

This Bulletin gives details of some events in 1984, and reports on the 1983 field meeting in Norfolk and the last Annual Meeting of the Recording Schemes. Some other items of news and requests for help and information are also included.

NEXT ANNUAL MEETING OF THE DIPTERA RECORDING SCHEMES - 10 NOVEMBER 1984

Please enter this date in your 1984 diaries now. Some of you forgot last year's date! The usual facilities are booked for the British Museum (Natural History) and Adrian Pont will be arranging the Dipterists' Supper the same evening.

If there are any special requests for topics to be included (whether as lectures, demonstrations or discussions) then please let Alan Stubbs know by July. Possibly the hoverfly addicts would like an any questions session in the afternoon to pick up points arising from the Hoverfly Book - is it too much to hope that there will be no questions?

FIELD MEETINGS IN 1984

Main Summer Meeting 9-17 June 1984, Muir of Ord, Inverness

There are still a few places available for this 8-day field meeting, so if you haven't yet booked and would like to come please write to Ian McLean within the next month. Some details of the habitats available within easy reach of the field centre were included in the last Bulletin. This part of Scotland should give ample scope for finding many of the boreal Diptera which occur in the Highlands. The cost will be about £9 per day for dinner, bed & breakfast, packed lunch and evening coffee with biscuits. The sleeping accommodation is in rooms with 2 to 5 single beds, and a good library and laboratory facilities are available for our use.

To book please write to Ian McLean, NCC, 19/20 Belgrave Square London SW1X 8PY enclosing a deposit of £10 (cheque to be made payable to "University of Aberdeen", please). Some dipterists will be staying in Scotland for a second week - if interested, please say.

BENHS Week-end Field Meeting in the New Forest, 2-3 June 1984

This is an opportunity for Dipterists to join in the activities of the New Forest Recording Group (organised by Col. D Sterling) which has been recently undertaking detailed recording of a number of insect groups in the New Forest. On this occasion the meeting will be led jointly by Ian McLean and Professor John Owen (a leading Coleopterist) at a time of year when the dead wood fauna should be much in evidence. The meeting will commence at 10.30 hours on both Saturday 2 June and Sunday 3 June at the small car park in Mark Ash (grid ref. SU 247072) and in addition to ancient beech and oak forest, heathland and peatland habitats can be investigated nearby. It would be helpful if you could notify Ian McLean in advance if you intend to come along so that we can estimate the probable number of participants.

YNU Entomological Section Field Meeting at Otley, 19 August 1984

Roy Crossley will be leading this meeting to explore riverside and upland forest in an area which has produced Eriozona syrphoides, Dasysyrphus friuliensis and a number of rare and local Empididae and Dolichopodidae in recent years. The meeting point is Otley Market Place at 10.00 hrs on Sunday 19 August. It may be possible to arrange a visit to Ashberry Pastures on Saturday 18 August. If you are interested please contact Roy Crossley at 46 St David's Road, Otley, West Yorkshire LS21 2AW.

NEWS OF THE NORFOLK FIELD MEETING, OCTOBER 1983

Despite windy and cool weather for most of the meeting, results were up to expectations with 111 species of fungus gnats and a number of good records in other families including Syntormon miki (fourth British locality), Psacadina zernyi, Eccoptomera obscura, Mydaea discimana and Macquartia dispar. The records obtained give a good picture of the Autumn fauna in the high quality sites visited in north and west Norfolk.

ANNUAL MEETING 12 NOVEMBER 1983

A lively, varied and stimulating sequence of lectures in the morning was greatly appreciated by those present, and good timekeeping by the speakers allowed questions after each presentation. This year the event was recorded by a photographer from the BM (NH) Diptera Section, and a report on the lectures will appear in RES journal "Antenna". The afternoon session included a discussion on recording (some points arising from this are explored further below) and the sale of publications produced by BENHS, FSC and RES proved popular - any volunteers who can help with the sale of dipterological books at the next Annual Meeting please contact Ian McLean. The Dipterists' Supper was as delicious as always, and Adrian Pont and his helpers from the Diptera Section were warmly applauded by all present for the hard work they put in to make this occasion such a success.

SOME POINTS ARISING ON THE DIPTERA RECORDING SCHEMES

The last Annual Meeting included a session on the larger Brachycera and the Hoverfly Recording Schemes. This revealed that a number of people were uncertain as to what was needed. Paul Harding (Head of the Biological Records Centre) was present and he has kindly agreed to be one of the speakers in the morning session of the 1984 annual meeting.

The main points are as follows:-

1. For both ecological and conservation purposes, site records are needed. This means a six figure grid reference for the centre of the main area of recording. Use a site name where possible, e.g. woods, commons etc often have clearly defined boundaries, at least in lowland districts.

