



BULLETIN OF THE
Dipterists
Forum



Bulletin No. 53

Affiliated to the British Entomological and Natural History Society

Spring 2002



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Bulletin Editor Darwyn Sumner

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31 Ash Tree Road, Oadby, Leicester, Leicestershire, LE2 5TE. jk@chezejog.demon.co.uk	
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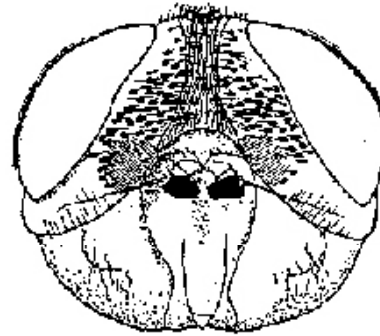
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Articles submitted should be in the form of a word-processed file on disk or E-mail Darwyn.sumner@ntlworld.com Please submit in native format and Rich Text Format (.rtf). An accompanying print-out would also be useful. Line artworks are encouraged. Darwyn Sumner: 122, Link Road, Anstey, Charnwood, Leicestershire LE7 7BX. 0116 212 5075; Biological Records Officer at Leicestershire Environmental



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Forum News

Editorial

Darwyn Sumner

Those accustomed to pulling their Bulletins apart to file Newsletters separately might have a bit of a problem with this issue. My apologies for this, we are trying out a commercial printer this time and the job has had to be kept fairly straightforward. I've incorporated a range of illustrations in the issue in order to assess the feasibility of using better quality pictures via this type of reprographics. We've not paid for anything fancy but authors may wish to examine the colour diagram (page 11, Hoverfly newsletter) and the monochrome one on page 10. If the reproduction is acceptable then they may wish to consider the inclusion of this type of illustration in future issues if we decide to adopt this method again.

Microscopical Show at Northampton

Northamptonshire Natural History Society and Field Club hold an annual exhibition of Microscopy. I recall going to one of these many years ago and if they have continued in the same vein, dipterists may well be interested in attending their 8th June exhibition in The Humfrey Rooms, 10 Castilian Terrace, Northampton NN1 1LD this year if the weather is preventing you from field work. This meeting attracts microscopists from many microscopical societies (Oldham, Manchester, Postal, Queckett) who turn up armed with all sorts of bits and pieces for sale and with demonstrations of a wide range of equipment. Members are part of a thriving and fascinating community of enthusiasts with specialist interests very similar and relevant to our own. It is well worth making contact with them and this event is an ideal opportunity to do so; contact Cyril Sampson on 01604 604529.

Desiccated aspirations

Lakeland Limited provide a couple of items which might be of interest to collectors. The first, in their latest home shopping catalogue is marketed as a "Spider Catcher", a hand-held device in the form of a battery-operated vacuum cleaner (38cm) to which is attached a long plastic cylinder which is to be pointed at the offending spider. It looks like a short, fat Star Wars light sabre. It purports to catch flies and wasps in flight so it seems as though it might be powerful enough to Hoover out the contents of a sweep net if adapted with a bung and narrower entrance tubing. You'll certainly find me wielding one of these things this season; far better to poke this at a bag full of biting flies than my head. Theirs is the catalogue which prints satisfied customers' letters alongside their products, what are our chances of getting something along the lines of "Thank you very much for the Spider Catcher, with the simple addition of a bung and tube I was able to outpoot Peter Chandler at the recent Dipterist Field Week in Scotland - and all without a single fly bite. Mr. L. Flywalker, Leicester." published in the next one?

In their Chester shop I found "Lock & Lock" boxes which claim (and seem) to be absolutely airtight. They are tough translucent sandwich-type boxes in a range which includes 10 x 13 x 5 cm and 20 x 13 x 7 cm. The lid has an integral rubber gasket which squeezes firmly onto the base via four elephant ear shaped flaps which fold down and lock onto it. I've used them for several purposes already, keeping material moist, desiccating specimens and they are just perfect for putting suspect items through the freezer for disinfection; no doubt larval hunters will be able to transport wet material more safely with them. Contact Lakeland Limited at Alexandra Buildings, Windermere, Cumbria, LA23 1BQ, in Chester: 5 Eastgate Row North (tel. 01244 313758) or at www.lakelandlimited.co.uk



Why slurp?

Spotty map lovers everywhere will be intrigued to learn of "*The unified neutral theory of biodiversity and biogeography*". In this, Stephen P. Hubbell uses complex computer modelling to arrive at a simple set of 4 variables which predict, for any given place and life form, how many species will coexist and in what abundance. As we stand in some field, fen or wood, clutching our prize rare beast and wonder why it occurs here and not elsewhere, we can now add Hubbell's variables to our musings: firstly the total number of individuals of our favoured taxon in the area under study (a measure of the suitability of the area for our taxon), secondly the overall number of individuals of our taxon in the wider world (mainly, but not exclusively, mainland UK), thirdly the rate at which individuals migrate into our study area and fourthly the rate at which new species arise within the wider world. From the flies' point of view it simply boils down to "I'm wandering about, looking for a new home; here's somewhere suitable, I'll settle here". No other factors are involved. Great concept, but now devise a survey to test it!

Darwyn Sumner

News from the schemes

Hoverfly Recording Scheme

David Iliff

Newsletter number 33 included with this bulletin

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

Larger Brachycera Recording Scheme

Simon Hayhow

Newsletter number 20 included with this bulletin

Simon Hayhow, 15 Brookfield Road, Thornton Cleveleys, Lancashire FY5 4DR

Cranefly Recording Scheme

Newsletter 11

Seemingly you are all demanding that I should be manacled and caged until British Craneflies is completed and sitting (hopefully not idly?) on your book-shelves.

If only life were so simple, and the delay is not all my fault. The people to blame are those who are purchasing British Hoverflies at such a rate that the book will be out of print again by mid summer. A straight reprint of an outdated 1983 text, with yet more cumbersome bolt-ons is not acceptable. Thus I plead a cranefly sabbatical for just a few more months (mercifully hoverfly lead editing is off my plate thanks to Stuart Ball & Roger Morris).

Do not despair, there has been progress, including advancing some of the cranefly text. Fortunately CCW has undertaken to process the Welsh data mountain.

Here I simply dust down some notes already at hand, add scene news, and at least keep the ball rolling.

A reminder may be appropriate that John Kramer is now a co-organiser with me for the recording scheme. I hope soon to transfer to him a stock-pile of spare sets of test keys so that he can respond to requests for keys, and he is the person to approach first with the easier requests for help with identifications and advice.

Current News on tackling the data mountain

Mike Howe is seeing through the processing of Welsh data at CCW (on the back of the Lipsotrix Species Action Plans). A pilot batch of records for a few southern Welsh counties were processed onto Recorder last year, about 5000 records, and a second larger batch was also largely finished that year. In early January 2001, Mike bravely lugged a heavy rucksack of further BRC cards and records sheets from Peterborough to Bangor, including the results of a number of field meetings. That should take 'a little longer' to process as opportunity arises (and same records apart from craneflies on the sheets is also being entered).

There will be a call for any other Welsh data in due course in order to mop up on data held by other recorders, but that will have to await 'the rucksack' being empty. Taken in conjunction with the Welsh Wetlands Survey data (mid 1980s), an atlas for the craneflies of Wales should be possible within say a couple of years.

The prospect that the enormous data mountain for Wales is being tackled is a considerable relief and gives some encouragement that perhaps somehow the 'alpine range' of data for the rest of Britain can be tackled. The Dipterists Forum has backed the priority to sort out the data for this scheme, noting that preparation of a book on craneflies is about to accelerate. John Kramer, in his capacity of Secretary of the Dipterists Forum, is clarifying what is meant by the NBN (National Biodiversity Network) being able to assist in gaining resources to process data and advance schemes (a matter relevant to all schemes)

One job lot is to put on computer the data from the Natural History Museum (material checked and accessions identified), which has now been abstracted onto cards (updating and extending abstraction for long-palped craneflies made by Tony Hutson and

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

Conopidae, Lonchopteridae and Otitidae

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

Culicidae - Mosquitoes

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

Dixidae - Meniscus midges

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

Drosophilidae - Fruit Flies

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

Larger Brachycera

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

Mycetophilidae and allies - Fungus gnats

Mr P J Chandler
606B Berryfield Lane, Melksham, Wilts SN12 6EL (01225-708339, chandgnats@aol.com)

Sciomyzidae - Snail-killing Flies

Dr I F G McLean
190 Miller Way Brampton Huntingdon Cambs PE18 8TZ
mclean_i@jncc.gov.uk
Mr A.P. Foster
23 The Dawneys, Crudwell Malmesbury Wiltshire SN16 9HE

Forum News

Dick Vane-Wright in the early 1970s) - John Kramer has offered to take this on. Fortunately data for some areas is already on computer, including Derbyshire and the Peak District (North Midlands Cranefly Group) and Kent (Laurence Clemons), incorporating back-log data from the national scheme. Also, some individuals have a fair amount of data on computer for their home area and various travels (Ken Merrifield is one such person I know of). This all helps make the target of a GB atlas achievable but there is a long way to go. It would be helpful to know who holds data on computer if it is likely that I remain unaware of this (replies to John Kramer).

