

DIPTERA



RECORDING SCHEMES BULLETIN NO. 30, FEBRUARY 1991

Details are given for the main summer field meeting and various news items are included.

DIARY DATES

Annual Meeting of the Diptera Recording Schemes, 2 November 1991

A booking has been made at the Natural History Museum as usual - note this is the first Saturday in November, a slight change from our usual date.

Amateur Entomologists Society Annual Exhibition, 5 October 1991

British Entomological and Natural History Society Exhibition, 26 October.

A DIPTERIST'S SUPPER?

Owing to circumstances beyond human control it was not possible to hold the Dipterist's Supper in 1990.

In order to avoid another serious disappointment to attendees of the Dipterist's Day, I have agreed to organise **The Supper** this year, with considerable help from Ian White, Brian Pitkin and other equally committed people. I have provisionally booked the Royal Entomological Society's Meeting Room on the evening of 2 **November 1991** for a buffet supper from 6.30 pm for 7.00 pm. Tickets will be £12.00 each.

In order to assess the demand for this event it will be necessary to have a minimum booking of thirty (30) tickets by June (of which about 12 are already guaranteed) to finalise the event. For reasons of space it will be necessary to limit the number of tickets to sixty (60) ONLY on a first come, first served basis. A Cake will be in attendance.

Would all interested parties please let David Henshaw, 34 Rounton Road, Waltham Abbey, Essex EN9 3AR, know ASAP.

FORTHCOMING FIELD MEETINGS

Twin Centre, Skye and Eastern Ross 6 - 21 July 1991

We return to Scotland and there is the option of twin centres for those who want to make the best of their journey. You are welcome to book for one or both weeks (through priority for accommodation will be offered to those who only feel it is worth coming if the fortnight is available). There are, however, easy overflow possibilities at both centres.

Skye will be new ground for recording meetings. A booking for 10 is in a guest house at Broadford for evening Saturday 6 July to breakfast on 13 July at a cost of £18.50 per day including packed lunch. The landlady is used to field parties and sounds helpful as regards us taking over work space. The cost is £18.50 per person including packed lunch. There will have to be low density room sharing. Skye is very scenic and has a wide range of habitats; the Isle of Rassay and the adjacent mainland are also easily visited. Peter Skidmore has good lists for early and late in the season so we shall plug a major gap in knowledge.

In Eastern Ross we return to Tarradale House, an Aberdeen University field centre near Muir of Ord, north-west of Inverness. The booking runs from the evening of 13 July to breakfast on Saturday 20 July. The cost is about

£15-16 + VAT per day including packed lunch. There will be low density room sharing. The main limitation is work space for about 15 people, though there are more beds. We had a very successful meeting here in mid June 1981, with plenty of good sites, and roads giving practical access even to Aviemore and the western mountains (but there are more than enough short range sites).

The meeting will be led by Alan Stubbs who has previously visited both areas. We have the major advantage that this is the home region of Iain McGowan, an active dipterist, who is an NCC ARO based at Inverness. Thus local site advice and experience is readily at hand. Eastern Ross had already been selected by the Malloch Society (Scottish dipterists) as their main target area for 1991, so the meeting is designed to coincide with that objective. The meeting will thus be co-led by some of the Scottish dipterists as opportunity arises.

Bookings should be placed with Alan Stubbs (address at end of Bulletin). For Skye a deposit of £10 is required (cheques made to Mrs McCray) and for Muir of Ord a deposit of £10 (cheques made to Aberdeen University). Confirmation of bookings has to be made by the end of March so please respond by then (and remember primary accommodation is limited). Late enquiries must take pot luck as regards the options available. If you are extra sensitive to bites from Ceratopogonid midges and other beasties, note that the West of Scotland can sometimes be difficult under certain weather conditions at this time of year.

Oxfordshire Fens, 1 June 1991

Following the successful meeting at Cothill last year, this is the opportunity to visit one or two further fens in the Oxford area.

Keith Porter will be sorting out access permissions. Please contact him for further details (Nature Conservancy Council, Foxhold House, Crockham Common, Newbury, Berks RG15 8EL; telephone ~~063 523~~ 8881 or home telephone 02357 4897).

