

Fungus Gnats Recording Scheme

Newsletter 11 Spring 2020

The previous Newsletter 10 appeared in the 2018 Spring Bulletin, so findings from 2018 and 2019 are reported here. The gnat heading this and previous newsletters from Spring 2014 (no. 7) onwards is *Synplasta exclusa*, still the only British specimen.

Results of Field Meetings in 2018 and 2019

There were two Dipterists Forum field meetings in 2018, and three in 2019. I attended the summer and autumn meetings in 2019 and the spring meetings in both years.

The number of species recorded at each meeting were:

2018: New Forest, Hampshire, 17-20 May (118 species); Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, 23-29 June (137 species).

2019: West Sussex, 17-19 May (49 species); Stirling, 22 June – 5 July (153 species); West Sussex, 18-20 October (18 species)

New Forest, Hampshire, 17-20 May 2018: This meeting produced good catches at some of the woodland inclosures, notably Holmsley Inclosure (SU225008) (63 spp), Brock Hill (SU267058) (56 spp) and Tantany Wood (SU367042) (52 spp). At both Holmsley and Brock Hill, *Mycetophila stylatiformis* was present, confirming it, along with other recent records of this species, as well-established in SE England. A catch of 26 species of gnats in a wooded fringe (mainly *Rhododendron*) of heathland at Foxbury Plantation on 18 May included *Dynatosoma thoracicum* and *Mycetophila lubomirskii*. At Anderwood Inclosure (SU249058) on 19 May, *Mycetophila immaculata* was among 33 species found. Catches at Mark Ash Wood and Denny Wood were more meagre.

Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, 23-29 June 2018: Although very hot and dry conditions prevailed during this meeting, gnats were caught by seven of those attending: Andrew Cunningham, Martin Drake, Andrew Halstead, Roger Morris, John Mousley, Alan Stubbs and Rob Wolton. The highlights were *Trichonta girschneri* new to Britain from Hawksmoor Wood (see p. 2 below), and the fifth British record of *Macrocera fastuosa* from Cotton Dell, both caught by Roger Morris. *Mycomya pectinifera* turned up at 15 sites, so it is clearly now common in this part of the country. Other notable finds were *Mycetophila immaculata* from Hawksmoor, *Phronia electa* from there and Dimminsdales and *P. sudetica* from Cotton Dell. The latter site was most productive with 65 species, thanks to catches by 4 people.

West Sussex, 17-19 May 2019: The preceding and then prevailing drought contributed towards the low catches on this meeting. Gnats were caught by Martin Drake, Andrew Halstead,



Roger Morris, Rob Wolton and myself. The most productive site was Ebernoe Common (37 spp) with relatively few at other sites, and only 15 species on the Knepp Castle Estate. No significant records were obtained.

Stirling, 22 June – 5 July 2019: As gnats were sparse at most sites visited, the overall total of 153 species after all catches were submitted was encouraging. A highlight was the finding on 20 June of three males of *Urytalpa macrocera* in the Loch Lomond NNR, in carr (NS435891) by the Endrick Water river near its entry to the Loch; there are 7 previous British records, 6 from Scotland and 1 from Cumbria, and some of these are from similar situations in woodland on the shore of water bodies.



Urytalpa macrocera site, looking towards the Endrick Water (with L-shaped tree growing upwards after falling)

At Flander's Moss NNR (NS618978) on 27 June *Dynatosoma nigromaculatum* was found by Rob Wolton, and he also caught *Exechiopsis furcata* at Tarmachan (NN593391) on 28 June. A male of *Boletina minuta* was caught at Dollar Glen (NS963987) by Alan Stubbs. This was only the 4th British record (previously from Windsor in 1978 and two previous Scottish records, both in 1998, Morrone Birkwood and Rothiemurchus). Sauchie Craig (a wood by Bannock Burn) (NS7690), which I visited on 28 June, produced the highest site total of 36 species, including one male of *Mycomya lambi* (9 previous British records, all in Scotland) and two of *Mycetophila lubomirskii* (the second Scottish site for an uncommon southern species, recorded at Linn of Tummel by Ivan Perry in 2013 and 2014). Andrew Cunningham found

Mycetophila lastovkai at Glen Artney (NN751184) on 28 June; this is now widespread in the south, but had not yet been recorded north of East Anglia, so it was a surprise so far north.