The earlier call for help in processing data drew limited response. Perhaps there would be more enthusiasm for data for areas of personal interest.

Progress with literature abstraction (year dot till 2000)

I am about 95% complete on the main national entomological journals, plus those of the British Ecological Society. It is mainly a matter of adding data for very large papers and completing the last few years in some cases. Abstracts include ecological and life history information.

In addition much of the Naturalist (Yorkshire Naturalists Union) has been abstracted as 'illegible' written notes, but some still remains to be typed in. Presumably it will have to be a separate operation to format or reenter data onto a Recorder compatible database, but at least the raw information is assembled on computer word files with annotation as regards the frequent horrors of interpreting reliability (timing of splits, apparent det. errors etc.) and current name.

The final dusting down of this project has been on hold for the last hectic couple of years. Before letting-go of my London base, I diverted priority to abstracting the Natural History Museum collection data (having already done most of the literature abstraction that was dependent of London libraries).

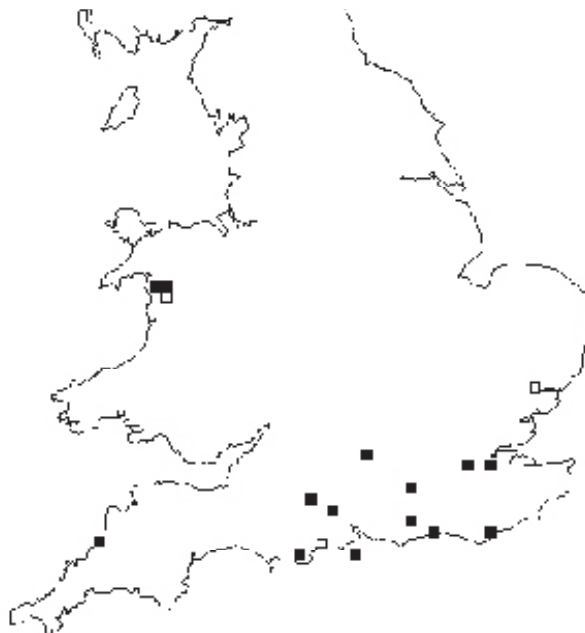
Advances with mapping distribution

The recording scheme officially started in 1973, though active recording began well before. The Long-palped cranefly atlas, published by BRC in 1992 was based on manually plotted maps submitted to them at the end of 1984. Subsequent to 1984, there is now a further 16 years of data accumulation. By extrapolation, there is probably 70% more data, reflecting perhaps 50% more dots including areas that were previously weakly covered.

The widespread species have been gaining a better density picture. For seemingly localised or scarce species, there have been some major new insights into distribution patterns, stemming from more recording manpower and opportunity to record at previously missed localities or times of year.

In some cases, having cracked the problem of not knowing the ecology of a species, records start to pile in. A few obvious cases come to mind:-

Tipula helvola distribution data is now much improved (see accompanying maps). Why is it that neither Verrall (nor Collin) found it in the Weald ('Tunbridge Wells') or the Newmarket-Breck area (Verrall in particular did a lot of work in revising the British list a hundred years ago)? Why is it that it was so rarely found in the 1960s and 70s? For instance, the Cranefly Recording Scheme meeting in 1975 based at Rogate, West Sussex, had a collecting blitz group of 20 concentrating on craneflies for a week (and including Tony Hutson and Dick-Vane Wright then up to scratch as specialists), yet no records at the right time of year. The Norfolk meeting in the 1990s had no problem finding this species, with even novices coming in with specimens. The current map (at short notice there are some records still to build in, such as near Wrexham) reflects my recording blitzes in East Anglia and the West Weald, where success can usually be achieved on site in the matter of minutes (dryish or moist woodland), but in the Peterborough area it has taken some dogged determination to prove the presence of the species. My prized record is for the dry edge of Chippenham Fen (a favourite place of Verrall and Collin). I have been amazed at how many other people have been finding the species



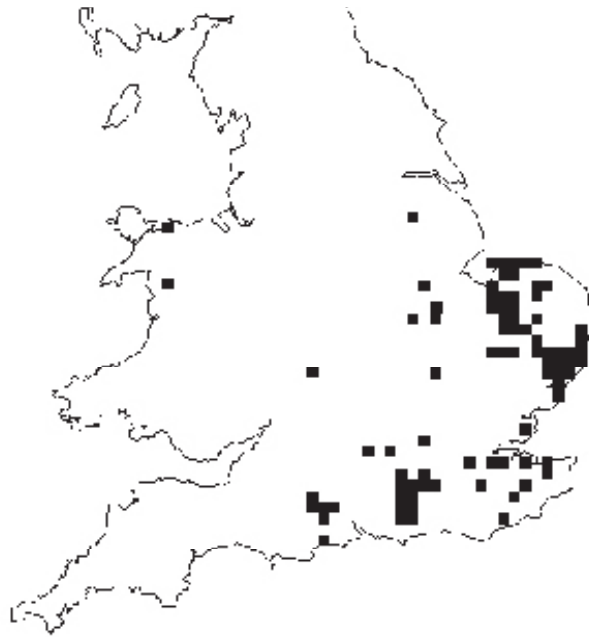
in the Weald and elsewhere. My feeling is that this southern *Lunaticipula*, a specialist on dry soils, has become more plentiful and possibly more widespread, as a result of the warmer weather of recent decades.

These maps illustrate the marked improvement in distribution data for *T. helvola*, a species of dry and moist woodland, mainly on sandy soils. The sandy Drift districts of Norfolk and Suffolk prove to be a previously unrecognised stronghold.

Sandy areas in the Weald are also favourable. It seem likely that this species has thrived in the warmer climate of recent decades and became easier to find by novices and specialists alike. See main text for further details.

Prionocera subserricornis ecology is now known - deep shade alder-lined ditches full of peaty slurr (why bother with jargon, and I suspect there is no better technical term). This very great Norfolk rarity is now known to occur in a scatter of localities across to the Cheshire Plain in the West Midlands.

Ctenophora flaveolata has been turning up far more widely than expected in the south and Wales, but is still a rarely recorded beast. It was bred from pupae in a very rotten fallen truck in Devon, the first break-through on its ecology- tantalisingly larvae still unknown/undescribed !



Sepsidae

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

Hoverflies

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

Tachinid

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

Tephritid Flies

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

Tipuloidea & Ptychopteridae - Cranefly

Mr A E Stubbs
181 Broadway Peterborough PE1 4DS
co-organiser:
John Kramer
31 Ash Tree Road
Oadby, Leicester, LE2 5TE

Anthomyiidae

Mr Michael Ackland
mackland@btinternet.com
4 The Moors Kidlington Oxfordshire OX5 2AJ

Chironomidae

Dr P.P. Roper
South View Sedlescombe Battle East Sussex
TN33 0PE

Empidid and Dolichopodid

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

Pipunculidae

Mr A E Stubbs
Mr Michael Ackland

Simuliidae

Dr R. Crosskey
c/o Dept of Entomology Natural History Museum
Cromwell Road London SW7 5BD

Stilt & Stalk Fly

Mr. D. Sumner

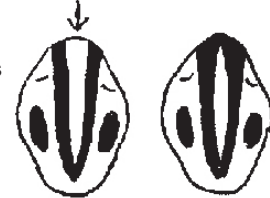
Forum News

IDENTIFICATION HINTS

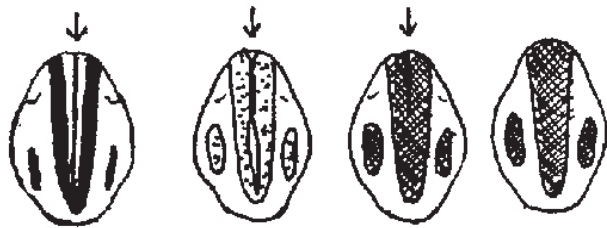
Identification hints 1 - key to subgenera of *Tipula*

Couplet 9 seem to have been causing anguish. In the version below, 9a now includes the case where the median stripes are mainly separated but meet at the front margin, and 9b text has been clarified and the left figure touched up. Hopefully this now works in all circumstances, but if not, then please say.

