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Long-standing readers of this newsletter may wonder what has happened to the lists of references to recent hoverfly literature that used to appear regularly in these pages. Graham Rotheray compiled these when he was editor and for some time afterwards, and more recently they have been provided by Kenn Watt. For some time Kenn trawled for someone else to take over this task from him, but nobody volunteered. Kenn continued to produce the lists, but now no longer has access to the source that provided him with the references. I therefore now make a plea for someone else to agree to take over this role, ideally producing a list of recent literature for each edition of this newsletter (i.e. twice per year), or if that is not possible, for each alternate edition. Failing a reply to this plea, has anyone any suggestions for a reliable source of references to which I could get access in order to compile the list myself?

Copy for **Hoverfly Newsletter No. 35** (which is expected to be issued in February 2003) should be sent to me: **David Iliff, Green Willows, Station Road, Woodmancote, Cheltenham, Glos, GL52 9HN,** Email **davidiliff@talk21.com**, to reach me by 20 December.

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STUBBS & FALK, SECOND EDITION

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British Hoverflies (Stubbs & Falk, 1983) is now 19 years old and things have moved on considerably in the hoverfly world. We have over 20 additional species since the original publication and, of the 250 named species included in 1983, name changes in the latest checklist (Chandler, 1998 and updates published in Dipterists Digest) affect around 50 of them. Knowledge of biology has advanced, especially in the area of larval biology, and distribution, status and phenology are now much more firmly established with the publication of the provisional atlas (Ball & Morris, 2000) and also an account of the Irish fauna with 50km square distribution maps (Speight, 2000).

The official position from the "Preface to the Second Edition"

British Hoverflies has not stood still: it was reprinted in 1986 including a 15-page supplement. In 1996, a second supplement (incorporating the changes from the first supplement) was published separately (Stubbs, 1996) and a further update appeared in 2000 (Stubbs, 2000) in the Journal of the British Entomological and Natural History Society. These were bound into the reprint of the book published in 2000. Whilst convenient to have the supplements and update in one cover, this was not a very satisfactory solution from the point of view of ease of use! The need for a substantial revision of *British Hoverflies* was therefore clear.

Interest in hoverflies remains unabated, and demand for *British Hoverflies* is as high as ever. Faced with a need to reprint the original volume once again, the British Entomological and Natural History Society's Publications Committee considered the options late in 2001 and concluded that it was not satisfactory merely to reprint the book including supplements and update (especially as yet another update would be necessary!). Therefore a revision has been undertaken to provide a text that reflects those important advances in our knowledge of the British fauna and the substantial taxonomic changes that have occurred. It incorporates the changes from the two supplements, additional species reported in the entomological press up until June 2002, and brings the nomenclature into line with the latest check list (Chandler, 1998), although the sub-families and tribes used in 1983 have been retained to avoid major restructuring of the book. It contains revised keys, including those from the second supplement, but with additional modification to incorporate new species and changes in nomenclature. The opportunity has also been taken to incorporate in the keys a small number of European species that are considered likely to be found in Britain. Species accounts have been updated to cover the additional species and those aspects of individual species' biology that are important to our understanding of hoverfly distribution. Whilst there has been some updating of literature and unpublished information, the dead-line to which we have worked has not allowed for a comprehensive treatment. Seventeen black and white plates have also been added, illustrating the male genitalia of *Cheilosia* (drawn by Steven Falk) and *Sphaerophoria* (drawn by Stuart Ball).

The real story

In 2001 Stuart Ball and Roger Morris had got the atlas out and the soldierflies volume was about to appear, freeing up Alan Stubbs. Alan was very aware that the hoverfly book needed revising, but didn't want to commit a lot of time to it because he was busy with the Invertebrate Conservation Trust and wanted to make progress on craneflies. He therefore approached Roger and Stuart, asking if they would be prepared to take on the job. They (perhaps unwisely for their sanity and social lives) agreed.

British Hoverflies was written before the advent of personal computers and so was not in electronic form. In late summer 2001 Stuart borrowed an unbound copy of the 2000 reprint and began the process of scanning it and converting the images to word-processor files using optical character recognition software (OCR) with Roger doing the clean-up job (OCR is pretty good these days, but there is still a lot of tidying up needed to make the results usable). Stuart also borrowed the original illustrations for the keys from Alan for scanning and tidying up. Stuart and Roger announced at Dipterists Day in November 2001 that a revision was planned, but suggested it would take several years.