2. There are three types of record card

(a) Individual Record Card (Code GEN 8)

This is designed for cases where only a single species is recorded from a site. It may be that it was the only species recorded. However, the card is of particular value when recording a notable species - it is worth giving as much data as possible, particularly on habits and habitats, and filling in a card on each occasion even from a site where previously reported.

(b) Single Species Card (Code GEN.7)

This card is designed to list several records for a particular species. It is ideal if your own records are already arranged under species or if listing out records in a large collection. For small schemes such as Conopidae, with few species it is practical to extract from notebooks even where records are under locality. A revised version of this card will be available from BRC later this year.

Major local records centres may be faced with having large numbers of records of common species. It may be too time consuming to literally copy out all data and it must be admitted that endless records of Eristalis tenax may not be worth the effort. If there has to be a cut off, then for nationally common species one or two recent records per 10 km square will suffice, preferably for sites of entomological or conservation significance. (The fuller local data may be suitable for interpretation of local distribution pattern and of seasonal occurrence, so it is not useless). For species which are local, in a national or regional context, it is preferable to have all data on BRC cards.

(c) Locality Cards (with species lists) (Code

These are ideal cards if your notes are arranged by locality since site details have to be filled in only once and it is quick to mark off the species present. One card per visit is ideal since this gives seasonal data; if a site is visited a great deal then it may only be practical to give a card per year, annotated with months of occurrence or annotated with the year of the most recent record.

In the habitat box it may be possible to give an A,B,C code to habitat types and mark these against the species names. Cards cost you nothing so it is better to use several rather than pack with illegible detail.

3. Remember that the time and effort of writing out a record is small relative to the time, effort and cost in travelling to a site and identifying and recording a species. Information omitted is information lost.
4. The BRC data bank will in the longer term act as a means of monitoring the changes in status of species. Today's "common and widespread" species may be tomorrow's rarity. Thus do not hesitate to send in data for common species - these are the ones that we are likely to find out most about.
5. The Diptera recording schemes are concerned with developing knowledge on all aspects of the ecology species. The locality card can quite easily be used to mark off the species of hoverflies visiting a particular flower. The location of larvae or particular ecological information on adults may deserve use of the individual record card. The mosquito recording scheme has a specially designed card with boxes for many types of ecological information.
6. You can contribute to knowledge even if you do not study a particular group of flies. Some schemes, such as the Crane-fly Recording Scheme, benefit greatly from people sending in samples of specimens (in this case in envelopes).
7. If you need a supply of cards, then write to BRC stating the schemes and the type and number of cards required. Completed cards should be sent to the relevant scheme organiser (who is responsible for data quality control). If you want to save postage, then field meetings, indoor meetings, BRC and NCC staff, local entomological contacts etc may provide opportunities to relay cards on.

8. Much information was lost in the past and as penny units it often remained insignificant. By pooling the combined information of many people, there is the chance of creating a really good data base. This leads to better opportunities in such matters as advancing knowledge of the ecology and biology of species, studying regional variations in seasonal occurrence and ecology, and in interpreting distribution in relation to habitat factors and climate. There are many applications to practical conservation, including recognition of sites of value and the defence and management of those sites. BRC schemes are very much alive and practical concerns - if we choose to make them so.

NEWS FROM THE SCHEMES

Cranefly Recording Scheme

Maps and draft text are ready for two atlases and will be handed to BRC in March. Thus later this year atlases will be in print for Ptychopteridae (updated from the photocopied version of 1982), and Tipulinae.

Dixidae Recording Scheme

Henry Disney, your scheme organiser, reminded us in his talk at the last annual meeting that he is keen to receive samples of dixids in alcohol.

Mosquito Recording Scheme

You are reminded that the early months of the year are an ideal time to obtain samples of mosquito larvae. Its something to do in what is otherwise a slack season.

Larger Brachycera Recording Scheme

A newsletter is in preparation and will be sent to all participants soon. Please send any items for inclusion to Tony Irwin.

Sciomyzidae Recording Scheme

Several batches of records from 1983 have been received - more will be very welcome! It is planned to produce a second newsletter before the next field season, so if you have any items for inclusion then please send them to Ian McLean. Copies of the first newsletter, which contains an updated list of the British species and some hints on identification, are still available.

Sepsid Recording Scheme

A newsletter containing a request for records was sent out in December. If you did not receive a copy and wish to contribute records, then please write to Paul Harding, at the Biological Records Centre, Monks Wood Experimental Station, Abbots Ripton, Huntingdon, Cambs PE17 2LS.

The response to the newsletter has been good, and Adrian Pont is planning to complete the assembly and editing of records by 1 April. If you wish yours to be included in the first edition of the maps, then please send them to Adrian by 15 March at the latest. Address: British Museum (Natural History), Cromwell Road, London SW7 5BD.

Hoverfly Recording Scheme

A newsletter is scheduled for March. This will go to those who are registered with the scheme (check the scheme codes on the address list - contact Philip Entwistle if need be).

