

NEWSHEET NO 12

EDITORIAL

We are grateful to our small band of contributors and thank them for making it possible to produce another miscellany which hopefully will contain something of interest for everyone.

Can I remind collectors of empids and dolis that I am still happy to receive and hold BRC record cards for these flies? Although a steady trickle of cards reaches me from time to time, I know that there are many more still to come, so if anyone out there with lots of records has some time to spare in the winter months, how about filling in a few cards? There has been a suggestion that a 'call-in' of records for selected genera, (or even species), may be a way forward. Perhaps this is something to be discussed at next Dipterists' Day. Ideas or suggestions please!

Either Anthony Bainbridge or myself will be happy to receive items for the next issue of the Newsheet which is planned for production next July or August. Anthony has provisionally undertaken to do the editing, professional commitments allowing; his address is: 33 Compton Avenue, Mannamead, Plymouth, PL3 5DA.

Roy Crossley, 1 The Cloisters, Wilberfoss, York YO4 5RF.

DOLICHOPODIDAE VISITING FLOWERS OF HEMLOCK WATER DROPWORT

Records of flower visits by Dolichopodidae are rather sparse so the following list of species found visiting flowers of Hemlock Water Dropwort (*Oenanthe crocata*) at Kenfig NNR, Glam., on 15-18. vi. 1992 may be of interest: *Dolichopus popularis* 1f; *D. simplex* 1m; *D. unguatus* 2m, 5f; *Hercostomus assimilis* 2m, 3f; *H. blankaartensis* 1m; *H. germanus* 1m, 2f; *H. metallicus* 1m; *H. nigriplantis* 2m, 1f; *H. nigripennis* 2f; *Chrysotus gramineus* 1m; *C. neglectus* 1f; *Sympycnus desoutteri* 1m.

One male and one female of *D. unguatus* appeared to be sucking nectar, but most flies were not watched, they were rapidly collected before they flew away! I would be glad to hear of observations of any Dolichopodids visiting flowers, particularly if feeding was observed.

C E Dyte, Priory Cottage, 14 Priory Way, Datchet, Slough, Berks., SL3 9JQ.

THE FLIES OF AN ORKNEY SHORE

The heading is the title of an interesting paper by Brian Laurence which has recently (1992) been published as a biological records supplement to the Bulletin of the Orkney Field Club.

Three species of *Chersodromia* are noted: *arenaria*, *hirta* and *incana*; also the northern speciality *Rhamphomyia morio*. *Aphrosylus ferox* and *A. raptor* are included in the list which contains a further nine common and widespread doli and empid species.

Roy Crossley.

Although dolis and empids were not thick on the ground at the Norfolk meeting, a number of interesting species were found. These included the Norfolk specialities *Dolichopus nigripes* Fall. (1m. Woodbastwick), and *D. laticola* Verr. (1m. 1f. Catfield Fen), both species being taken by Ivan Perry. Ivan also took *Lamprochromus elegans* (Mg.) at Wheatfen Broad and *Hilara platyura* Lw. at Woodbastwick and Wheatfen Broad.

Ivan comments that the most surprising aspect of the week for him was the abundance of *Hercostomus blankaartensis* Pollet, and the apparent absence of *H. assimilis* (Staeg.). He found numbers of *H. blankaartensis* at Woodbastwick, Upton Broad and at Wheatfen Broad. At all three sites it was swept from mixed fen and not restricted to reed-beds as indicated by Pollet (Dipt. Digest No. 7. 1990). Other members of the party also found the species at various localities. Whether the species is having a population explosion or has just been overlooked before is difficult to say.

Although the date of the meeting was too late for many empids, a few interesting species were found. Apart from *H. platyura* already mentioned, Ivan took *Rhamphomyia gibba* (Fall.) at East Wretham Heath, *R. sciarina* (Fall.) at Wheatfen Broad and *Symbalophthalmus dissimilis* (Fall.) at the same locality.

I am grateful to Ivan Perry for providing the information on which the foregoing notes have been based.

The most unexpected find of the week of which I am aware was *Dolichopus caligatus* Wahl., a single male of which was taken by Keith Porter at The Nab, Burgh Common, Fleggbourgh. The specimen was handed to myself for identification and I have subsequently checked it against a specimen in my collection from the Outer Hebrides. This appears to be the only English record of this Scottish species. Hopefully a more detailed report of this interesting discovery will be published elsewhere in due course.