West Sussex, 18-20 October 2019: Like the spring meeting this was organised by Tony Davis, and was also attended by Andrew Halstead, Roger Morris and myself. It began at Ebernoe, where conditions were cold and soon turned to rain. At Knepp on the following day it was drier but still cold, and areas near the Hammer Pond that had been very dry in May were now under water. An afternoon visit to the Mens was cold and dark and the meeting was abandoned. As I was continuing to Dallington Forest and staying at Henfield, I visited the Wood's Mills nature reserve on Sunday 20 October, where it was still cold but sunnier, and insects active by the afternoon – the 11 species of gnats found there was the highest site total for the weekend.

Gnats new to Britain

Like other recent additions to the British list, the species dealt with here can presently only be treated as Data Deficient. *Boletina gusakovae* has been identified by Vladimir Blagoderov (National Museums of Scotland), who has provided the note below. The other two additions are based on specimens collected by Roger Morris.

Boletina gusakovae Zaitzev, 1994

by Vladimir Blagoderov

A male specimen of *Boletina gusakovae* Zaitzev, 1994 was collected by Ian Strachan in Arkaig Pinewood (NN085899; Scotland, West Inverness-shire) (Malaise trap sample in period 5.vii-15.viii.2018). The species belongs to the *Boletina nitida*-group, of which members have the gonostylus bearing a characteristic finger-like processus with strong apical spines. *Boletina gusakovae* is similar to *B. digitata*, but has the ventral median appendages of the gonocoxites pointed, not rounded. Although the species was described from the Russian Far East (Zaitzev 1994), it has later been reported from Sweden, Finland, and Estonia (Kjærandsen *et al.* 2007). Zaitzev *et al.* (2006) also suggested that *B. gusakovae* might occur in Austria, based on the figure by Kidd & Ackland (1970) of *Boletina nitida* sensu Strobl, and the Netherlands, based on the figure of *B. dispecta* by Barendrecht (1938).



Boletina gusakovae male habitus, lateral view (all photos of this species by Vladimir Blagoderov).



Boletina gusakovae male genitalia, ventral view



Boletina gusakovae male genitalia, dorsal view

Trichonta girschneri Landrock, 1912 new to Britain and France

This species was added to the British list during the 2018 Dipterists Forum summer field meeting at Stoke-on-Trent. Roger Morris caught a male at Hawksmoor Wood (SK038442), Staffordshire on 23 June 2018. This is a widespread Holarctic species that has been recorded widely in Europe. Landrock (1912) described it from Czechoslovakia and the Ukraine. Gagné (1981) had seen specimens from Finland, Italy, Romania, Iran and throughout Canada and the USA. The Russian records cited by Zaitzev (2003) stretched from Karelia to the Primorsky region and Sakhalin Island. Jakovlev (2011) reared it in Finnish Lapland from *Datronia mollis* on a decaying aspen log. He noted that it had previously been reared from a resupinate polypore on spruce (Zaitzev 1984) and from an *Oxyporus* species on *Maackia amurensis* (Zaitzev 2003).

There are records from several other European countries (see www.faunaeur.org) and I collected it in France at Le Gros Fouteau in the Fontainebleau Forest near Paris on 20 September 1997, a record that didn't make it to Fauna Europaea. In view of its wide distribution, its occurrence in Britain is not entirely unexpected, but perhaps more surprising that it should first turn up in the West Midlands – so something to look out for further south.