(0635) ← 26 8881

Leamington Spar area, Warwickshire, 9 June 1990

Steven Falk is leading a meeting to some calcareous sites.

Upton Fields (ST 3861), old clay pits with a rich flora including fen. Regional specials include Neoascia interrupta, Xanthogramma citrofasciatum and it would be nice to refind Bombylius discolor.

Stockton Cutting (ST 4404), a disused railway line, clay pits and woodland. Cheilosia barbata and a good tephitid fauna have been found on previous visits.

For further details contact Steven Falk (Herbert Museum & Art Gallery, Jordan Well, Coventry CV1 5RW, telephone 0203 833333; home telephone 0203 419465).

Wicken Fen, Cambridgeshire 15 June 1990

The series of meetings, which have been well attended, continues with a part of the season yet to be covered. It is hoped that the Wicken list can be pushed over the 1,000 species mark with a bit more help.

The leader to this famous fenland, run as a nature reserve by the National Trust, is Ivan Perry (27 Mill Road, Lode, Cambridge CB5 9EN; telephone 0223 61111 (work) or 0223 812438 (home)). Meet at 10.30 am at the car park near the end of the signposted lane from the village of Wicken (TL 562705). Later arrivals will be waited for if they give advance notice of their attendance.

Yorkshire Naturalists Union Field Meetings

Dipterists are welcome to join the following meetings which will begin at 11 am. Further details may be obtained from Bill Ely (Clifton Park Museum, Rotherham, S Yorks; telephone 0709 382121).

27 April - Haverfield NR, N. Humberside (full details not yet known).

19 May - Burton Bushes (meet: West of Beverley Racecourse grandstand TA 013396 at 11 am).

23 June - Muston, Nr Filey (meet: West End Farm, TA 094797).

14 July - Reeth (meet: Round Ho. car park, Richmond NZ 156009).

10 August - Hart Hill, S Yorks (meet: Hart Hill reservoir SK 490 805).

14 Sept - Willow Garth NR (SE 515241).

FIELD MEETING REPORT

North Yorkshire Moors, 10 - 14 October 1990

A party of 6 assembled at a very suitable guesthouse at Pickering. The area has a great number of interesting sites.

Despite the drought, which was not too intense here, we got some very worthwhile results. There were 55 species of cranflies, with Dicranota guerini and D. gracilipes along several streams. 140 fungus gnats included 2 only previously known from Scotland. The warm autumn helped a record haul of 17 species of hoverflies, including Arctophila fulva.

DIPTERISTS DIGEST - Progress Report

Issue No. 6 was circulated to subscribers in November, and a few spares are still available at £4 (including postage). It includes a much-welcomed user-friendly key to the 'picture-winged' flies Otitidae and Platystomatidae by Dave Clements, and a provisional atlas of Anopheles mosquitoes, in addition to accounts of several new British flies.

Issue No. 7 went to press in November and should be ready any time now. It will be mailed directly to subscribers, and again spares are available at £4 (including postage). It includes maps of Leopoldius, notes on finding hoverfly larvae, more on moth flies, and even more species new to Britain and Ireland.

Issue No. 8 is now filling well and will form the first issue for 1991. I am keen to publish more national distribution maps in this issue. If any Recording Scheme organisers have any ready let me know now.

As a Special Offer to entomologists yet to sample the delights of Dipterists Digest, a 'tempter-pack' is available for £2 from the address below, including sample copies.

Future Issues

Graham Rotheray's colour slides (96) of hoverfly larvae are now at the printers, being made up into plates, while Graham writes the text to his handguide.

A 'Western Isles' edition is in preparation including detailed results on the intriguing faunas of the Outer Hebrides and the Isle of Rhum.

Warden Wicken.
Tim Bennett
(98) 720
Fly. 274.
Kinross
spec
Gamekeeper.
Mr MacIntyre
Ariemore
(0479) 810713

For D. & E. fans, we are hoping to devote an entire issue to a collection of papers on Dolichopodidae and Empididae in the future.