9----- Praescutum (top or thorax) with a pale median line clearly separating the subdorsal stripes at least in the front three quarters, though may meet at front



-----⁻¹¹ Praescutum dark on median line, either with a thin median dark line (at least locally developed, partially or intermittently or as a broad dark median stripe)



----- 10

Identification hints 2 - *Dicranomyia* with a dark stigma

Note that *D. autumnalis* with a very dark stigma can be misidentified as *D. nigristigma*. The males of both species have a long beak to the styles of the genitalia, with a pair of widely spaced spines. However, the beak is simple on *autumnalis* but complex in *nigristigma* (see test key illustrations). Errors in using the key may occur when dried specimens of *autumnalis* have the ventral genital process angled horizontally rather than angled downwards.

Identification hints 3 - *Tricyphona*

There were some errors in the NHM collection so some further notes may be helpful, including characters for female ovipositors.

In *immaculata*, the ovipositor is relative short, gently curving up soon after the base. In this common species, the thorax has a broad dark median stripe, even when viewed from in front.

The other 2 species, *schummeli* and *unicolor* have a much longer ovipositor, being fairly straight for some distance before curving up. These species have the dark median thoracic stripe divided by a thin axial line of grey dust, most obvious when seen from in front.

In *schummeli*, the central dark stripes are black and particularly shining, and the abdomen has blackish sand-shining sternites. The fused section of R_{4+5} is of course particularly short in this species.

In *unicolor*, the central dark stripes are dull with heavy dusting and the sternites and also very dull dusted.

To my surprise, the NHM has a female unicolor from Chippenham Fen (1965) and another from the Norfolk Broads (1966). The ecology of this elusive species is very poorly known, most previous records being from Scotland.

Alan Stubbs 181 Broadway, Peterborough PE1 4DS

Tephritid Flies Recording Scheme

Last year I reported on Richard Jones' exciting rediscovery of *Rhagoletis meigenii* (Loew), after a hundred years' absence, at Battersea Park in London. Pride of place this year must go to Jonty Denton's record of *Trupanea amoena* at Black Ven, Charmouth, Dorset on 26th June 2000 (Denton, J.S. 2001 Rare and uncommon Diptera in England and Wales, 2000. *Dipterists Digest (Second series)* 8: 27-30). The last record for the species was from Dawlish, Devon on 13th June 1958 by L.H. Woollatt and the Aldborough, Suffolk record was on 15th July 1894. However it appears to be the fourth British record and not the third as there is an undated record by A. Thornley from Cirencester, Glos.

Jon Cole, Andrew Halstead and Adam Wright have already sent me their records from 2001 and these contain data for 38 species. Adam found *Chetostoma curvinerve* at Borthwood Copse on the Isle of Wight in February and all took *Acanthiophilus helianthi* from vice-counties 2, 4 and 10. Jon found *Terellia vectensis* and *Urophora spoliata* at Tintagel, Cornwall in early July. Adam and Jon found *Urophora quadrifasciata* (could someone please tell me why this is a UKBAP species?) in three vice-counties whilst Adam and Andrew recorded *Dioxyyna bidentis* from the Isle of Wight and Surrey respectively.

Two new host plants have been discovered. David Biggs reared *Urophora stylata* from a capitulum of *Arctium* sp. and Norman Heal submitted a specimen of *Sphenella marginata* from the alien ragwort *Senecio inaequidens*.

In Kent I was very pleased to find *Tephritis matricariae* on the Isle of Grain in the extreme north-eastern part of VC16 during early July 2001 just one year after finding it abundantly in the eastern part of VC15. It very probably occurs elsewhere and those who have not seen the paper *Tephritis matricariae* (Loew, 1844) (Dip.: Tephritidae) new to Britain and breeding in East Kent. *Entomologist's Record and Journal of Variation* 112: 225-230 may like to amend the key to *Tephritis* in the Royal Entomological Handbook (White, I.M. 1988 Tephritid Flies (Diptera: Tephritidae). *Handbooks for the Identification of British Insects* 10 (5a) thus:

- 8----- Crossvein r-m with adjacent small hyaline spots next to vein R₄₊₅, but not M ----- 8a
- Crossvein r-m with adjacent small hyaline spots next to both veins R₄₊₅ and M etc. -----ruralis (Loew)
- 8a ----- Larger; WL = 4.6-5.7mm. Posterior notopleural seta dark brown to black. Oviscape orange to dark orange, black at apex. Aculeus apex pointed. -----conura (Loew)
- Smaller; WL = 3.3-4.5mm. Posterior notopleural seta pale. Oviscape black with orange side-patches. Aculeus with an apical notch. -----matricariae (Loew)

The original paper contains other important data so do look it up.

There are now over 12000 records on the database and, as the provisional atlas is now five years old, it was intended to provide an update with this Bulletin to celebrate the anniversary. This has now been abandoned as it is felt that coverage is still too sparse (see map). Very few additional records have been received for Ireland and there are still many 10km squares in England, Scotland and Wales for which data are required. Attempts have been made to ascertain records from the literature but these are very selective and it is inconceivable that someone who was competent enough to identify the "rare" A, B and C did not also find the "common" X, Y and Z. Furthermore this is not the most time or cost efficient way of obtaining information and hence I urge all members of the Dipterists Forum to send me directly whatever records they may possess. I am still most willing to identify collections (dry or in spirit) and abstract data provided the essentials of date, site name, grid and collector name are included and would be prepared to reimburse postage costs from my own pocket if that is what it would take to increase the database.

Finally the following table may be of interest. It lists the top ten areas of the British Isles in terms of species diversity and by the time I next write, hopefully, it will be very different.

Administrative County	No of Species	VC	No of
Greater London	58	Surrey (17)	57
Hampshire	56	East Kent (15)	53
Kent	53	South Hampshire (11)	51
East Sussex	51	Isle of Wight (10)	48
Surrey	49	West Kent (16)	46
Dorset	48	Berkshire (22)	45
Cambridgeshire	45	East Sussex (14)	45
Berkshire	44	Dorset (9)	44
Avon	43	South Essex (18)	42
Essex	43	Warwickshire (38)	42



Forum News

Stilt & Stalk Fly Study Group (formerly the Small Acalypterate Families Study Group)

(NEURODEA: Pseudopomyzidae, Micropezidae, DIOPSOIDEA: Tanypezidae, Strongylophthalmyidae, Megamerinidae & Psillidae)

Darwyn Sumner

Mark Telford of BRC has placed all our Recording Schemes on the BRC's website. On that site I noticed that the status of this study group had been raised to that of a recording scheme. The simple distinction between the two would be that for a recording scheme the organiser should have some form of access to the national dataset and additionally have some useful identification keys available. Thanks to John Ismay I now have a summary of the records of the more scarce species taken from the national dataset which formed part of the Invertebrate Site Register initiative and was the source of all the hard work that Steve Falk put into turning the huge stack of data into the "Reviews of scarce and threatened ...". Speaking of which, the one for the Acalypterates is not yet published but I now have access to a draft copy of that, also from John Ismay. So I'm now in a much more informed position regarding the scarcer species, their distribution and ecology.



Whilst a major launch of a call-in for records is a little premature, since I can provide little in the way of useful identification guidance at the moment, this season would be a good opportunity to begin looking for them. So far I've 323 records and most of them are in my house (thanks to loans from Peter Chandler & Ivan Perry). Keep an eye open for relatively hairless, glistening orange flies (*Psila*, *Chamaepsila*, *Psilosoma*), flies that look like small ichneumons (*Loxocera*, *Megamerina*, ?*Chyliza*) and anything spherical-headed and/or very leggy (all Micropezidae) in your sweep nets this season and you should accumulate a few records (and lots of Sepsids as well but I'm sure Adrian Pont won't object to that). You'll be disappointed that you haven't when you find keys in the next bulletin. I would be very

pleased to receive such records from the handful of people who record in this group.

