

If you don't like this idea, I suggest you keep your mind clear and fresh by studying the drosophilids around the celebration wine.

Alan Stubbs

Rem acu tetigisti

I've almost invariably used a method of relaxation prior to setting my catches, this comprising the exposure of the insects to a humid environment created by cotton wool moistened with a little Phenol dissolved in a weak alcohol solution. I've used this technique even if only for the short period of time needed to tuck into one of St Joseph's School's best cuisine. It's curious to note that when I foolishly left some staged specimens exposed overnight to any predators which might be wandering around my study, the selected choice morsels were the two which I could definitely say I had mounted fresh and were thus phenol-free.

John Kramer reckons this is spider handiwork, there was certainly a *Tegenaria* in my house giving me a funny look a couple of days later. John adds that any crane-flies he has rescued from webs have frequently proved impossible to identify since the spider invariably munches the genitalia first. Now is this a "protein in the gonads thing" or a "sting thing"?

Darwyn Sumner

"You have touched the matter with a needle"

Contributors

Many thanks to all the people who have helped out with what has turned out to be rather tricky issue to put together this time. To John Kramer for getting to grips with the secretarial stuff with such efficiency, to Chris Spilling and Ken Merrifield for leaping at the chance to write up those field meeting and workshop notes, to Sally Brown of Queensland who did me a special page to advertise the Dipterology Conference (love the pictures), to Peter Chandler for help and advice to my incessant questions and to all those contributing to this issue and all the other expressions of support.

Please note the following deadlines for the next two bulletins:

Spring bulletin

Aims to be on your doorstep in the first two weeks of March, contributions by the end of January, this is printed in February in time for the March workshop meeting.

Autumn bulletin

Aims to be on your doorstep in the middle of September, contributions by the end of July. Printed in time for the Autumn field meeting and the AGM.

Would contributors please note that it takes a **minimum** of 4 weeks to compile, edit, reproduce, collate 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.

Please let me know if you are about to contribute a Newsletter or other separate as I need to include it on the "Fly sheets" list on the Contents page.