Looking ahead, when sufficient maps have reached a satisfactory state, a preliminary atlas of Tephritidae is a possibility. Now there's a good incentive to send your records to Laurence Clemons.

Finally, a reminder that Dipterist Digest has moved to larger premises, the new address is below, and to make cheques available to 'Derek Whiteley' please. Thank you to all subscribers and authors for your continuing support. The project now looks quite secure for the next few years. Dipterists Digest, Derek Whiteley, 17 Rustlings Road, Sheffield S11 7AA

NEWS FROM THE SCHEMES AND RECORDING GROUPS

Cranefly Recording Scheme

At the November meeting BRC reassured us that the hand plotted Tipulinae Atlas and the Ptychopteridae Atlas, given to them in autumn 1984, will be reproduced this year.

Mosquito Recording Scheme

British Mosquito Bulletin No. 8 includes items on the leg-ring pattern in Aedes cantans, further news on the use of Bacillus thuringiensis var. israelensis, the mosquito fauna of the Channel Islands, and the seasonal occurrence of pupae and emerging adults of Aedes detritus. See also publications below.

Empididae and Dolichopodidae Study Group

Three species of doli new to Britain are included in Dipterist's Digest No. 7:- Hercostomus blankaartensis, H. sylvestris and Syntormon luteicornis.

Anthony Bainbridge will edit the next newsletter so please send him text.

Larger Brachycera Recording Scheme

BRC expects the atlas to selected species to go to the printer in February so it should be available by the field season. At the November meeting it was possible to order free copies; if you missed that chance please write to Brian Eversham at BRC (Monks Wood Experimental Station, Abbots Ripton, Huntingdon PE17 2LS).

The scheme organiser, Martin Drake, will welcome items for the next newsletter.

Hoverfly Recording Scheme

The scheme organisers, Stuart Ball and Roger Morris, have provided the following notes:-

Since our report at Dipterists Day, we are pleased to say that the computerised records held by BRC have been copied to us in machine readable form. There are some 55,000 records in this form; the process of checking grid references will take some time. Progress in Scotland is very encouraging. Ken Watt has more than 15,000 computerised records and an impressive analysis of coverage related to time of year. This initiative will doubtless encourage greater activity in Scotland. Those of us who are planning a Scottish holiday might bear in mind the west coast which would most benefit extra recording effort.

With the field season almost upon us, this would seem to be a suitable time to remind all recorders that we are keen to receive further records. Please continue to forward records. Ideally, these should go to the County recorder first but otherwise we would be pleased to receive them direct. As mentioned at Dipterists Day, it would make our task much easier if records were on single site cards (rather than single species cards). In this form, they are much easier to computerise and will speed up the task of data processing and the production of provisional maps. We hope to comment further on production of maps in the next Hoverfly Newsletter.

Pipunculidae Study Group

Michael Ackland has now sorted out the additional species of Cephalops and has illustrated the various species. Another issue of the Piercer is in preparation.

Trypetid Study Group

You are reminded that Lawrence Clemons would like records as a step towards producing maps.

Sciomyzidae Recording Scheme

Andy Foster has done it again! This time the water traps on East Anglian fens have produced Sciomyza testacea new to Britain, from several sites.

NEWS ITEMS

Conopid meeting at Liverpool

Liverpool Museum is to continue its popular series of instruction days. On 4 May, 14.00 - 17.00 hrs, David Clements will give a lecture, followed by a practical session. In the morning it will be possible to gain access to the extensive entomological collections, by prior appointment. For information and to book write to Stephen Judd, Liverpool Museum, National Museums & Galleries on Merseyside, William Brown Street, Liverpool L3 8EN or telephone (051) 207 0001.

More Museums in trouble

The growing financial crisis among city and other branches of local government has resulted in even deeper budget and staff cuts. Museums are a soft target but they are especially vulnerable since a call for savings readily translates into staff cuts. There are very serious concerns for the future of entomologists at Sheffield, Bristol and Passmore Edwards museums; other museums may yet find themselves on the same slippery slope.

Evidence of public support can make a great difference among such people as local MPs, City or Borough Council leaders and your local elected ward representative if you are resident. Hence if you live in the area of a museum in trouble, or you are within range of one, check the circumstances that may be of concern and then send letters accordingly.