Trichonta girschneri male genitalia, ventral view with dorsal lobes of gonostyli extended (photo Janet Graham)

***Phronia elegantula* Hackman, 1970**

Males collected by Roger Morris at two sites in Scotland have been concluded to most likely belong to this species, and I am grateful to Jostein Kjærandsen (Arctic University Museum of Norway at Tromsø) for reminding me of the photographs of the genitalia of *P. elegantula* provided by Salmela & Kolcsár (2017), who recorded it as new to Norway. It was described from Finland and has also been recorded from Russian Karelia, the Murmansk region, widely in Sweden and once from Germany (Bavaria). The first Russian record was by Polevoi (2000), but additions made in that paper were too late for inclusion in the keys to Russian species by Zaitzev (2003), being listed in an addendum.

Two males were caught at Inverliever Forest (NM955103) on 1 June 2018. One male was then found at Newyork (NM964116) near Dalavich on 7 June 2019. Both sites are in Argyll, to the west of Loch Awe. A leg has been sent to Jostein Kjærandsen, so that DNA barcoding can confirm whether it is indeed conspecific with the Norwegian specimens.



Phronia elegantula male genitalia, ventral view (photo Janet Graham)



Phronia elegantula male genitalia, dorsal view (photo Janet Graham)

Janet Graham has continued to photograph both the species that she and her brother Andrew have recorded in North Wales, and also the genitalia of selected specimens of Mycetophilinae that I have been supplying in batches. Her excellent photographs of genitalia and whole insects can be viewed on her Flickr site: www.flickr.com/photos/149164524@N06

Other recording in 2018 and 2019

Batches of fungus gnats were received from Keith Alexander, Mike Bloxham, Pete Boardman, Steve Crellin, Andrew Cunningham, Scotty Dodd, Martin Drake, Andrew Foster, Andrew Halstead, Anna Hart, Martin Harvey, Nigel Jones, Adam Mantell, Mark Mitchell, Ryan Mitchell, Roger Morris, John Mousley, Ivan Perry, David Sheppard, Alan Stubbs, Judy Webb, Mark Welch, Rob Wolton and Ivan Wright. Records have also been received from Laurence Clemons, Andrew Graham and Donald Smith.

In addition to records cited elsewhere in this newsletter, Ivan Perry recorded *Palaeodocasia flava* at **Brandon Country Park**, Suffolk on 15 May, and *Trichonta bicolor* at **Flitwick Moor**, Bedfordshire on 30 June. His visits to Scotland and the New Forest were less productive than in earlier years, due to unfavourable weather, but *Exechiopsis magnicauda* at Denny Wood and Pondhead Inclosure on 9 and 10 June 2019 respectively, was a new record for the New Forest. This is a rarely recorded species, with records in the Cotswolds predominating (the most recent in 2007); otherwise there is an old record for Oxfordshire (Stokenchurch 1907) and more recent records for Windsor Forest (1987, 1999), Burnham Beeches (1996-2001) and Humber Carr Wood, Herefordshire (1998).

Roger Morris toured Scotland from 27 May to 17 June 2018 and recorded 140 species of fungus gnats. Finds included *Phronia persimilis* at Drimsynie (NN191050) on 29 May and *Trichonta tristis* at Rogie Falls (NH444583) on 14 June. *Phronia persimilis* was known in Britain from four previous records, two in Scotland (Craigellachie NNR 1967, Dundreggan 2012) and two in England (Main's Wood, Herefordshire 1973, Buckingham Thick Copse, Northants 1992); *T. tristis* was added to the British list on two Scottish records in Newsletter 10.

Then from 24 – 30 August 2018, a party of dipterists gathered at Strathpeffer in Easter Ross. Gnat records were contributed by Alan Stubbs, Roger Morris, Andrew Halstead and myself. I also recorded at several sites in Perthshire en route to Strathpeffer, from 21 to 23 August. Altogether 138 species of fungus gnats were found. These included *Dynatosoma nigromaculatum* at Glen Strathfarrer (NH3239) on 25 August, *Mycetophila abbreviata* and *M. mohilevensis* at woods by Conon Dam (NH388578) on 29 August, and *Rymosia acta* at Dog Falls (NH2426) on 30 August.