In December 2001, Ian McLean, in his capacity as chairman of the BENHS Publications Committee, approached Stuart: the Publications Committee had been looking at the sales of *British Hoverflies* and the resulting projection was that it would be out of print about June 2002. However, the Publications Committee were reluctant to simply reprint it again, as in 2000, because having the supplement and update as separate sections within the book detracted from its legendary user-friendliness. Ian knew that Stuart and Roger had started work on a revision - was it possible to do a quick cut-and-paste job to incorporate the supplement and update into the main text? The important thing from the Publications Committee's point of view was that a new edition should be ready for the BENHS exhibition and Dipterists Day in 2002, because this is when many of the sales would be made.

Stuart and Ian met with Alan in early January 2002, during which Steve Falk was consulted by phone (Roger was away at the time and consequently got volunteered in his absence!), and came up with a plan for the revision. Its scope was to be as follows:

- The keys to *Platycheirus* and *Sphaerophoria* from the second supplement would replace the originals and the key to common *Cheilosia* would be dropped,
- There would be limited updating of keys to incorporate changes and errata from the supplement and the additional species,
- Names would be updated throughout to the new checklist,
- Species accounts for the new species (written by Roger with help from Alan) would be added,
- There would be very limited updating of the text to incorporate changes and errata from the supplement and to correct phrases which were clearly wrong or misleading in the light of subsequent knowledge.

It was also agreed that, if time allowed, male genitalia illustrations of *Cheilosia* drawn by Steve, and *Sphaerophoria* drawn by Stuart, would be incorporated. It was envisaged that a further, more comprehensive revision would then proceed on a longer time scale (5-6 years) which, amongst other things, would fully revise both the keys and text including a thorough literature search.

Stuart, with advice from Malcolm Storey (who did the layout job on the soldierflies book), sorted out the technical details. The conclusion was: use Word 2000 and then generate a Portable Document Format (PDF) file to send to the printer using Adobe Acrobat 5.0 software. A test file was generated for one of the keys and sent to the printer (Henry Ling Ltd.). They checked it on their systems and declared it usable.

Ian established the latest date at which the material would need to be received by the printer for the book to be available in the autumn. A time table was then devised, working backwards from this date. The initial deadline for changes to the text from the main authors was the end of February 2002.

One of the issues was that around 600 copies of the colour plates remained from a previous printing. Unfortunately, these have legends on the back, so are not usable for the revised book (since some species names and all page references in the legends are now different). Various options were discussed by the Publications Committee, but it was eventually decided we could not allow the existence of this stock to prevent the book being revised and to go ahead with new plates. Consequently the original colour plates have been borrowed from Steve Falk and new scans and printing made for the second edition. The Publications Committee still has to decide what to do with the stock of old colour plates, but nobody is suggesting that we just scrap them!

As work proceeded things started to get a bit out of hand. Alan, with his usual enthusiasm, started to revise more and more of the keys and to slip in various European species which might occur in Britain. Also the edits to the text from several directions got more and more extensive. It was quickly becoming a full revision of the text on a break-neck time scale!

By mid-April we had just about got through the work planned to be done six weeks earlier and it went out for proof reading, review and testing of the updated keys. Reviewers were Peter Chandler, Jon Cole, David Iliff, Ian McLean, Ivan Perry, Mike Pugh, and Graham Rotheray. During this period it became clear we still had a lot to do:

- Revision of biology, status and distribution statements were very patchy, some took account of new data, others did not,
- The way plant names were quoted was very inconsistent,
- The way measurements were quoted was a complete mixture of metric and imperial units,
- There were quite a lot of errors and inconsistencies in references and their citations,
- There were a number of places where the updated keys didn't work,

- Some taxonomic issues remained (especially in *Xanthogramma*, *Eupeodes*, *Microdon*)

So we took these on. Stuart did most of the consistency checks, whilst Ian tackled the references. It was decided to follow the soldierflies book in the way plant names were dealt with, i.e. use only common names in the text and include a list showing common name and corresponding Latin name. Whilst tackling this, an index to names of species other than hoverflies was added. Alan did most of the sorting out of keys and taxonomic problems with assistance from Steve, especially on *Cheilosia*. As always, not all taxonomic issues can be sorted out in time, and there are a few new 'species B's and 'C's.

We have now got to the final proof read (by Roger Hawkins of BENHS Publications Committee) which should be completed by the end of July. This should enable us to get the finished PDF file to the printer by mid-August, leading to a delivery date in October.