For advice and news, the Museum Curators Group may be consulted via Derek Whiteley.

Friends of the Natural History Museum

The formation of The Friends is pressing ahead. For details write to Miss Adele Carrit, 14A Shelley Court, Tite Street, London SE3 3JB.

Nature Conservancy Council Dismemberment

NCC will cease and the new agencies formally take over on 1 April 1991. For purposes of postal address and telephone numbers the existing routes will still get through.

It is still early days to say much about the new agencies since they have only recently been firming up staff and committee structures, let alone define job descriptions or agency policies. The agency names below are those that currently look as though they will go ahead.

English Nature. Ian McLean has a management role for species conservation. Roger Key, Martin Drake and David Sheppard have entomological posts. The headquarters will be the current NCC HQ building in Peterborough. The Countryside Commission (for England) remains separate.

Countryside Council for Wales (CCW). An entomological post is in the planned staff structure but as yet it is in a batch of extra science posts awaiting approval and funding by the Welsh Office. Countryside Commission functions are to be included by this agency. Bangor currently remains the HQ location.

Nature Conservancy Council for Scotland (NCCS). There is currently no identifiable staff post to oversee entomology, a matter that is of deep concern. The NCC Scotland will merge with the Countryside Commission for Scotland functions in 1992 once new legislation is passed, so a further agency name change will be forthcoming, probably Scottish Natural Heritage.

Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC). Margaret Palmer (a freshwater entomologist) has a management role for species conservation; Stuart Ball will fill the only permanent entomology post and will be in charge of the Invertebrate Site Register. This is a co-ordinating agency, including Northern Ireland (not an NCC patch). It will be in Peterborough to begin with but its eventual location is undecided.

Thus for practical purposes there are two main contact points for Dipiterists at Peterborough. For the Invertebrate Site Register contact Stuart Ball. For site and species problems concerning Diptera in England, contact Martin Drake.

It is also firmly hoped that some, if not all, agencies will in due course advertise contract work in the New Scientist; there should be quite a lot of permanent jobs of various sorts advertised in the same manner.

See also next item.

Reflections

It now seems almost certain that I shall be taking early retirement, on health grounds. In any case my job will not continue into the new agencies and, as a result of a DoE staff inspection of NCC, science has effectively been downgraded as regards seniority of specialist posts. The alternative was to be thrown into a management role with the pressure and bureaucracy that entails.

Throughout my working life I have had a GB role, indeed that was one of the essential aspects when I transferred from geology to entomology in NCC. It is the end of an era, for there will no longer be an operational GB conservation unit (in either subject!). Retirement will allow me flexibility to continue some involvement in entomological conservation on a GB basis and will give me more freedom to write books. I will also have freedom of action.

The assumption is that I will maintain some sort of relationship with the new agencies and that the Bulletin will be produced and circulated at Peterborough in the same way. The NCC address will still reach me.

The coming months will be a difficult period in the new agencies and for those working in them. The agencies start with many major shortfalls in necessary staff and resources. (I have already been to speak to the Edinburgh Entomological Club who are developing a case for an entomologist in the new Scottish agency). The extra money provided by the government is addressed to triplication (or x4) of administrative structures, leaving many of the applied science areas to be properly funded at some later date. The economic problems of this country suggest that difficulties will remain for some time (though reduced countryside development pressure may give the agencies initial breathing space).

My thanks go to everyone for the support given me while I have worn an NCC hat. I have been blessed throughout my entomological career with having marvellous entomological colleagues; special thanks go to Ian McLean who took over so effectively when protracted illness intervened. An enormous amount has been possible behind the scenes in setting a national framework, the response from the entomological community having been vital in gaining support and resources for entomology within NCC. Despite all the shortfalls, entomology has actually done pretty well in getting its slice of the cake. Through the Invertebrate Site Register, for instance, entomology is now part and parcel of the scientific case for making, managing and defending considerable numbers of Sites of Special Scientific Interest. Your encouragement and support for the new agencies, and the wider conservation movement, will be as important as ever. When all is said and done, the only sources of information and the strongest voice for entomology will be from entomologists - we cannot leave it to others to recognise the priority. There is all too much evidence that insects cannot be left to simply 'look after themselves'.