In 2019, Roger toured Scotland again from 1 – 21 June, and obtained records of 125 species. *Brevicornu kingi* was found at two sites: Glen Etive (NN244543) on 10 June and River Carron (NH487916) on 16 June. *Sceptonia flavipuncta* was recorded at Allean Forest (NN858599), in the Tay Forest Park on 21 June; this is becoming more frequently recorded in the south, with records as far north as Lincolnshire, but is new to Scotland.

Rob Wolton ran a Malaise trap at **Scadsbury Moor**, Rutleigh (SS518014), on his Devon farm in 2018 and 2019, and again obtained a considerable catch of gnats. This brought the gnat list for Scadsbury Moor to 239 and for Locks Park Farm, which includes this area, to 266 (all within hectad SS50); *Mycetophila immaculata* was added in the period 16 March to 30 April 2019.

Keith Alexander again reared *Sciophila varia* from *Hydnum repandum*, collected in Argyll in 2017 (Alexander 2018). Some records from his 2018 and 2019 surveys are cited elsewhere here. **Ausewell Wood**, an ancient woodland south of Dartmoor,

produced records of 170 gnat species in 2019, a large proportion of these from a trap placed within a collapsed branch from a mature beech in an old beech and pine plantation (SX733720); this evidently acted as a refuge, with great numbers during the early summer (95 species) and autumn (117 species) peaks of gnat activity, with a total in the year of 161 species from this one hollow. This catch included *Acnemia amoena*, *A. longipes*, *Dynatosoma cochleare*, *Leptomorphus walkeri*, *Mycetophila immaculata*, *M. lubomirskii*, *M. sublunata*, *M. uliginosa*, *Phronia electa*, *P. sudetica*, *Trichonta nigrutula* and *T. pulchra*. Keith's survey at **Crickley Hill** (SO9316), Gloucestershire (dry woodland on limestone), produced 77 species: 39 from the ancient woodland area described below (p. 6) under *Grzegorzekia bushyae*, including *Trichonta fusca* (see p. 7 below), while 41 species trapped at a whitebeam with rot holes included *Allodia westerholti*. Both catches included *Mycomya insignis* and *M. pectinifera*.

I have continued to record at **Windsor Forest and Great Park**. The gnat list has risen from the 291 reported in Newsletter 10 to the present total of 300. Some of the additions (*Macrobrachius kowarzii*, *Mycetophila immaculata*, *Sceptonia pilosa*) were reported by Chandler & Alexander (2018), when also recording the occurrence of *M. kowarzii* (see below) at Dallington Forest. Those finds were part of very large numbers of gnats recorded along the almost dry streambed at Highstanding Hill on two visits in July 2018, during the then prevailing hot dry conditions in SE England. At the same stream on 10 May 2018, *Phronia sylvatica* was found for a second time on the Estate; the first English record of this species was from Old Windsor Wood in 2017, as noted in Newsletter 10. Other additions in 2018 included *Phronia egregia*, *P. forcipula* and *Sciophila buxtoni*. Overall in 2018, 196 species of fungus gnats were recorded on the Estate, of which 20 species were additional to those recorded in 2014 to 2017, bringing the total of fungus gnat species recorded for those five years to 258.

The *Macrobrachius* record from **Forge Wood** (TQ6520) in **Dallington Forest**, East Sussex was from a trapping survey for saproxylic insects carried out by Jamie Simpson; the catches were referred to Keith Alexander, who passed the Diptera to me for identification. The prevailing drought in the summer of 2018 resulted in low gnat catches (only 31 species) but these did also include *Dynatosoma cochleare* and *D. thoracicum*; it is unusual for both these uncommon species to be found at the same site. In 2019, I made three visits to this locality, mainly to follow up the finding on that same survey of a rare crane fly *Ellipteroides alboscutellatus*. The first visit on 13 May was before the spring field meeting, and that on 22 October after the autumn meeting, with an intermediate visit on 6 August. The site has SSSI status for its ghyll woodland, including a steep-sided wooded ravine with a stream and flushes, fed by smaller streams. The three visits provided records of 80 species of fungus gnats, 14 in common with the 2018 survey, bringing the site total to 97 species, mostly common. *Mycetophila stylatiformis* and *M. sublunata* were recorded; both species are clearly now well-established in southern England.