The most productive sites for dolis proved to be along the north coast where vast quantities were found at Brancaster in situations where fresh water enters the saltmarsh. Here, amongst the more typically common salt marsh species, were found *Dolichopus strigipes* Verr. and *Poecilobothrus principalis* (Lw.). The former was also abundant at other saltmarshes along the coast.

For those of us who associate *Hercostomus praetextatus* (Hal.) with seepages on the shore, the discovery of a number of specimens by Jon Cole, and subsequently by myself, (following Jon's directions), at the base of dunes at Wells Next the Sea was unexpected. My own specimens were swept from areas of dry moss in the vicinity of flowering privet along a narrow strip of sand below the pine trees and just behind the beach chalets!

~~error. Diaphana africana to be corrected~~  
Finally, Jon also took *Melanostolus melancholicus* Lw. along the side of the footpath which borders the southern edge of Hickling Broad.

Roy Crossley.

#### HERCOSTOMUS VERBEKEI POLLET IN BRITAIN

In his recent description of *H. verbekei* Marc Pollet lists Great Britain as one of the countries from which the species occurs; (Pollet, M., 1993; Morphological and ecological characterisation of *Hercostomus* (*Hercostomus*) *plagiatus* and a sibling species, *H. verbekei* sp. n. (Diptera : Dolichopodidae); Zoologica Scripta, Vol. 22, No 1, pp. 101-109). The male he lists is one of two males which I took on the bank of the River Lark near Barton Mills, East Suffolk, (TL7274) on 17.vii. 1987.

I thank Marc Pollet for checking my few specimens of *H. plagiatus*.

Peter Hodge.

TWO SPECIES OF *SYNTORMON* CONFUSED UNDER THE NAME *S. MONILIS* (HALIDAY)

*Syntormon monilis* in British collections consists of two distinct but closely related species. This preliminary note should enable the two forms to be readily separated although it is not yet possible to apply names to either form or even to say which one is the true *S. monilis*. For the purpose of this note the two forms have been labelled 'species A' and 'species B'. The colour of the front femora and abdomen should only be used in conjunction with the differences in the leg structure since only a short series has been examined.

	'SPECIES A' <i>silvanus</i>	'SPECIES B' <i>monilis</i>
Front femora	Darkened along front margin	Entirely yellow
Front tibia	Dorsal hairs longer	Dorsal hairs shorter
1st segment foretarsus	Long haired ventrally	Short haired ventrally
2nd segment foretarsus	Shorter and swollen basally	Longer and not swollen basally
Abdomen	Entirely green	Yellow ventrally at base

Both species are likely to be widespread in Britain although I have only found 'species B' at one site in the New Forest, Hampshire.

I thank Peter Dyte for his help and support with this problem.

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## DOLICHOCEPHALA IN EUROPE

Jon Cole has kindly drawn to my attention a recent paper, Jonassen T. 1992. Further Empidoidea (Dipt.) new to the Norwegian fauna. *Fauna norv. Ser. B* 39: 73-75. Oslo 1992.

Under *Dolichocephala thomasi* Wagner 1983, Terje Jonassen states, inter alia, "The *D. ocellata* (Costa) of Collin (1961) and other previous authors, has subsequently (Wagner 1983) been proved to be a species group consisting of *D. ocellata*, *D. thomasi* and *D. austriaca* Vaillant 1968. The latter seems to be distributed exclusively in the Alps, while *D. ocellata* probably is a Mediterranean species. Thus, any European records of *D. ocellata* outside this area should be re-examined, as *D. thomasi* seems to be the only one of these three species occurring north of the Alps".

A description of *Dolichocephala engeli* Vaillant in litt. has recently been published, in Polish, by Stefan Niesiolowski: Empididae Aquatica, Wodne wujkowate (Insecta: Diptera), Polska Akademia Nauk Instytut Zoologii. The distribution of the new species includes Great Britain and it would appear that records of this species may now be published.

Roy Crossley.