Alan Stubbs

Dolichopodidae: RESL Handbook Out of Print

Following advice that this Handbook will not be officially reprinted, and anticipating that new sales would in any case be limited, it was agreed at the November meeting that we should seek permission to photocopy or reprint it for new recorders. Derek Whiteley received the following response from the Registrar of the Royal Entomological Society:

"It was agreed, with regret, that the provisions of the Contract which the Society has with the Natural History Museum precludes the Council giving you the authorisation to reprint and distribute the Dolichopodidae handbook. I will communicate your views about the Handbook to the Editors, who may be persuaded to issue a reprint published and distribution by the Natural History Museum. The decision will, however, be theirs.

Diptera Collection at Liverpool Museum

Liverpool Museum is part of the National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside.

British Diptera - 40,000 specimens.

Representation is particularly high for Syrphidae, Tabanidae and Mycetophilidae. Cover is also good for the larger Brachycera and Tipulidae. Some families, particularly those in the Nematocera and Acalypterata, are poorly represented. The Museum is actively seeking to acquire new specimens to enhance the quality of the existing collections. The majority of the Diptera are now rehoused in a new storage system. Computerised cataloguing of the collection is well advanced.

The main contributors are:

- H Britten Provided many thousands of specimens from all families, including much material from Lancashire, Cheshire and Derbyshire.
- J J Collins (not J E Collin). Several hundred specimens collected mainly from Oxfordshire in the 1930's.
- P N Crow Mainly Syrphidae from North Wales.
- C D Day Mainly Dorset Diptera including Tachinidae.
- W J Fordham Provided the Museum with a large collection of Yorkshire and North East England insects including some Diptera. Unfortunately many of these were destroyed in the war-time fire.
- E G Hancock Mainly Tipulidae collected whilst working at the Museum in the late 1960's and early 1970's.
- C M Jones Syrphids and larger Brachycera from North West England and North Wales.
- L N Kidd Recently donated his nationally important Mycetophilidae and extensive collection of North West England Diptera.
- G S Kloet Approximately a thousand North West Diptera specimens.
- J H Murgatroyd A major component of the Museums collection. Also including Collins and Kloet material.

Foreign Diptera - 30 specimens.

Dominated by the medically important groups in the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine Collection. This includes material from Newstead, Evans, Patton, Austin and Neave.

If you would like to consult the Museum's Diptera Collection, make use of the departmental library, microscopes or other study facilities, please contact Stephen Judd, Curator of Entomology, Liverpool Museum, William Brown Street, Liverpool L3 8EN or telephone 051-207-0001.

List of Names in Use

The 2nd International Congress of Dipterology, last autumn in Czechoslovakia, came up with two resolutions of particular relevance to us.

The fourth Resolution:-

Whereas names are the basis of all communications:-

Be it resolved that this Congress recognizes the importance and need for stabilizing the names of Diptera, endorses the principle of "List of Names in use", and instructs the Council for International Congresses of Dipterology to establish a Committee on Diptera Names for the purposes of preparing lists of Diptera names in use for approval by subsequent Congress and providing advice and consent to the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature.

The fifth resolution, in view of the importance of the Diptera, asked for international support of long term baseline studies of Diptera in eco-conservation systems.

The fourth resolution certainly offers hope that we may yet reach the day when long forgotten names are no longer dug up to plague us. David Henshaw kindly forwarded the above information.

PUBLICATIONS

Mosquitoes

The Naturalists' Handbooks series has published No. 14, Mosquitoes by Keith Snow.

This is a guide written as an introduction to mosquitoes and how to study them. Keys cover eggs, larvae, pupae and adults at generic level, with species keys to final instar larvae and adults. There are sketches accompanying the key couplets. Notes are provided on the occurrence of the various species and colour plates include some representative species.

The publisher is The Richmond Publishing Co. Ltd, PO Box 963, Slough SL2 3RS, price £5.95 soft back + 50p p+pP. Order direct or through bookshops.