Two visits in 2019 to **High Park, Blenheim**, continuing the survey organised by Aljos Farjon, were less successful. The BENHS saproxylic field meeting on 15 June (12 species) was a wet day, and the late autumn visit on 30 October (22 species) began cold, and access was more restricted. However, on that second visit *Epicrypta fumigata* was found (see below).

Before the Stirling field meeting I spent a few days in Durham. At Gill Wood, Scargill (NZ0610) on 20 June I found *Mycomya pectinifera*, which is the most northerly record so far. Following the field meeting I went to Findhorn, at the request of Alan Watson Featherstone, to record on 1 and 2 July in a coastal area managed by the Findhorn Hinterland Trust; 20 species of gnats were identified from old pine plantations with some birch, behind the dunes. I then visited some sites in the Spey Valley and Cadgill Wood in Dumfriesshire on the way back south.

Gnats new to Scotland

It is mentioned above (p. 2) that *Mycetophila lastovkai* from Glen Artney and (p. 4) *Sceptonia flavipuncta* from Allean Forest are new records for Scotland. *Ditomyia fasciata* is another new national record.



Ditomyia fasciata (photo Donald Smith)

The previous newsletter reported finds in 2017 by Roger Morris at Egglestone Abbey, North Yorkshire and Wingate, Durham, the most northerly then known, following on from 2015 records in Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. Now it has arrived in Scotland. Donald Smith observed a male on 8 November 2019, sunning itself on the trunk of a beech tree at Clerkington (NT508727), East Lothian.

Gnats new to Ireland

I looked at material from three Irish surveys carried out by Buglife. The first was in 2017, at two woods in Northern Ireland, Breen Wood, Co. Antrim and Rostrevor, Co. Down; this resulted in 9 species of fungus gnats new to Ireland (Chandler 2018b; *Mycetophila sumavica* was wrongly included as it was not the first Irish record). A survey in 2018 of sites in The Burren, Co. Clare, also produced new Irish records of three species, which are first published below, all from traps run in hazel woodland on limestone pavement at Slieve Carran (M32900382):

Boletina bidenticulata 1♂ in sample emptied on 7 July 2018.

Manota unifurcata 1♀ in sample emptied on 7 July 2018.

Mycetophila gibbula 1♂ in sample emptied on 8 August 2018.

Two of these species are widespread throughout Britain, while *Manota* has a more southerly distribution in England and Wales (see p. 6). Two other species can also be added, *Leia longiseta* (see p. 7 under *Looking for Leia*) and *Rymosia connexa*.

A male of *Rymosia connexa* was caught by Ryan Mitchell at Belvoir Park Forest (J336695), in Northern Ireland on 2 October 2019. This species is rarely recorded in Britain, though the 9

known hectads are widely scattered – there is only one record in the present century, on 24 July 2005 at Whinfell Forest Center Parc (NY5727), Cumbria by David Gibbs, and the only other post-1990 record is from Great Triley Wood (SO313182), Monmouthshire on 12 October 1998 by Ken Merrifield. Earlier records, the most recent in 1936, are mostly from the east side of the country.

Other significant records

Boletina landrocki

This species was added to the British list on 4 males trapped by the RSPB at Abernethy Forest in 1999 (Chandler 2006). It was not found again until 2019, when Rob Wolton turned it up during a short trip to the north-west of Scotland. One male was found at Inchnadamph (NC265213), near Loch Assynt, Sutherland on 14 October 2019. Among the 13 species of gnats recorded at this site were *B. trivittata*, *B. dubia* and *Exechiopsis furcata*.