The Scottish field week this year may present an opportunity to find some of the more scarce species, I say "may" since I lack dates from the summary list of scarce species and I suspect that we will have to be very lucky with the weather prior to our visit for them to be actually flying about. Species to look out for in the regions we seem likely to be visiting, will be:

Cnodacophora stylifera (earliest record 16-Jun),

Micropeza lateralis (22-Jul),

Strongylophthalmyia ustulata (no data), Graham Rotheray has records for this from Scotland

Loxocera sp. - a wide range of dates depending on species - fingers crossed they are double brooded! *L. aristata* occurs there (11-Jun) and whilst I only have information about Peter Chandler's EIRE records and Alan Stubbs' Leicestershire catch, the mid to late May dates for *Loxocera sylvatica* promise some success with this genus
Chamaepsila chunalis (no date - last record 1982). "Probably marshy areas and margins of rivers and ponds ... Larvae probably phytophagous though host plant unknown"

Chyliza annulipes (April to June) will be interesting to look for, it is recorded from Speyside and its larvae "develop within the viscous resin exudations around wounds of various conifers"; a challenge for the larvae hunters here: "Resin containing *C. annulipes* larvae has a distinctive red brown or pinkish colour due to the many frass particles scattered through it. Evidence of *C. annulipes* occurring in previous years can be found in the old resin nodules on trunks of spruce trees. Those nodules that are a dirty yellow colour and with a honeycombed centre will sometimes contain empty puparia just below the surface.", in Scotland the association is presumed to be with Scots pines.



Membership Matters

It's that time of year again. Please look at your address label. If there is a "***" followed by a number, that indicates you pay by standing order and need do nothing more. If there is "02/" followed by a number, then you have already paid this year's subs. For those with "01/", please fill in and return the enclosed membership form with your money, or better still, fill in the enclosed standing order form if you haven't done so already.

We now have over 170 standing orders and this really makes my job easier to do. Many thanks to you all for your patience and co-operation each year.

Liz Howe l.howe@ccw.gov.uk 8 February



2002

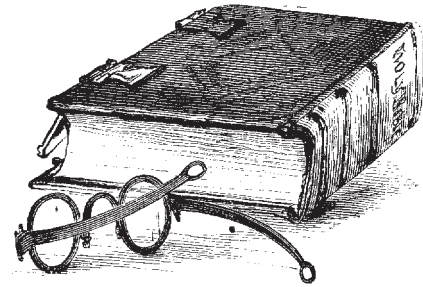
Literature

British Soldierflies and their allies: follow through

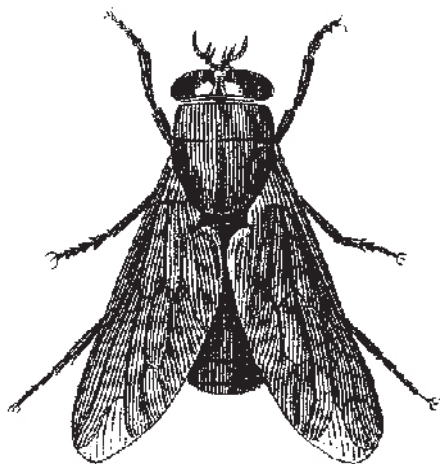
It would seem as well to repeat a few things here that were touched upon at the Forum AGM last November.

Firstly, the book was very much a joint effort involving many members of the Dipterists Forum. Without the help in testing keys and in making new observations, the outcome would have been very much weaker. The Preface attempts to convey thanks to those who made a major contribution to the editing and production stages; the authors cannot claim all the credit. Secondly, if you spot any blips and errors, please do not be embarrassed about drawing them to the attention via the Larger Brachycera Newsletter or the authors.

Thirdly, the book is a stepping stone to gaining even better understanding and a reference point on which to build and publish new observations or to confirm woolly information. Sometimes there will be conflicting observations, implying either that previous observations were incorrect, or equally likely, that behaviours and ecologies are more varied than currently known. And I am fully prepared for the fact that specimens will turn-up that defy the keys! Have fun. To me it was a revelation to discover just how extraordinary these flies are - and I hope that you can share that experience.



Alan Stubbs



Notice board

Sweep Net

Contact Darwyn Sumner on Darwyn.sumner@ntlworld.co.uk

Dipterists Forum Website

This must be the slowest website development ever. I suspect the reason is that there just aren't enough hours in the day as we're so busy dipterising. We've been in the position for some time of having several mimics - surely an evolutionary first since there isn't a model yet. Roy Crossley drew our attention to yet another mimic at the AGM and when I looked at the excellent new BRC website, Mark Telfer had directed enquirers to yet another. A very reasonable thing to do since it at least gave the basic information about us. I pointed this out to him and we've come up with a compromise as, as I think you'll agree, we need to have editorial control over the contents of such a site. The BRC has therefore offered a couple of A4 pages worth of basic information for the Dipterists Forum on their own website. I've been in communication with Ken Merrifield about this and the details of those two pages will be discussed at the Preston Montford meeting at the end of March. Their site is at www.brc.ac.uk then press the wellington boot for National Species Recording Schemes where we have 22 different entries listed (that's one per organiser); you have to select one of these to find the website.

Bunch of keys

Chris Palmer drew my attention to this site. There is some terrific stuff, mainly hoverfly keys, on it. The navigation is rather peculiar as one starts off with a list of folders, each named with a hoverfly genus

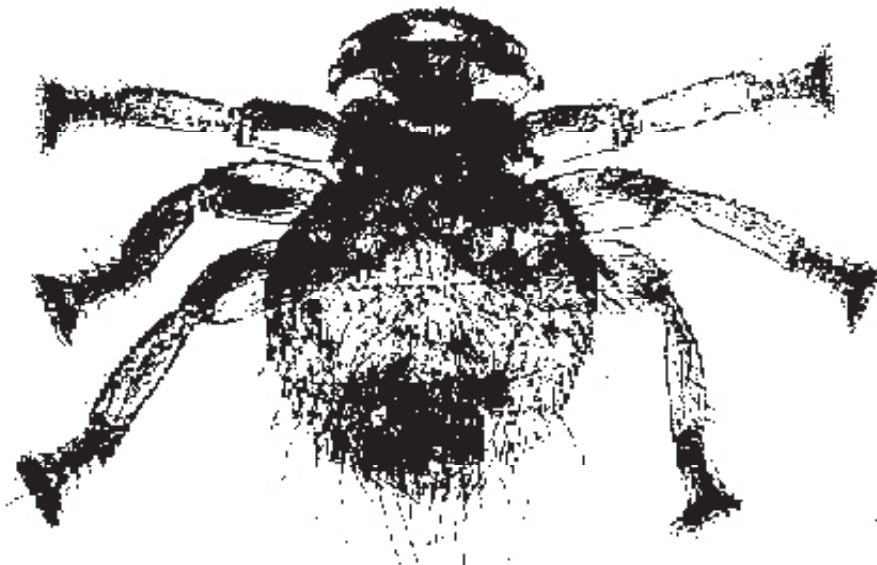
(mainly). Follow some of these links, though and several really useful keys become available (you have to click on the *.html files in order to find these, click on the *.gif or *.jpg and all you get is pictures). Try the one for *Platycheirus*, this has an extensive introduction and a binomial key where clicking the description at each couplet will cause a diagram to display. Mark van Veen's site can be accessed at : <http://home.hccnet.nl/mp.van.veen/KEYS/>

Technology

Watsonian Vice-Counties

The NBN Trust has begun an initiative to digitise the 112 Watsonian vice-county boundaries to a high level of detail (1:10,000) to coincide with the 150th anniversary of their first publication. These maps, in computer format only (compatible with Recorder 2000 and MapInfo), will be made available freely to volunteer recorders. The work will use Dandy's original 1" maps archived at the Natural History Museum and will match up with great accuracy to existing Ordnance Survey boundaries and to historical maps where the VC boundary diverges from current administrative ones. In addition to the classic vice-counties, Jim Munford (director NBN Trust) has pressed strongly for additional offshore segments which will stretch out to the 3 mile limit. Four initial pilot schemes will be carried out in Cambridge (Stuart Ball), Leicester (Darwyn Sumner), Denbigh & Fife to test the set of rules used to determine the correct boundaries. To keep up-to-date with developments on this initiative, please contact your Local Records Centre, the NBN website or myself.