Fauna Entomologica Scandinavica

Volume 24 is titled 'Blowflies (Diptera, Calliphoridae) of Fennoscandia and Denmark'. Fifty-two species are covered in 272 pages, with extensive illustrations; 6 species are on a colour plate by Steven Falk. There are plenty of name changes affecting the British fauna. At over £32 even on the subscription rate it is pricey but thorough.

Keys to the Insects of the USSR (Diptera)

The Smithsonian Institution have published a translation of this major Russian work, in two very thick door-stopper volumes. Though about 20 years out of date it is an invaluable access to keys with east European species. I wrote to see if a free copy might be given to circulate among us, many being amateurs unable to access the official free copies. Details of how to obtain personal copies was also sought. The reply is given below, though some points were not answered - such as photocopying position. No mention is made of postage costs. If there are points to follow up, please let me know by the end of February so that a collated response is possible.

"Thank you for your letter of November 3 (recently received at my desk) on behalf of the Diptera Recording Schemes of Britain. The 2-volume book on Keys to the Insects of the USSR (Diptera) is not generally available on the commercial market. The enclosed leaflet describes the translation program's operation. The Smithsonian Libraries prints only 300 copies of each translation, distributing 170 of those gratis to libraries in the US and abroad. In the United Kingdom, copies have been sent to the British Library, The British Museum (Natural History) library, the Bodleian Library and the Cambridge University Library. A few additional copies that were made available to the requester of the translation, Wayne Mathis, Department of Entomology, National Museum of Natural History, but his supply is, regrettably, exhausted.

The book is available from the national Technical Information Service (see leaflet). Smithsonian Libraries registered it there, and sent a limited number of hard paper copies there for sale. Hard copy prices are US \$102 and \$123 (for parts 1 and 2); and for a microfiche copy, US \$38.50 and \$45 respectively. Orders should be placed for TT 79-52010 (part 1) and 79-52011 (part 2), specifying hard copy or microfiche. We appreciate your interest in this work, and regret that the nature of the programme precludes larger print runs. You may write to me, or call me at 202/786-2690, if you have any questions"

Signed Nancy L Matthews, Publications Officer, Smithsonian Institution Libraries, Washington, DC 20560

Insect Habitat Conservation Book

The Amateur Entomological Society has published a new handbook entitled Habitat Conservation for Insects - A neglected Green Issue. A lot of effort has been put into it by the editors Reg Fry and David Lonsdale, with substantial input by others including Alan Stubbs. It may be ordered from the AES Publications Officer, 'The Hawthorns', Frating Road, Great Bromley, Colchester CO7 8JN; price £9 + 1.50 p+p, cheques payable to 'AES Publications'.

AND NOW - GREAT EXPECTATIONS

On good authority, I am told it is a great honour to be mentioned in 'And Now'. Often it is a passing and seemingly insignificant casual remark or action that becomes recorded for posterity. Occasionally there are those that seek forthcoming fame, by announcing the 499th fungus gnat. Just how far will dipterists go? Well this one takes some beating.

We knew Anne and Dave Clements were expecting. When a son arrived, there was the inevitable polite inquiry as to the name. Before reading on, think carefully about what reply they gave.

Well, the first name is Alexander. Apparently Keith Alexander, also at Circencester, was considerably miffed to discover that the child was not named after him. So was it fortuitous that Alexander was the man who described 10,000 species of crane-fly new to science?

The second name, wait for it, is Verrall. Among his many memorable papers is 'A hundred species of fly new to Britain' followed a few years later by 'Another hundred species of fly new to Britain'. This apart from describing many species as new to science and the odd major monograph or two.

So what expectations has Alexander Verrall Clements to live up to? Indeed what have his parents to live up to! One thing is certain, however, none of you have become an 'And Now' candidate within the first week or two of birth.

Central Panel of
Diptera Recording Schemes

Co-ordinator

Alan Stubbs
c/o Nature Conservancy Council
Northminster House
Peterborough PE1 1UA
Telephone: 0733 340345

and

181 Broadway
Peterborough
PE1 4DS
Telephone: 0733 346448