Clastobasis alternans

This distinctive species was newly recorded from six mainly wetland sites from 1993 to 1998 (Chandler 2001). Two further sites noted here are the first this century.

Gibraltar Point, TF563582, Lincolnshire, vi.2017, 1♂ (J. Shaw); Ferry Meadows, Heron Hide scrape, TL154975, Cambridgeshire, 4.vii (5♂) and 13.vii.2018 (1♂) (A. Stubbs).

Epicrypta fumigata goes east

Since being found in Devon by Rob Wolton at Scadsbury Moor Rutleigh in successive years from 2013 to 2015 (Chandler 2014, 2015, 2016), there have been some additional records from the south-west, but it was a surprise for it to be found in Cambridgeshire and Oxfordshire in 2019. The new records are as follows.

Watersmeet, Exmoor, SS751489, North Devon, 21.iv.2018, 1♂ (R. Wolton); Titcombe Wood, Loddiswell, SX733500, South Devon, 15.ix.2018, 2♂ (R. Wolton); Waresley Wood, TL262548, Cambridgeshire, 27.v.2019, 1♂ (I. Perry); High Park, Blenheim, SP4315, Oxfordshire, 30.x.2019, 1♂ (P.J. Chandler).

However, Rob's record of a male from Whiddon Deer Park, Devon (reported as *fumigata* by Chandler 2018a) has proved to be *E. torquata* Matile, a widespread European species that is new to Britain. Specimens have also been seen from two other sites in the south-west. Full details will be published elsewhere.

Exechia lucidula still out there

This has always been a rare species in Britain, with the most recent records in 1988 from wetland surveys in East Anglia carried out by Andrew Foster and Deborah Procter, when it was recorded at Mills Marsh, Norfolk and Chippenham Fen, Cambridgeshire (Falk & Chandler 2005). It had been recorded earlier at the latter site – J.E. Collin collected it there in 1941. It is pleasing to report that this species has survived there as a male was swept in open fen at the same site by Ivan Perry on 12 September 2019. Nationally there are records from only 6 hectads, four in the eastern counties, one in Cheshire (Goyt Valley) and one in Scotland (Logie). It is a distinctive species among British *Exechia* as it has a shining thorax. It is evidently more frequent in other parts of Europe and has been reared from

several genera of soft fungi, mostly agarics, both terrestrial and saproxylic.

***Grzegorzekia bushyae* goes west**

This species had not hitherto been seen since it was described (Chandler 2015) from specimens obtained at Bushy Park, Middlesex and at a *Quercus pubescens* forest in France. How it came to be at Bushy Park was a matter of speculation; owing to the lack of any other British records of such a distinctive species, the possibility that it was a chance introduction was considered. However, its discovery in 2019 at an ancient woodland in Gloucestershire suggests that it may be a rare native.

A male and a second specimen that had lost part of its abdomen were caught in flight interception traps operated by Keith Alexander at Crickley Hill (SO9316). The intact male was from a trap on a field maple coppice stool with rot-holes, sample dated 21 May – 24 July, and the other was from a trap on an ash coppice stool with rot-holes, sample dated 24 July to October. These two traps were sited in ancient semi-natural woodland. There was a lot of recently cut branch-wood where the Cotswold Way passes through the wood, but it is otherwise closed-canopy, albeit a narrow strip with strong lateral light (Keith Alexander *pers. comm.*).