The book "British Hoverflies" has sold over 400 copies and momentum is continuing by word of mouth. It is essential for this book to sell well if other BENHS books are to be a viable proposition. Please interest other people if you can. At the annual meeting the book was offered for £12 soft back and £15 hard back (add £6 for open market price). British Entomological and Natural History Society members can have as many copies as they wish at this price. Alternatively members of recording schemes can obtain the lower price if they first get an order form via Alan Stubbs (please enclose SAE).

If you have the hoverfly book, and realise that you have revised thoughts about any earlier records submitted to your scheme organiser, then please let him know so that he can ensure that his data is accurate.

Circulated with this Bulletin is a sheet of amendments and additional comments arising from "British Hoverflies". It is proposed to continue producing such sheets on an ad hoc basis. If you find there are errors and difficulties which have not been commented upon, please draw these to the attention of Philip Entwistle or Alan Stubbs. By all means say if there are specimens which require checking. Dr Martin Speight is glad to help play a lead role in sorting out the real nasties.

FIRST TEPHRITIDAE NEWSLETTER

A newsletter containing provisional keys to British Urophora and Tephritis, four distribution maps, information on techniques and a request for reared parasites of Tephritidae has been produced by Ian White and Laurence Clemons.

NEW BOOKS

RES Handbook to Sciaridae

Dr Paul Freeman has prepared the first account of the British Sciaridae since Edwards' brief summary published in 1925. This handbook is well illustrated with figures of male genitalia, wing venation, tibiae and palpi and includes an introduction which describes the necessary techniques for study (preparation of slide mounts is recommended).

This family is allied to the Mycetophilidae, and they may be reared from a variety of situations including decaying plant material and from under bark of rotten wood. Rearing or collecting adults from habitats which have been little studied will certainly lead to the discovery of additional British species. The handbook is Vol.9 part 6, and is available from the Royal Entomological Society, 41 Queen's Gate London SW7 5BD price £5.50 (£3.85 to fellows of the Society).

Hoverflies of Siberia

This 240 page book on Siberian Syrphidae by N A Violovitch is in Russian, and is illustrated by a large number of line drawings. It is priced at £7.50 (including postage) and is available from Collet's Holdings Ltd Denington Estate, Wellingborough, Northamptonshire NN8 2QT.

WANTED - WASPS NESTS

We are investigating the insect fauna of wasps nests and would be grateful to receive (or collect if practicable) whole nests, either cut down suspended nests, or those dug out from the ground will be very welcome. For convenience they may be put in plastic bags and deep frozen until required. Please contact either Dr Henry Disney, Malham Tarn Field Centre, Settle, Yorkshire BD24 9PU or David J de C Henshaw, 34 Rounton Road, Waltham Abbey, Essex EN9 3AR.

Books for disposal

(1) Rozkosny, Biosystematic Study of the European Stratiomyidae, 2 vols. (2) Chvala, Fauna Ent. Scand., Empidoidea part 2. (3) Hennig. Die Fliegen, some parts of Anthomyiidae section (mainly Pegomya). Contact: A.C. Pont, British Museum (Natural History), Cromwell Road, London SW7 5BD.

ALIVE, ALIVE O!: £100 REWARD

An American entomologist is anxious to obtain a British parasite of sciariid (and mycetophilid) flies. This parasite is an infectious worm (nematode) which can be seen through the transparent cuticle of the fly larvae. It is carried into the pupal and adult stage of the fly. Parasitized female hosts deposit small clusters of nematodes instead of eggs. They are completely sterile. If found, host specimens should be placed on wet paper tissue and enclosed in a plastic bag. The bag should be rolled up lightly to allow for the passage of air. The material should be sent (air mail) to Dr George Poinar, Jr, Department of Entomology, University of California, Berkeley, California 94720. All expenses will be paid and a sum of £100 will be paid to the first living shipment received.

REMINDER - CATTLE FLIES PROJECT

In the last Bulletin Dr Eric Hillerton (National Institute for Research in Dairying, Shinfield, Reading RG2 9AT) asked for help with his survey of flies associated with cattle. If you have not yet contacted him but would like to help then please write to him for information. Although numbers of these muscids are highest in August and September, data from earlier in the summer will be very welcome.

AND NOW..... FROM THE NORFOLK NURSERY!

For those of you who have not yet heard, Tony and Trisha Irwin have produced another aspiring entomologist - Benjamin John. Well, Trisha was glancing through Tony's handwritten card index of Stratiomyidae and pulled out a batch of cards. "What's this about Ben's clavipes, Ben's fuscipes and Ben's morrisii?" It is rumoured that Tony is hoping to describe a new species - Beris teddybear!

Central Panel of
Diptera Recording Scheme Organisers

Co-ordinator
Alan E Stubbs
Nature Conservancy Council
19/20 Belgrave Square
London SW1X 8PY