In consequence, by the autumn meetings we should have a fully revised second edition available. It has substantially updated keys with around 50 additional illustrations and 17 additional black and white plates. It has over 480 pages - nearly twice the original edition. The only thing we cannot claim to have done is a thorough literature search, but there are just under 800 references in the bibliography, again nearly twice the original edition. The totals for the numbers of species covered are as follows:

	2002	*1983*
Named species	268	250
Unnamed species	5	6
	273	256
Forms of uncertain status	11	9

Overall it has been an awful lot more work than we originally bargained for, but the end product should be worth it and represents a major step forward for those interested in the family. It has also been a co-operative venture involving quite a number of dipterists - which is surely what Dipterists Forum is all about. We also now have the whole thing computerised, so keeping it up-to-date in future, as names change occur and new species are discovered, should be much less of an undertaking and it should not be necessary to resort to separately published supplements again.

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NEWS FROM THE SOUTH WEST, 2001

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Despite the limitations of access to wildlife sites, due to the Foot & Mouth, some success was achieved by visiting adjacent lanes. Surveys alongside Bickham Wood, a Somerset Wildlife Trust reserve on the Devon border, produced 56 species including *Brachyopa scutellaris*, *Brachypalpoides lentus*, *Chalcosyrphus nemorum*, nine species of *Cheilosia*, *Eumerus ornatus* and *Sericomyia lappona*. Aphid dependant Syrphinae were very scarce during the first half of the year. In Dorset, Ashley Wood, a Dorset Wildlife Trust reserve was the target for attention. 50 species were found between mid-April and early June including *Brachypalpoides lentus*, *Cheilosia psilophthalma* (previously *C. praecox*), *Meligramma euchromum*, *Eumerus ornatus*, *Melangyna cincta* and *Volucella inflata*. *Criorhina* were seen in good numbers especially *C. floccosa* and *C. ranunculi*. *Brachyopa scutellaris* was sometimes extremely common. Still in Dorset, Garston Wood, an RSPB reserve, produced 56 species including *Cheilosia carbonaria*, *C. longula* and *C. soror*, *Chrysotoxum festivum*, *Didea fasciata*, *Eumerus ornatus*, *Melangyna labiatarum* and *Volucella inflata*. Here Dave found *Rhingia rostrata* for the first time in Dorset. For those looking for this elusive hoverfly, it was found that a useful identification point was the orange scutellum, a feature that is lost soon after it is pinned. Several were seen feeding at various flowers mainly in the shade. It should however be noted that a variety of the commoner *R. campestris* can have a very pale abdomen with hardly any dark markings on the abdomen including the lateral margin, in these specimens the coloration of the hind legs should be used.

A survey of Fifehead Wood, a deciduous Woodland Trust reserve in Dorset, produced 47 species, the best of which were *Eumerus ornatus*, *Parhelophilus frutetorum*, *Volucella inflata* and *Xylota tarda*.

During visits to a Wiltshire Wildlife Trust reserve, some exciting encounters were made with *Callicera aurata*. This rarity was found on several occasions at a chalk downland site, feeding at flowers of dog-rose (*Rosa canina*). As many as six were seen on one date and video footage obtained. It was noted that this brilliant fly folds its wings along its abdomen when at rest and feeding. Visits to this reserve began on June 22nd and this species was seen on five separate occasions, the last being July 27th, when a male and female were found feeding on bramble flowers (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.). *Doros profuges* was also seen on both June 22nd and 23rd, a male on the first day and both male and female the next. Both sexes were mainly seen flying slowly around, as if searching for something and rested only briefly. Of special interest among the 55 species seen at this site were *Chrysotoxum festivum*, *Criorhina asilica*, *Eumerus ornatus*, *Melangyna labiatarum*, *Scaeva selenitica*, *Volucella inflata* and *Xanthandrus comtus*. *Epistrophe diaphana* was seen in numbers [20+], mainly on Umbelliferae.