***Grzegorzekia bushyae* male (from Chandler 2015: photo Chris Spilling)**

***Macrobrachius kowarzii* goes north**

This genus and species (characterised by its very short posterior wing fork and rather simple male genitalia) was added to the British list from Ashenbank Wood, Kent, where Keith Alexander obtained 7 males in a trapping survey in 2016 (Alexander 2017). It was discussed and illustrated in Newsletter 10. Then, during 2018 it was found at two further sites, Dallington Forest in East Sussex and Windsor Forest, Berkshire (Chandler & Alexander 2018). As mentioned there, these specimens and males that I have seen from elsewhere in Europe have unmarked wings (as shown in the habitus photograph by Jostein Kjærandsen), while ill-defined markings are present on the female wing. Females have yet to be found in Britain but the finding of another male can be reported. This was caught by Ivan Perry on 12 May 2019 at Chippenham Fen, Cambridgeshire. As all previous records are from south of the Thames, this indicates a remarkable extension to its range. Unlike the previous British records, this male has a faint grey marking occupying the base of the median fork, as

depicted by Dziedzicki (1889), reproduced in Newsletter 10, but not extending beyond the fork veins as indicated there.



***Macrobrachius kowarzii* male (from Kjærandsen 2015)**

Macrocera fastuosa

A record from the Stoke field meeting is mentioned above. Pete Boardman also recorded 1 male each at two well-separated sites in Gloucestershire in 2018: Midger's Wood, ST794892, 31.vii and Hen Wood, Sapperton, SO951043, 1.ix.

Macrorrhyncha hugoi

British records were discussed in Newsletter 9 (Chandler 2016), adding records from the Berkshire/Surrey border and Oxfordshire to the previous Hampshire distribution. A male was caught in the period May to July 2019 by a flight interception trap on a decayed holly with rot holes (SX731709) at Ausewell Wood, Devon (K.N.A. Alexander).

Manota unifurcata

New records from Surrey, North Wales, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Devon and Somerset have been cited in previous Newsletters, to augment those shown in the distribution map included in Newsletter 7 (Chandler 2014). It is cited above as new to Ireland, and some further new records are given here: Branscombe Mouth, SY205883, Devon, 27.ix.2018, 1♂ (A. Cunningham); Scadsbury Moor, SS519014, Devon, 2018, Malaise trap, 1♂ (R. Wolton); Pierce Wood, ST53649592, Monmouthshire, 26.vi-9.viii.2018, 1♂, 1♀ (K.N.A. Alexander); Waresley Wood, TL262548, Cambridgeshire, 29.vi.2019 1♂, 13.vii.2019, 1♂ (I. Perry).

Mycetophila hyrcania

This mainly Mediterranean species was added to the British list in Newsletter 9 with 3 males caught by Martin Townsend in an aerial trap at Chalkhills Farm, Buckinghamshire. Then in Newsletter 10 a record by Ivan Perry from the Warburg Reserve, Oxfordshire was reported. Ivan has now found it at 3 more sites, all in Cambridgeshire, and Mark Mitchell has found it in Hampshire: Chippenham Fen, TL645693, 24.x.2018; Devil's Ditch, Stetchworth, TL645583, 30.iv.2019; Fulbourn Fen Nature Reserve, TL528562, 3.vii, 16.vii and 13.viii.2019 (I. Perry); Shoulder of Mutton, SU733265, Hampshire, 20.iv.2019, 1♂ (M. Mitchell).

Mycetophila immaculata

There has been an apparent recent increase in records for this species. A few records were cited in previous Newsletters; Chandler & Alexander (2018) recorded it from Windsor Forest and four more new records are cited above. Chandler (2018b) added it to the Irish list from Breen Wood in Northern Ireland and a second record from Northern Ireland was obtained by Ryan Mitchell from the Clandeboye Estate (J490771), on 6 October 2019.

Third site for *Neoempheria striata*

This is another distinctive species first recorded in Britain from Cothill Fen, Oxfordshire on 13 July 1985 (Chandler 1987), a male caught in damp woodland adjoining fen. It had since been recorded only from *Salix* carr at Osier Lake, Godmanchester, Huntingdonshire by Jon Cole on 23 July 1998 (Cole 1999). Now it has been found at High Park, Blenheim, Oxfordshire, where a survey of all organisms has been in progress since 2017. A male was caught by Ivan Wright in a flight interception trap (at SP43451542), in a sample dated 11-26 June 2018. The location was a moderate-sized horizontal dead oak trunk with an upper quarter missing and the trap was placed on the rotting wood on the floor of the exposed cavity. The area is not particularly damp, but it does have a very sheltered microclimate, closely surrounded by woody shrubs, bramble (and bracken when mature); also it is at about the elevation of the upper spring line and there is much damp soil around (Ivan Wright *pers. comm.*).