## A NEW *PLATYPALPUS* SPECIES IN BRITAIN

*Platypalpus australominutus* Grootaert, 1989, is added to the British list in the following paper on the basis of specimens in the collections of the Natural History Museum (B.M.N.H.); Knebworth, Herts., 13.v.1923, 1m. F.W. Edwards; Palling, Norfolk, 17. vii. 1904, 1m., G.H. Verrall (as *T. annulata*); Sutton Wick, Berks., 15. vii. 1881, 1m., G.H. Verrall:

Grootaert, P. 1989: *Bull. Anns Soc. r. belge Ent.* 125 (1989): 243-250. 'Description of a new *Platypalpus* species, closely allied to *P. minutus* Meigen (Diptera Empidoidea Hybotidae) from Europe.'

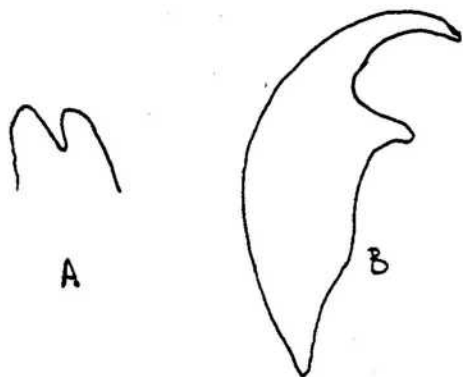
*P. australominutus* is very similar to *P. minutus*. In Europe both species generally occur together and they can only be distinguished in the male by the structure of the hypopygium. It is not possible to separate the females.

Since receiving a copy of Dr Grootaert's paper I have examined specimens of *P. 'minutus'* collected this season. The majority have proved to be the true *minutus*, but a single male *Platypalpus australominutus* was found amongst several *P. minutus* males taken near the River Derwent, East Yorks. 11.v.93. Another male *australominutus* was found with six male *minutus* at East Cottingwith Ings (traditional hay/flood meadows in the Derwent Valley, East Yorks.), 29.v.93 and a further example from the same site, with eight *minutus* males, 5.vi.93.

It is clear that *australominutus* is present in small numbers mixed in with populations of *minutus*, at least on the Plain of York. No doubt the situation is the same elsewhere and the practical implication is that all former British records of *P. minutus* must be treated as potentially doubtful unless the male specimens are available for examination.

The most easily observable differences between the two species is in the shape of the tip of the right perandrial lamella and the shape of left cercus which can usually be teased out in fresh specimens without the need for a full genitalia preparation.

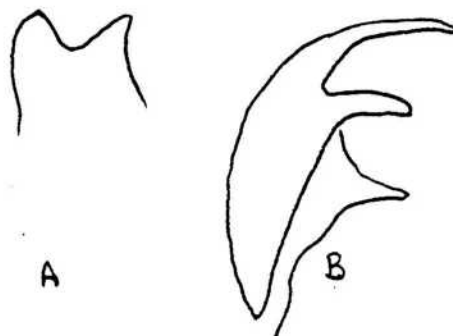
Roy Crossley.



### *Platypalpus minutus*

A: tip of r. perandrial lamella

B: left cercus  
(after Grootaert)



### *Platypalpus australominutus*

A: tip of r. perandrial lamella

B: left cercus  
(after Grootaert)

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Newsletter.

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## COLLATING DATA ON REARING EMPIDIDAE

The life history and immature stages are known for very few empids. An excellent introduction is provided by K.G.V. Smith in his "Introduction to the Immature Stages of British Flies" (RES Handbook 10: (14) 1989) and there are scattered references and descriptions of larvae and pupae in the literature and PhD theses. Apart from this there are occasional records of rearing adult empids from specific sources such as bark, leaf litter, soil etc., which are of considerable interest but which are all too often locked away in field note books, and unavailable to the many dipterists interested in them.

I have recently begun to collate rearing records gleaned from any available source so as to provide a database of life-history information. I hope to make this available to all interested parties through publication in the E & D Newsletter. I would like to make a plea for anyone with rearing records to note them in the Newsletter or to let me enter them onto the database for publication on an occasional basis. All records will be fully acknowledged.

Rearing of some species seems to be quite easy; a sample of the pabulum can be bagged and watched for emerging flies; much useful information can be gained in this way. For example, I have reared *Hilara lundbecki* Frey from turf sods cut from a salt marsh in South Wales and was able to demonstrate a preference of this species for dryer areas of the salt marsh. The sods were cut and kept in plastic biscuit jars stored in an outside shed. The jars were checked periodically for emerging flies and the numbers doing so related to the position on the marsh from which the turf was cut. This kind of work is easy to perform and highly productive in terms of valuable ecological data, and I would strongly encourage any empidist to give it a try.