FLYING OVER FINLAND: A SEARCH FOR RARE SAPROXYLIC DIPTERA ON THE ALAND ISLANDS OF FINLAND

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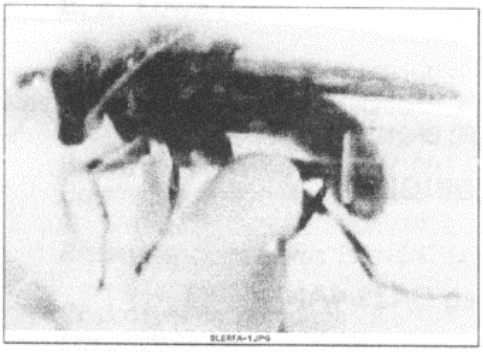
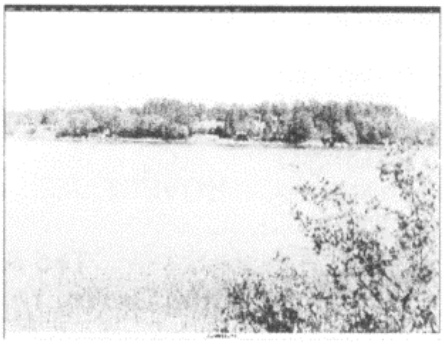


The very rare Pinewood Hoverfly, *Blera fallax*



One of the Aland Islands

Kenn Watt has recently returned from Finland, where he and other members of The Malloch Society spent a week looking for rare saproxylic Diptera. This Society was formed in 1988 by 7 Scottish Dipterists with the aim of researching the existence and conservation requirements of Scotland's rare and endangered flies. Their 10 years of field research is summarised in a recent paper by Rotheray et al. (2001).

One of Scotland's most endangered and rare saproxylic hoverflies is *Blera fallax*, a large hoverfly species found in ancient Caledonian pinewoods on Speyside. First recorded in Britain by G.H. Verrall, the most notable British Dipterist of the 19th century, at Braemar in 1871, this species has rarely been seen in the past 70 years. After 10 years of searching, the Malloch Society

eventually located only 2 breeding sites in the Grantown-on-Spey area. It was to discover more about the breeding requirements of this and other saproxylic species that members of the Malloch Society spent a week on the Aland Islands of Finland. These wooded islands have many of the same tree species found in Scotland and a Diptera fauna similar to that in Scotland. They were joined by 4 members of the Finnish dipterist community as well as one Swedish dipterist. Blessed with seven days of glorious weather and comfortable accommodation in a field centre in a nature reserve on the island of Nato, they were able each day to explore some of the 4000 islands that make up this archipelago. Kenn is pleased to announce that the breeding sites of most of the rare dead wood Diptera were located, including *B. fallax*. Indeed, he and Iain MacGowan, were fortunate to take a male and a female adult of *B. fallax* to add to the collections at the Royal Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh.

Samples of the wood decay products of pine, ash and aspen, in which these saproxylic species breed, have been brought back and hopefully the larvae they contain will pupate and emerge as adults this summer. These larvae and adults together with the site habitat information will add greatly to the understanding of the conservation requirements of these rare and endangered saproxylic species.

Reference: Graham E. Rotheray, Geoff Hancock, Steve Hewitt, David Horsfield, Iain MacGowan, David Robertson & Kenneth Watt (2001) *Biodiversity and conservation of saproxylic Diptera in Scotland* J. Insect Conservation **5**: 77-85

HOVERFLIES AT COOMBE DINGLE

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We first became aware of Coombe Dingle in 1988 while examining Syrphidae specimens in the collections of the Natural History Museum, London and the Hope Department, Oxford. Interesting finds had mostly been collected by E.C.M. Fonseca, but others by John Cowley and others in and before the 1940s. It seemed so unlikely that this locality in the suburbs of Bristol could be such an exciting place to find hoverflies that we – forty years later – decided to visit this pleasant little valley on the Blaise Castle Estate. Later, when we were researching our Somerset Hoverfly Atlas, we found it a rather tantalising spot, as it is situated on the north side of the Avon Gorge, just outside the Somerset VC6 boundary (in VC34; West Gloucestershire). Leigh Woods, on the south side of the river also had a good reputation for Diptera, but some species had been found at the “Dingle” which were special.

This wooded valley, now a municipal park, has many fine old trees along its slopes; among them, situated on the banks of the stream, are one or two maples which seem to be a great attraction to insects when in blossom. Sallow and laurel also abound, and large patches of lesser celandine and various Umbelliferae are to be found in the open spaces, so the valley is of interest to dipterists in all seasons. We have been reporting to the Conservation Officers of the Bristol council annually since the 1980s to keep them aware of the uniqueness of this site and to point out management needs for insects, the damage that can be caused by "tidying" operations, seepages, vegetation, etc.