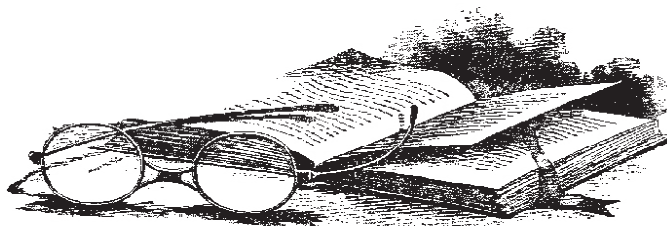
Darwyn Sumner



Reports**Published****Annual General Meeting 2001**

the Natural History Museum, London, on Saturday, 24 November 2001.

Chair: Chris Spilling

**1. Minutes of the last AGM and Matters arising.**

The minutes were read by the Secretary and approved by the meeting as a correct record.

Matters arising: The Chairman stated that, at its recent meeting, the Committee had decided to publish the Starter Pack independently if it still has not been published by Spring 2002.

2. Change in the Constitution.

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

The proposal was accepted unanimously

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

Roy Crossley spoke to the proposal, listing the many ways that Alan had initiated and supported the Recording Schemes since 1974 and the Dipterists Forum since its inception in 1993.

The proposal was accepted unanimously

3. Secretary's report

The annual programme of events has gone ahead successfully this year, although for many of us, the FMD epidemic, news of which broke about February 20th, had a significant effect on recording activities during the season. The Editors of the DF Bulletin and the DD have each produced two excellent editions, and indeed, the Bulletin makes a Secretary's Report rather redundant. Please note that the Bulletin copy deadlines, printed on the last page of the Bulletin, are January 31st and July 31st.

The season opened with the eighth weekend workshop, lead by Roy Crossley and devoted to the Empidoidea, which took place at Preston Montford FSC from 16-18 Mar 2001. Thanks are due to Roy for sharing his enthusiasm and expertise, and to Liverpool Museum for the loan of the specimens. The 20 members who attended had a very enjoyable weekend. The Empid & Dolies Study Group has been going since 1985, and can I use this opportunity to remind members that Adrian Pont has asked people to send their Empid records to him by Jan 2002.

The workshop for 2002, lead by Peter Skidmore, will be on the Muscids, and will be at Preston Montford from 22-24 March 2003.

The 27th summer field meeting was again, as last year, held at St Joseph's School, Launceston, and attended by 20 members from 7-14 July. The weather was good and, thanks to Malcolm Smart's excellent preparation, much valuable recording was carried out. Any records still outstanding should be sent to Darwyn Sumner, for collation. From Wed 10th -Sun 14th October, 11 members took part in the Autumn Field Meeting based at Moreton Morrell Agricultural College, Warwickshire. Thanks are due to Peter who organised it, and to Steve Falk who provided information and organised access to the sites. The weather was the best yet experienced for an Autumn Meeting and a good number of sites were visited.

Your committee met twice during the year, on 12th July and 17th November and the annual list of problems seems to get no shorter. Publications are one issue. The starter pack, written over 5 years ago, still remains to be published. The Reviews of Scarce and Threatened Species are still in limbo. A second major problem is the very large backlog of records to be transferred to a database, in addition to those we collect in the future. I was asked in Nov 2000 to carry out a survey of the Recording schemes and the results of this were published in the Autumn Bulletin. Your committee has decided to prioritise the Tipuloidea dataset, and to try and obtain some funds to assist us in transfer-

Meetings

ring the paper records on to the 'Recorder' database.

To end on a more positive note, the Invertebrate Conservation Trust was launched in March. The Hoverfly Atlas has now been published, (Mar 2001) as has also the 'British Soldierflies and their Allies'. (Nov 2001) Our thanks are due to those who worked hard to bring these about.

5. Treasurer's Report.

The audited accounts were published in the August bulletin. Income for the year just exceeded the expenditure and so there will be no need for a subscription rise next year. In response to the request at the last AGM the Treasurer had simplified the subscription entries so that hopefully they were now easier to understand. There were no questions and the accounts were accepted unanimously.

6. Membership Secretary's Report.

The membership now totals 266 including 26 overseas members, and 13 who only subscribe to the Dipterists Digest. The recent advert raised 2 queries and membership numbers are still rising slowly. There are currently 163 standing orders for payment of subscriptions.

7. Dipterists Digest Editor's Report.

There had been the usual two issues this year. The increase in text in the latest issue was due to the inclusion of the Report of the 1998 Dorset Summer Field Meeting, and also a long paper by Martin Drake. Comment was made by the Editor on the print quality of the latest edition (2001 Vol. 8, No 2) and comment was made from the floor regarding the quality of the print, and the paper. It was decided to with-hold payment until the matter had been resolved with the printers.

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., and 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 are 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]
	Steve Falk	[re-elected 2000]
	Mick Parker	[elected Nov 2000]
	Stuart Ball	[re-elected 2000]
Un-elected Representatives	Peter Chandler	Dipterists Digest Editor
	Ken Merrifield	BENHS Representative
	Alan Stubbs	co-opted

The proposed committee members were duly elected. The Chairman drew the attention of the meeting to the vacancy for the job of Field Meetings Secretary. Also, since Steve Falk had recently resigned due to the pressure of work, two vacancies existed for ordinary members on the committee. The Secretary should be notified of any proposals for these posts.

9. Any other business.

a) Alan Stubbs thanked all the contributors to the newly published 'British Soldierflies' book, and returned photographic slides and specimens to donors. Alan also requested any feedback, and said that the D.F. Bulletin could be used to update the text where necessary.

Feedback was also requested regarding the provisional Cranefly Keys, in preparation for the Cranefly book. Alan also stated that a new edition of 'British Hoverflies' had been proposed by BENHS. Roger Morris and Stuart Ball had offered to share the load of revision. An appeal was made for problem species such as *Melanostoma*.

Also a new edition of the Dipterist's Handbook was near completion from the AES. Regarding the Invertebrate Conservation Trust, work by the Trust will start in February. The newly appointed Conservation Officer is Matt Shardlow from the RSPB and Alan Ramsay of the Scottish Nature Conservancy is the Biodiversity Project Manager. He will run the Habitat Action Plans, including those on 'Brown field Sites'.

Regarding the new edition of the Hoverfly book Roger Morris said that it needed to be born in mind that there remained 1000 plates from the previous edition, costing £3 each. The text would be re-written, new records would be incorporated and it would be some 3-4 years before the new edition would be ready. An appeal was made to continue to send in records, even though the hoverfly atlas had just been published. The current dataset of hoverfly maps is available on the internet on the current Version 2 of the Gateway.

- b) David Heaver reminded the meeting of the **Muscid Workshop** at Preston Montford from 22-24 March 2002. The workshop will be led by Peter Skidmore and the RES Muscid Key by d'Assis Fonseca (Vol. X Part 4(b) would be useful. The cost would be £90 to share a room, and a deposit would secure a place.
- c) **The Summer Field Meeting**. Malcolm Smart said that the meeting would take place in Scotland on the Black Isle, just north of Inverness. Accommodation, on a 'first come, first served' basis, would be at Tarradale at a cost of £27 per day, and a booking form was available from Malcolm.
- d) The proposed BENHS Suffolk Coast field meeting was now planned for 2003, at a cost of £32 per day, full board.
- e) Stuart and Roger would be running **a course on Hoverflies** at Birmingham University which could be booked through the FSC. The dates however, clashed with those of the DF Summer Field Meeting.
- f) **BRC Workshop** Darwyn said that eight DF members had been present at the meeting and that notes on the content would appear in the next edition of the Bulletin. A questionnaire regarding priorities was circulated at the meeting.
- g) **Tachinid Recording Scheme**. The newly formed scheme had 2000 records already. Additional records should be sent to Chris Raper or Matthew Smith. (See Bulletin).
- h) **Website**. Darwyn Sumner drew the attention of the meeting to the American version of the DF Bulletin available from Wayne Mathis or Chris Thompson.

Chris Spilling thanked Malcolm for his work as Field Meetings' Secretary and complimented him on the high standard of all the work that he had done. Chris said that it was hoped that the next AGM would be held at Liverpool Museum, and a formal request had been made to Steve Judd. At present it was uncertain whether the Museum would be ready, following extensive re-organisation, but a formal reply would be made at the end of January. In case of a refusal, members were asked for suggestions of other possible venues. Chris then gave his thanks to our speakers for a fascinating programme, and to the Natural History Museum for their help.