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## A NEW CATALOGUE OF PALAEARCTIC DOLICHOPODIDAE

Volume 7 of the 'Catalogue of Palearctic Diptera' edited by A. Soos and L. Papp and published in 1991 includes the section on the family Dolichopodidae by O.P. Negrobov. It completes the cycle of six catalogues by various authors and publishers which since 1965 have together covered the Dolichopodidae of the world. The cut-off date for inclusion in all volumes of the Palearctic Catalogue is the end of 1982. This means that inevitably the present volume was over eight years out of date when published. Even so over 1200 Dolichopodid species are included.

Because of the extensive literature in many languages, the difficulty of recognising taxa described many years ago, the many synonyms, and the numbers of species and types needing consideration, this catalogue has been much more difficult to prepare than those covering Dolichopodidae in other regions. It not only attempts to catalogue the Palearctic species but also indicates the countries in which each species has been recorded. With such an ambitious undertaking some errors and omissions are almost inevitable. In the event, even granting the difficulties, the number of mistakes is rather large. A number of taxa are omitted, and rather a large number of type localities, spellings, dates and references need to be corrected. A further problem is an editorial decision not to include new synonymies in the Catalogue. Negrobov has dealt with this by including many, but not indicating that they are new!

Readers of the Newsletter will probably be mainly interested to know how the nomenclature used in the Catalogue differs from that used in Britain (i.e. that in Dyte (1975) and Assis Fonseca (1978)). An associated problem, which has been with us for some time, is how the nomenclature used in the two main continental identification monographs differs from that used in the UK. These two monographs are the book by Parent (1938) on the French fauna, and the parts on Dolichopodidae so far published in *Die Fliegen der Palaearktischen Region*. This latter work is still incomplete. Stackelberg covered the Dolichopodinae in 1930-1971 (though the last 14 pages published in 1971 appear not to have been revised since 1941); Negrobov and Stackelberg covered the Medeterinae in 1971-1977; and Negrobov the Hydrophorinae, the Aphrosylinae, and the Rhapsiinae (so far only *Rhaphium*) from 1977 to the present.

There are two main problems. It is inconvenient when different names are used for a particular species in different publications. It is much more misleading when a single name is applied to different species in different publications. We have three instances of this second problem: *Syntormon pumilus*, *Rhaphium caliginosum*, and *Rhaphium riparium*. The table presented here attempts to summarise the differences in usage which exist. It makes no attempt to judge the rights or wrongs of particular cases. For those interested some of the nomenclatorial problems are discussed by Collin (1940), and Denninger's (1950) study of the von Roser types is also relevant. Collin was wary of accepting some of the name changes proposed by Parent. Likewise when revising the checklist I was wary of accepting some of those proposed by Denninger.

Apart from species mentioned in the table, others merit comment.

*Argyra*. The Catalogue treats *A. argentella* (Zett.) as a synonym of *A. argyria* (Meig.). This is entirely in accord with Jonathan Cole's findings (see Newsh. 9:3-4).

*Chrysotimus*. *C. molliculus* (Fal.) is omitted from the Catalogue. As indicated in the Table Negrobov accepts Denningers view that the single female type of *flaviventris* von Ros. is identical with *concinus* (Zett.). However in his (1978) revision of *Chrysotimus* Negrobov used the name *concinus*. There is no evidence that he re-examined von Roser's type for that revision, and he was unable to include some of his new species in his key to females.

*Chrysotus*. In the Catalogue *C. microcerus* Kow. and *C. varians* Kow. are treated as synonyms of *C. gramineus* (Fal.). This agrees with Jonathan Cole's comments (in Newsh. 3:2-3), but Jonathan regarded *C. angulicornis* Kow. as another *gramineus* synonym, whereas Negrobov retains it as a valid species. *C. verralli* Par. is omitted. *C. monochaetus* Kow. is also omitted, however Denninger (1950) reported that this Kowarz species was a junior synonym of *C. viridifemoratus* von Roser 1840 and Negrobov uses von Roser's name for a valid species which he indicates occurs in Britain. It thus seems that he accepts Denninger's synonymy but failed to list *monochaetus* as a junior synonym of von Roser's species. I was aware of the synonymy suggested by Denninger when revising the British list (Dyte 1975) but did not accept it because the type material studied by Denninger consisted of two females, and I felt that a name change based on the identification of female *Chrysotus* specimens which were over 100 years old by a worker who as far as I know has not otherwise published on Dolichopodidae was unjustified.