Mating pair of *Neoempheria striata* taken in France (source uncertain; note that *N. proxima*, also widespread in S Europe, is similar and separated by characters of the ♂ genitalia).

It is a widespread and not uncommon species in Europe, and I have identified it from several sites in France, Spain and Greece, so there is no obvious reason why it is so rare in Britain.

Falk & Chandler (2005) cited the following records of its biology: Dufour (1842) found larvae in mucous webs under brackets of the polypore fungus *Trametes suaveolens* on poplar (*Populus*) trunks, while Matile (1963) found larvae in webs on pine (*Pinus*) branches lying on the ground and considered them

to be carnivorous on nematodes, which became immobilised (probably by oxalic acid) on contact with the web.

Phronia petulans

Also at Chippenham Fen, Ivan Perry caught this species on 24.x (4♂) and 17.xi.2018 (1♂). The only previous British record was from Nesbitt Dene, Durham in 1990 (Chandler 1992), but it is small and easily overlooked.

Sciophila rufa

Following Ivan Perry's discovery, noted in Newsletter 10, of *S. rufa*, previously recorded in Britain only from Scotland, at Flitwick Moor, Bedfordshire, Judy Webb reared it from larvae collected at Thompson Common, Norfolk (Webb 2019, in which the larva, its web on *Fomes fomentarius* and a mating pair of the gnats are illustrated). Ivan had also reared it from a cocoon found on *Fomes* at Flitwick Moor on 5 May 2018, the adult emerging on 8 May.

Trichonta fusca

The second British record from Yocklett's Bank in Kent was reported in Newsletter 9. As well as two new records in 2019, a Scottish specimen from 2014 has been recognised to be *T. fusca*. Crickley Hill (SP9316), Gloucestershire, flight interception trap at ash coppice stool with rot holes, vii-x.2019, 1♂ (K.N.A. Alexander); Waresley Wood (TL262348), Cambridgeshire, 29.vi.2019, 1♂ (I. Perry); Altnaglander, Glenlivet (NJ170285), in birchwood with a stream, 2.vi.2014, 1♂ (A. Stubbs).

Zygomyia matilei

Records for Devon (R. Wolton), Oxfordshire and Hampshire (I. Perry) were mentioned in Newsletter 10. Ivan has now found it in Suffolk, at Brandon Country Park on 4 July 2019.

Update on Looking for *Leia* (see Newsletter 10)

New records are provided of the two rarest species of this genus.

Leia longiseta new to Ireland

A male was identified from a Malaise trap operated by Brian Nelson at Portmore Lough Nature Reserve (J1068), Co. Armagh, Northern Ireland, caught in the period 2 May to 8 June 1997. The trap was run soon after the RSPB had acquired the site (Brian Nelson *pers. comm.*).

New records of *Leia piffardi*

Leia piffardi was reported in Newsletter 10 as most recently recorded in Britain in 1985, with previous records from only eleven hectads, and it was noted that nine of the 13 British records were obtained by rearing from bird nests (blackbird, song thrush, magpie and buzzard are recorded) or dreys of both red and grey squirrels. It is pleasing to record that the following three new records (each of 1 male) have now come to notice: Kensington Garden (TQ26080), London, 29 May 2018 (S.G. Dodd).

Dibden (SU402087), Hampshire, flight interception trap placed in front of a rot-hole on oak in a wooded field boundary strip

with a wet seepage below it, catch in period 9 July – 20 August 2019 (K.N.A. Alexander).
Fulbourn Fen Nature Reserve (TL528562), Cambridgeshire, 16 July 2019 (I. Perry).

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Peter Chandler