The meeting closed at 4.00pm

John Kramer (Hon Secretary)

President's Report

Dipterists old and new from all quarters of the British Isles descended on the London Natural History Museum on the morning of 24th November to take part in Dipterists Forum day and AGM (numbers attending ranged from 40 – 50 during the day). Members were treated to a range of lucid presentations, well presented exhibits and convivial discourse

The mornings programme was filled with four very stimulating presentations and a short précis of each is given below. Thanks to Mike Pugh who volunteered to prepare the notes:-

Alan Stubbs used the opportunity of the publication of the new book "Changing Wildlife of Great Britain and Ireland" to review the changes to the British diptera fauna over the past 25 years.

The main engine for change has been land management – drainage of grazing marshes and other wetlands (around a million hectares of land has been drained in the last 25 years); increased water abstraction; destruction of heathlands; removal of hedgerows; monoculture grasslands and building etc., coupled with climate change. Examples were given of species that had extended their range, including *Xylota coeruleiventris*, which had spread far south from the Caledonian pine forests to colonise the commercial conifer plantations and those where numbers had reduced e.g. sciomyzids which are now much less abundant due to habitat destruction as a result of drainage, compounded by the droughts of the 1990's.

During discussion Stuart Ball postulated, on the basis of BRC records, that the decline in species abundance had probably ceased, after bottoming out during the generally colder weather in the 60's and 70's.

Richard Smith gave a presentation called "Mountaineers en masse: the population ecology of Arctic-alpine crane-flies" which was based on his PhD thesis. Crane-fly larvae and adults are a major food source for birds such as dotterel and snow bunting. The lack of knowledge about montane crane-fly ecology was the impetus for the

Meetings

study.

Richard recorded around seventeen crane-fly species occupying upland areas such as the Cairngorms, the most abundant being *Tipula montana*, the study species. Through photographs and graphs based on the study site 1000 metres above Glenshee we were led through to the conclusion that there was strong evidence for a two-year life cycle; a large variation in abundance between years and between locations on a mountain summit. Also abundance varies with habitat (Nardus snow bed, Racomitrium, scree etc). It was interesting to see that of all the emergence abundance sampling methods employed, water traps worked the best, indicating that around 75% of the year's population emerges over a period of approximately seven days.

Stuart Ball and **Roger Morris** spoke about the future direction of the Hoverfly Recording Scheme following the recent publication of the Hoverfly Atlas, posing the question "Can the recording scheme detect change". Based on records submitted to the scheme and extracted from the literature, maps and graphs were shown to illustrate the variation of total and individual species over the past thirty years. Deductions can be made from the data, but considerable care is needed in interpreting any trends. Has there really been a change in the frequency of the species, or is it just changing recording effort? For example, the proportion of records received per decade of a scarce species, *Callicera aurata*, shows a five-fold decrease, but over the same period, the common *Episyrphus balteatus* increases by almost the same margin. It was suggested that these trends are spurious and probably occur because few records of common species survive from the period before the Recording Scheme, giving an over-inflated idea of the relative frequency of scarcer species in the past and that this tendency becomes greater the further you delve into historic records.

However, some valid conclusions can be reached: *Rhingia campestris* presents no identification problems and has constituted up to 4% of all records received each year during the period of the Recording Scheme. Year by year there is often a 4x variation from peak to trough, but is this trend real? Jenny Owen's garden malaise trap records over a similar period show a closely related pattern suggesting the variations are real. The pattern is correlated with summer rainfall, the species being scarce in the year following a drought. However, once corrected for variation in weather, there is no evidence of any decline.

Some recent work has been done to document the colonisation and spread of *Volucella zonaria*. Up until 1938 there were only six known records, but it became established in North Kent and London during the 1940's. The early history is very well documented in literature and museum specimens, but as it became more frequent, interest waned and there are very few records from the 1960s. Was this, at least in part, a retrenchment, possibly associated with the harsh winters earlier in that decade? However, the spread continued subsequently and there seems to have been a marked expansion very recently with records from the East Anglia coast and extending inland to the west of London and northwards along the Severn valley. The current distribution corresponds closely to the isotherms for January min >1°C and July max >20°C. *Vinnanis* also seems to be on the move. It will be interesting to monitor these species to see if their spread continues. Is this evidence for the warming of our climate?

There was a plea that all species seen should be recorded with full data, and also a proposition to target recording on particular species plus a study of colour morphs e.g. *Meredon equestris* and *Volucella bombylans*.

Peter Skidmore talked on Flies and Archaeology, based on his studies of archaeological sites. The interest started many years ago with the unearthing of a bog oak from peat, which was found to contain coleopteran and dipteran remains. We were shown how it is possible to identify diptera, sometimes to sex, from fragments of adults, larvae and pupae associated with human habitation, such as *Musca domestica* and *Fannia canicularis*.

The distribution of three fly species within a farm building of a Viking settlement at Nipaatsoq in Greenland enabled a postulation that the settlement "died out" in 1380 A.D. due to starvation, because the climate became very much colder – this was confirmed by ice core samples. A mystery, which at present cannot be explained, relates to 4000 year old deposits on South Uist, long before human habitation, which contain the remains of female *Pedicia rivosa* – a flightless tipulid.

Grateful thanks to all the speakers for their presentations.

The numerous exhibits generated much discussion and three judges were selected to establish which exhibit should receive this year's book token prize. After lengthy debate and head scratching the result was announced after the AGM session. The judges decided that the prize should go to Chris Roper's and Matthew Smith's exhibit illustrating the introduction of the Tachinid recording scheme.

Thanks go to the many members who took the trouble to prepare and bring an exhibit. The exhibits are always fascinating and form a major part of the meeting.

An account of the exhibits displayed will appear in Dipterists Digest (those already shown at the BENHS exhibition are not included and have a separate write up in the BENHS journal).

An additional highlight was the presence of Gavin Boyd with quantities of Alan Stubb's and Martin Drake's long

awaited book "The British Soldierflies and their allies". Sales were brisk and Gavin had few left over at the end of the day.

The AGM was held during the early part of the afternoon and reports from some of the officers are shown elsewhere in the Bulletin.

Two items of significance arose:

- a) The creation of Honorary member was proposed and accepted into the constitution. The election of Alan Stubbs to be our first Honorary member was proposed and accepted for his contributions to the creation and work of the Dipterists Forum.
- b) Malcolm Smart resigned from the post of Field Meetings secretary to spend more time on other pursuits. Our thanks to Malcolm for his enthusiasm and organisation of our field meetings over the last four years.

This means the post of Field meetings secretary is vacant. **If any member is willing and keen to fill this post or wishes to know more about what is involved please contact Malcolm Smart or myself.** Malcolm's diligence means the activities of this post are very well documented and he is willing and able to give plenty of good advice to anyone interested in taking on the job. Most of the activity centres on the once a year field week meeting.

Chris Spilling - with the kind assistance of Ken Merrifield

Field Meetings

Autumn 2001 Field Meeting in Warwickshire

10-14 October 2001

This meeting went more or less as planned, using the Moreton Morrell Agricultural College for evening sorting while most of us stayed in nearby guest houses. It was attended for all or part of the time by ten people, enabling a good coverage of sites and fly families. We were indebted to Steven Falk for arranging site access and for giving first hand advice on this and priorities on our arrival, although he was unable to participate further in the meeting himself. We were also pleased to see Lita Greve, who was visiting from Norway, on the first evening.

This event was remarkable for the weather, certainly the warmest and sunniest we have experienced. Altogether 36 sites were sampled. Catches were up on last year although not as prolific as on some earlier autumn meetings. Records have not yet been fully collated but we can report that more than 300 species of Diptera in 40 families have already been identified. These included 38 species of craneflies, 6 species of winter gnats, 98 species of fungus gnats and 16 species of moth flies. Muscids were recorded by Alan Stubbs and Mike Pugh, resulting in a total of 31 species, probably the best result for this family on an October meeting. With Roy Crossley present we recorded 22 species of Empidoidea. In contrast to the Essex meeting in 2000 heleomyzids were in relatively low numbers but 10 species were recorded. Among other families, 7 species of sciomyzids, 5 species of dixids but only 3 species of platypezids (plus *Opetia nigra*) were found.