*Diaphorus*. The Catalogue lists *D. disjunctus* as British besides the four species in the Handbook. This may be an error or Negrobov may have seen specimens from Britain. The species is included in Parent's monograph.

*Dolichopus*. As a result of a nomenclatorial confusion *D. consobrinus* Zett 1859 is listed as a British species. This is an error. Zetterstedt's name is preoccupied by *D. consobrinus* Haliday 1851 (which is now a *Tachytrechus*). Because of this Verrall 1875 published the name *maculicornis* Verrall as a replacement name for Zetterstedt's species. Negrobov treats Verrall's name as a junior synonym of Zetterstedt's, and even claims that the New Forest is the type locality of Verrall's species! *D. festivus* Hal. is omitted. *D. latelimbatus* of the British list, Parent, and *Die Fliegen*, is misspelt and should be *latilimbatus*; Negrobov has it correct.

*Hercostomus*. *H. fulvicaudis* (Hal.) is omitted.

*Machaerium*. This genus with its synonym *Smiliotus* Loew, and its three known species including the British *M. maritimae* is one of several valid genera omitted from Negrobov's Catalogue. The others are non-British.

*Medetera*. The name *M. bilineata* Frey 1915 is used in the Catalogue for the species called *M. veles* Loew 1861 in Britain (see Cole, J.H., 1989, Br. J. Ent. nat. Hist. 2:115-118). As in *Die Fliegen* the Catalogue misspells *M. saxatilis* as *saxicola*.

*Ortochile*. This genus is misspelt as *Orthochile* in the British Checklist and in the Palearctic Catalogue. It is treated as a full genus and not a subgenus in the Catalogue, and this is preferable for nomenclatorial reasons (see Newsh. 5 pl-2).

*Rhapium*. *R. fractum* Loew is omitted from the Catalogue, although it was included by Negrobov in *Die Fliegen*. Denninger (1950) indicates that *tibiale* (von Roser 1840) is an earlier name for this species. *R. longilamellatum* Kowarz 1867 is accepted as a synonym of *R. gravipes* Haliday 1851 in the Catalogue. This synonymy was first reported by Verrall, but rejected by Negrobov in *Die Fliegen* where the two are treated as separate species. He now accepts the synonymy so my comment (Newsh. 5 p4) that *R. gravipes* was not yet known from continental Europe is no longer valid.

*Sciapus*. The names in both the Handbook and the Catalogue need to be revised in the light of the findings of Meuffels and Grootaert 1990 (see Newsh. 10 p2). Briefly, *S. maritimus* of British authors is *S. zonatulus* (Zett.), with the true *S. maritimus* Beck. not yet found in Britain; and *S. loewi* Beck. is a synonym of *S. contristans* (Wied.).

*Sympycnus*. The Catalogue treats *S. annulipes* (Meig.) as a synonym of *S. pulicarius* (Fal.). However *Sympycnus desoutteri* is not mentioned either as a valid species or in synonymy. The problem of these three names has been discussed in previous Newsheets (eg by Paul Beuk, and Jonathan Cole in Newsh. 9:5-6). I agree with Jonathan that whatever status is given to the two tarsal types, they appear to be ecologically distinct and it is worth recording them separately. Moreover, it may be worth pointing out that although Parent's keys and text mention only the antennal difference, he was aware of the difference in the male hind tarsi, and illustrated it (Parent 1938 figs 865 and 877). The name *cirripes* (Hal.) is misspelt by Parent and Negrobov.

*Syntormon*. *S. luteicornis* is listed twice in Negrobov's Catalogue: correctly as a *Syntormon* on p54 where the type locality is erroneously stated to be in Belgium instead of France, and again wrongly as a *Sympycnus* on p52. The males on the basis of which this species was reported as new to the British Isles (Blackith *et al.* 1990, Dipt. Dig. 7:24-27) would appear from their description to be males of *Bathycranium bicolorillum*. Only females of *S. luteicornis* were known previously, and until females have been found here it would seem best not to regard *S. luteicornis* as a British species.