More attention than usual was given to the Sciaridae, thanks to the attendance of Jane Smith who is studying this family at the HRI (Horticulture Research International) Laboratory at Wellesbourne. The sciarids are a welcome addition to our autumn recording, especially as they produced the only addition to the British list found during the meeting, *Epidapus absconditus* from Whitacre Heath. We hope for many more.

Otherwise few rarities turned up. *Mycetophila autumnalis* was the least common fungus gnat recorded but the find of the empid *Clinocera wesmaelii* visiting puddles along the rides in Whichford Wood was unexpected, apparently an addition to the Warwickshire list. Roy Crossley was also pleased to visit WOLFORD Wood, exactly fifty years since he was last there during his enforced stay at Moreton-in-Marsh.

It was also worthwhile to record the presence of *Musca domestica* at the College and at two eating/drinking establishments in the town. Hopefully this will re-assure Alan (now that he has taken up the study of muscids) that it is by no means in danger of extinction (2001. Bulletin No. 51, page 20: And now...) at least in Warwickshire. *Fannia canicularis* was evidently out of season.

Meetings

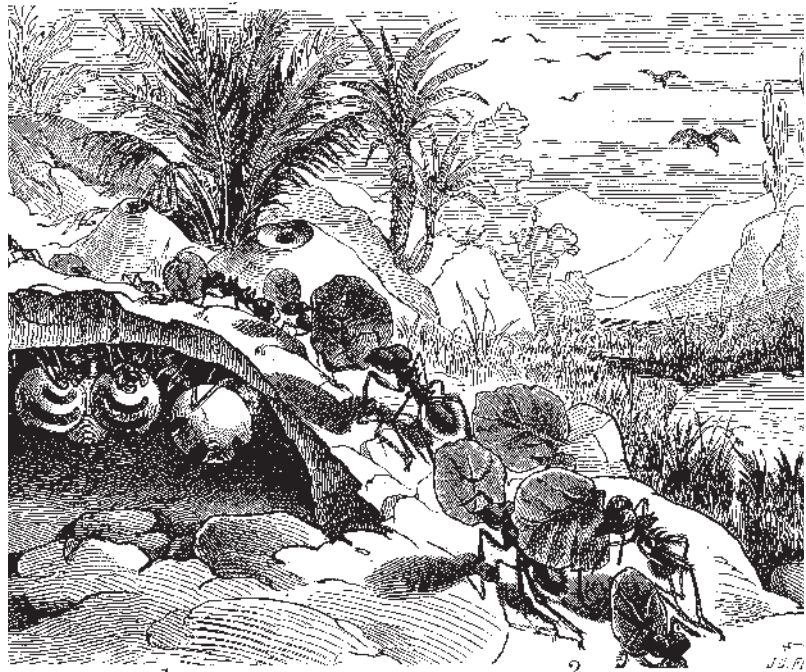
Peter Chandler

Inqui-lines

Honey Pot Challenge VI

For the second year running the Dipterists' Forum summer field meeting was based at St Joseph's School, Launceston. The May-June 2000 meeting was affected by rain and persistent mist but dipterists, ever the optimists, hoped for better in July 2001. Unfortunately, although the mist had gone, the rain had not. Despite the weather and the added complications of foot and mouth precautions, the assembled entomologists were once again urged to collect sawflies (Hymenoptera: Symphyta) in return for points, with the highest scorer at the end of the week winning the magnificent prize of a jar of honey.

In late May-June 2000, 90 species of sawfly were recorded, with the two winners scoring 49 points each. The second week in July is past the peak time for sawflies and was expected to produce fewer species and specimens. Nevertheless the 2001 total of just 51 species was disappointing. This was not due to a lack of enthusiasm by the honey pot challengers - the sawflies just weren't there to be recorded. Sites that looked promising were regularly producing just three or four species. The best site of the week was a coastal meadow with deciduous woods at Peppercombe, N. Devon, where nine species were recorded between the showers. The



best site during the 2000 week was Mambury Moor with 17 species. In 2001 sawflies were recorded at 41 sites (74 in 2000). Without the help of the honey pot challengers the 2001 species tally would have been just 24 species.

In a week when scarce species were hard to come by it is worth mentioning *Fenella nigrita* (Ivan Perry at Penhale Sands), *Heptamelus ochroleucus* (Keith Alexander at Crowhill Valley) and *Heterarthrus microcephalus* (me at Lower Brownsham Farm). Eleven dipterists collected at least one sawfly and the honey pot winner, with 16 points, was Malcolm Smart; Keith Alexander and Chris Spilling were second and third.

Sadly there will be no honey pot challenge in 2002. The date of the meeting is immediately after the week of the Chelsea Flower Show in which I am heavily involved. The prospect of driving up to Muir of Ord the following day and throwing myself into the rigours of a week-long field meeting is just too much. While you are waiting for the rain to stop, I will be basking in the Surrey sunshine, tending my bees and extracting the prize for Honey Pot Challenge VII in 2003. If anyone collects sawflies at Muir of Ord I will be happy to try and name them. They should be either pinned or stored in alcohol; papered specimens lose too many vital parts!

Andrew Halstead Senior Entomologist RHS Garden, Wisley, Woking, Surrey, GU23 6QB.

Forthcoming 2002

Dipterists Forum Workshop - Muscids

Preston Montford 22-24 March 2002

Summer Field Week: Muir of Ord

25 May - 1 June

This year's summer field week will be based at Tarradale House, a field centre run by the Geography and Environment Department of the University of Aberdeen. This venue is an old country house located at NH 553 485 on the shores of the Beaully Firth in the Black Isle area near Inverness.

For those of you with long memories, yes Dipterists Forum has used this venue before ... and we did try to find a different centre in a different location, but could find nowhere else that could provide the facilities we need in the general area we wanted at the season we wanted. So it's back to Tarradale who are happy to have us!

The price will be £27.025 (£23.00 plus VAT) per person per day and includes dinner, bed, breakfast, packed lunch and use of a large library for our evening studies. This equates to £189.18 for the week.

While there is only 1 single room, the accommodation includes 10 other rooms with numbers of beds varying from 2 to 5. There are altogether 35 beds. Obviously, most attendees will have to share rooms, so it is planned to allocate available space on a strictly **first come first served basis** - ladies excepted.

The location is wonderfully situated for access to a wide range of Scottish highland, lowland and coastal habitats; the Spey Valley from Granttown to Kingussie (and hence including Nethy Bridge) lies almost exactly along the perimeter of a fifty kilometre radius circle surrounding Tarradale.

I have stepped down as your Field Meetings Secretary, but I have agreed to act as a post-box for your bookings for the time being, passing them on to my successor **in the order in which I received them**.

If you plan (or hope) to attend, please complete the form below and hand it/post it to me (or send me an e-mail with the same data). It is imperative that you register your interest as soon as possible and not later than end April 2002 so that we can firm up arrangements with Tarradale House. Any enquires after that date should be made by telephone. Your bookings will be acknowledged by post or e-mail as appropriate.

Malcolm J. Smart, Southcliffe, Pattingham Road, Perton, Wolverhampton WV6 7HD.

Tel: 01902 700228, e-mail: malcolm@smart-home.freeseerve.co.uk

In the event that you cannot contact me or do not receive an immediate acknowledgement, please contact Chris Spilling on 0208 863 2294.



Autumn Field Meeting

Wednesday to Sunday (9th to 13th) October 2001

The 2002 autumn meeting will be held as usual in the second week of October. Confirm your £20/night booking with Peter now for bed & breakfast accommodation (totalling 11) at the Butterfly Cottage, The Green, Aldborough, Norfolk for the first 4 of the above nights. Arrangements for the evening's sorting consist of the use of the dining area. Surroundings are very pleasant, the large garden has a sizable woodpile backing on to a good stream (with permission to place a malaise trap). The village, at TG 1852 3444 has two public houses across the large village green for your evening's meal and relaxation and is situated a few miles SW of Cromer to the west of the A140 Norwich road. North Norfolk coastal sites such as Overstrand Cliffs, Cley Marshes, Sheringham & Beeston Common and Brancaster Dunes are within easy reach with Whitwell Common, East Walton and Snettisham and even parts of The Broads all worth a day's trip. Try the Norfolk Wildlife Trust website for other site information.