*Systemus*. Negrobov places *S. tener* Loew as a synonym of *S. bipartitus* Loew. I have not collected any specimens which match descriptions of *tener* so cannot comment on this. He has omitted the two species of *Systemus* described by Vaillant in 1978. Both of these have been reported from the British Isles but as pointed out in Newsh. 9:7-9, Vaillant's species were distinguished by comparison with published descriptions rather than specimens of previously known species, so it may well be that *S. alpinus* Vllnt. is a synonym of *S. scholtzii*, and *S. pallidus* Vllnt. a synonym of *S. pallipes*.

*Xanthochlorus*. The Catalogue does not indicate that *X. luridus* Neg. occurs in Britain (see Newsh. 3 p4). *X. ultramontanus* Beck. is listed as a synonym of *X. ornatus* Hal. This is a new synonymy and Negrobov has seen Beckers type as he quotes the label data. This synonymy means that the species found by Peter Chandler in Kent and Gwent (see Newsh. 5 p6) cannot be *ultramontanus*, and is probably an undescribed species.

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TABLE 1: NAMES USED FOR THE SAME SPECIES IN DIFFERENT PUBLICATIONS

British List & Handbook	Parent 1938 & Die Fliegen	Negrobov Catalogue
<i>Campsicnemus pectinulatus</i> (Lw.)	As Brit. List	<i>C. pumilio</i> (Zett. 1843).
<i>Chrysotimus concinnus</i> (Zett.)	As Brit. List	<i>C. flaviventris</i> (von Ros.).
<i>Chrysotus kowarzi</i> Lndbk.	As Brit. List	<i>C. obscuripes</i> Zett. 1838.
<i>Chrysotus monochaetus</i> Kow.	As Brit. List	<i>C. viridifemoratus</i> von Ros.
<i>Dolichopus caligatus</i> Whlbg.	<i>D. flavipes</i> Stann.	Lists both names with <i>caligatus</i> as British.
<i>Dolichopus cilifemoratus</i> Mcq.	<i>D. pseudocilifemoratus</i> Stack.	As Brit. List.
<i>Dolichopus discifer</i> Stann.	<i>D. nigricornis</i> Mg.	<i>discifer</i> Auth not Stann. = synonym of <i>nigricornis</i> ; <i>discifer</i> Stann. unlisted.
<i>Dolichopus trivialis</i> Hal.	<i>D. cilifemoratus</i> Mcq.	As Brit. List.
<i>Hercostomus gracilis</i> (Stann.).	<i>H. bicolor</i> (Mcq.).	Lists both names with <i>bicolor</i> as British.
<i>Poecilobothrus principalis</i> (Lw.).	<i>P. fumipennis</i> (Stann.).	As Parent.
<i>Poecilobothrus ducalis</i> (Lw.).	<i>P. infuscatus</i> (Stann.).	Both names listed with neither given as British.
<i>Rhaphium appendiculatum</i> Zett.	<i>Xiphandrium macrocerum</i> Mg.	As Parent (but <i>Rhaphium</i> ).
<i>Rhaphium caliginosum</i> Mg.	<i>X. zetterstedti</i> Par.	As Parent (but <i>Rhaphium</i> ).
<i>Rhaphium consobrinum</i> Zett.	<i>Porphyrops riparium</i> (Mg.).	As Parent (but <i>Rhaphium</i> ).
<i>Rhaphium lanceolatum</i> Lw.	<i>X. caliginosum</i> Mg.	As Parent (but <i>Rhaphium</i> ).
<i>Rhaphium riparium</i> (Mg.).	<i>P. praerosa</i> Lw.	As Parent (but <i>Rhaphium</i> ).
<i>Syntormon denticulatus</i> (Zett.)	<i>S. pumilus</i> (Mg.).	As Parent.
<i>Syntormon pumilus</i> (Mg.).	<i>S. rufipes</i> (Mg.).	As Parent.
<i>Syntormon spicatus</i> (Lw.).	As Brit. List.	<i>S. fuscipes</i> (von Ros. 1840).
<i>Thrypticus divisus</i> Strbl.	Par. = <i>T. crassiseta</i> Oldnb. Die Flieg = as Brit. List.	As Brit. List.