(my late suggestion was taken up by Peter; please note his request below for assistance with future trips - Ed)

Although various suggestions about where to hold the next autumn field meeting were made during the previous one, ... it has not been practicable to give this any attention due to the preparations for and distractions resulting from

Meetings

my move to Wiltshire. I would welcome hearing from anyone who is anxious for us to fill a gap in our recording or even return to an area visited in the past. Any offers of assistance with site access and suggestions for suitable local bases would also be welcomed.

Peter Chandler, 606B Berryfield Lane, Melksham, Wilts SN12 6EL (01225-708339, chandgnats@aol.com)

Annual General Meeting 2002

November 24th

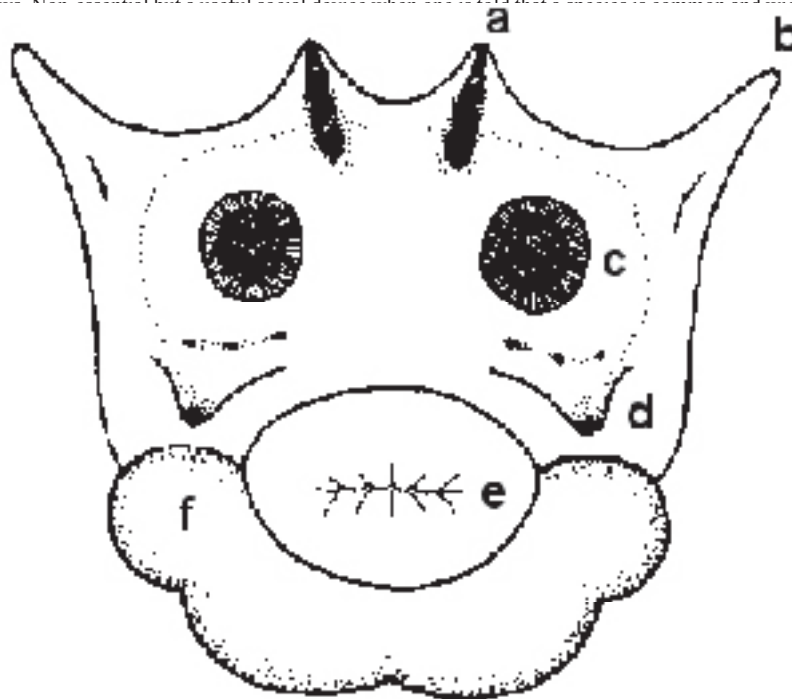
The Annual Meeting of the Dipterists Forum will take place on Saturday November 24th in the Palaeontology room at the Natural History Museum, London. The AGM will take place at 2.30pm, as usual. More details will be in the August Bulletin.

John Kramer

Portrait of a Dipterist?

I know that we have a logo which was designed by Patrick Roper a few years ago but I couldn't help but put a few words to the illustration of the anal segments of the larva of *Tipula montana* (= *excisa*) from Brindle, A., 1958. Notes on the larvae of the British Tipulinae (Dipt., Tipulidae) part 2. – the larvae of the subgenus *Vestiplex* Bezzi. *Entomologist's Monthly Magazine* 94: 241-244.

a) Raised eyebrows. Non-essential but useful. Essential to add that this species is common and widespread despite having



never found it.

b) Large ears. Essential not only for listening to what other dipterists have found but also to alert one of the approach of animal rights activists etc. who think that anyone with a net is on a par with paedophiles.

c) Big eyes. Essential not only to see small black flies on a small patch of black dung or to pick out small black bristles on a small black fly but also to accentuate a) i.e. "Really? This is evidently a very rare species and I have never found it. You must provide me with details of your capture".

d) Bags under the eyes. Non-essential but helpful. Suggests staying up late into the night sorting, pinning and identifying captures.

e) Pinched lips. Not at all necessary or helpful but sometimes inevitable. May be accompanied by the words "I knew this was something different back in (insert year) and now some kid has described it as new to science".

f) Puffed-out cheeks. Inevitable. May be caused by exasperation at not having found the *desiderata* but more likely through the exertion of trying to keep up with Peter Chandler and Alan Stubbs.

Laurence Clemons

Diary 2002

12 **BENHS** Annual General Meeting and Presidential Address
22-24 **DF** Muscid Workshop - Preston Montford

9 **BENHS** The origins of insect faunas on Arctic and Antarctic islands - **Prof. Paul Buckland**
21 **Kettering Insect Show**

25-1 **DF** Summer Field Week - Muir of Ord

8 Northamptonshire Natural History Society and Field Club
Annual Exhibition of Microscopy

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

9-13 **DF** Autumn Field Meeting, Aldborough, Norfolk

The **BENHS** organise innumerable field meetings throughout the year, too many to list here, do contact them as there is a good chance they will be in your area at some point.

LCES = Lancashire & Cheshire Entomological Society.
Exhibition Secretary Julia Hancell, 4 Priory Close, Halton, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7 2BN
stevehc@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.royensoc.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.

Solutions to crossword Issue #52

Empids & Dolichopodids

8 Hybos

22 Campsicnemus

10 Muscidideicus

1 Leptopeza

4 Micropygus

16, 5 Hilara rejecta

16, 17 Hilara anglodanica

12 Empis

7 Lissempis

12, 18 Empis livida

13, 2 Bathycranium bicolorillum

3, 9 Wiedemannia simplex

Mycetophilids

21, 11 Allodia truncata

20, 19 Sceptonia regni

20, 23 Sceptonia nigra

15, 14 Monoclona rufilatera

Conopid

20, 6 Sicus abdominalis



We are not amused - Ed

Muscids next!

Fly leaf



And now ...

.....Gorillas

My wife, Jane, drew my attention to an advertisement to adopt a gorilla. A bit of an odd concept, since surely I am not expected to take one home (what would the neighbours think, yet quite a good talking point as one takes it on a lead round the local park to upstage dog owners). I really cannot get my mind around sponsoring a caged zoo exhibit. And if one is to adopt a wild gorilla, what one is really being asked to do is adopt the habitat and keep off poachers.

Inevitably, one's mind starts to ponder on what it would mean to adopt a fly. Somehow, one suspects that it would not become a local status symbol, even though there are plenty of 'have not's' even in this Environment City. There is not too great a risk that a nice cuddly *Criorhina* on a lead in the park would not cut much of an image, and unfortunately it would not be robust enough to survive the more playful dogs. Equally a captive fly in a jam jar is unlikely to be a good line for sponsorship in the local paper, but if you've got kids around they could be persuaded to try their idea in their school playground.

That only leaves the consideration of adopting a wild fly. A bit short lived, though. Perhaps adopt a maggot would be a better ploy, but even *Callicera rufa* larvae don't live as long as your average gorilla. How about 'adopt a fungus gnat', meaning that one adopts a patch of fungus - this must be a winner. Most of the time you cannot see any fungus (gorillas are equally rarely seen) and fungal hyphal patches can have a life-span much greater than even the most prestigious mammals. For £100, sponsor a water sprinkler so that drought does not inhibit the appearance of fruiting bodies. For £500, sponsor a CCTV camera so that the rangers can prevent poaching of the precious pabulum of the fungus gnat larvae, or the stealing of fly eggs for the black market.

Mind, there may be a better strategy. Perhaps we should adopt cuddly animals after all. How about dipterists adopting all the beavers that are being introduced? We could then insist that they are confined to completely useless habitats for flies. Moreover, there is a valuable by-product since the market value of a beaver pelt is worth far more than a skinned fungus gnat. All we have to do is get the leader of the parliamentary opposition to wear a beaver base-ball cap at the Notting Hill Carnival, with the beaver tail providing a perfect sun-shade - the press and fashion magazines would go 'wild' and 'wild' beaver would go extinct wherever we directed. Why did we not think of this sooner?

Alan Stubbs

Contributors

Many thanks again to all the people who have contributed to this issue and all the other expressions of support.

Please note the following deadlines for the next two bulletins:

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.

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.

I hope Simon Hayhow will forgive my outrageous editing of his *magnum opus*. Members will probably appreciate that this issue of the Bulletin is somewhat larger than usual. Since we are paying for it through a commercial printer I've done my best to keep the size down to something reasonable. So I've shaved 5 sides off his newsletter by reducing his 12 point text to 10. Could all contributors please note this point

point; 14 points and above are used in large print books, 12 for standard letters and 10 down to 8 (e.g. Dipterists Digest) are considered quite acceptable for publications such as this

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.

Ed