Despite a great deal of use by dog-walkers and sightseers, by children enjoying the stream, and by some over-zealous mowing and pruning, Coombe Dingle is still an interesting place for hoverfly recording. While we suspect that we are unlikely to find the rarity *Myolepta potens*, the list that follows, which includes many of our own records, shows the possibilities one may encounter.

It is perhaps of interest that the Blaise Castle Estate is a large wooded and open space area, of which Coombe Dingle is only a narrow part. There may well be other tracts that are equally rewarding, where rare species have yet to be found. We would welcome any Syrphid records from this area to update our lists.

In the list below records without legend are our own; earlier records are from E. E. Lowe (L), E.C.M d'Assis Fonseca (F) and H. Womersley (W).

Baccha elongata 31/7/1993
Brachyopa insensilis 9/5/1946 (F)
2/8/1946 (F)
Brachyopa scutellaris 27/4/1991
Brachypalpus laphriformis 24/6/1947 (L)
20/5/1989
Brachypalpoides lentus 8/6/1947 (F)
21/5/1988
Chalcosyrphus nemorum 22/8/1948 (F)
Cheilosia albipila 24/3/1945 (F)
Cheilosia albitarsis s.str. 9/5/1998
Cheilosia bergenstammi 14/5/1988
Cheilosia fraterna 17/9/1994
Cheilosia illustrata 31/7/1993
Cheilosia impressa 31/7/1993
Cheilosia lasiopa 9/5/1988
Cheilosia longula 3/7/1999
Cheilosia pagana 19/9/1998
Cheilosia proxima 31/7/1993
Cheilosia soror 19/9/1998
Cheilosia urbana 23/4/1988
14/5/1988
Cheilosia variabilis 9/5/1988
Cheilosia vernalis 30/8/1997
Cheilosia vulpina 31/7/1993
Chrysogaster solstitialis 31/7/1993
Chrysotoxum bicinctum 21/6/1997
Chrysotoxum cautum 14/5/1988
Criorhina asilica 10/6/1947 (F)
Criorhina berberina 21/6/1997
Criorhina floccosa 7/5/1988
Criorhina ranunculi 11/5/1946 (F)
7/6/1948 (L)
26/3/1988
17/3/1999
Dasysyrphus albostriatus 14/5/1988
Dasysyrphus pinastri 28/5/1988
Dasysyrphus tricinctus 8/5/1993
Dasysyrphus venustus 9/5/1988
Didea fasciata 8/5/1948 (F)
21/7/1990
Epistrophe diaphana 7/6/1948 (F)
Epistrophe eligans 9/5/1998
Epistrophe grossulariae 31/7/1993
Epistrophe nitidicollis 9/5/1998
Episyrphus balteatus 31/7/1993
Eriozona erratica 19/5/1947 (F)
Eristalinus sepulchralis 7/5/1988
Eristalis arbustorum 29/5/1999
Eristalis horticola 31/7/1993
Eristalis interruptus 21/6/1997
Eristalis intricarius 7/5/1988
Eristalis pertinax 9/5/1988
Eristalis tenax 9/5/1988
Eumerus funeralis 30/8/1997
Eumerus ornatus 21/6/1997

Eumerus strigatus 14/5/1988
Eupeodes latilunulatus 23/4/1988
Eupeodes latifasciatus 7/7/1988
Eupeodes luniger 8/5/1993
Ferdinandea cuprea 31/7/1993
Helophilus pendulus 19/9/1998
Heringia heringi 14/5/1988
Heringia vitripennis 10/6/1946 (F)
Lejogaster metallina 20/5/1989
Leucozona glaucia 19/9/1998
Leucozona laternaria 3/7/1993
Leucozona lucorum 8/5/1993
Mallota cimbiciformis 25/6/1922 (W)
Melangyna cincta 7/5/1988
Melangyna labiatarum 21/6/1997
Melangyna lasiophthalma 26/3/1988
Melangyna quadrimaculata 13/3/1948 (F)
Melangyna umbellatarum 21/5/1988
Melanostoma mellinum 8/5/1993
Melanostoma scalare 9/5/1998
Melanogaster hirtella 28/5/1988
Meligramma euchromum 7/6/1948 (L)
27/4/1991
4/5/1991
8/5/1993
Meligramma trianguliferum 21/4/1990
9/5/1998
Merodon equestris 21/6/1997
Myathropa florea 9/5/1998
Myolepta potens 13/6/1945 (L)
26/6/1949 (F)
Neoascia podagrica 21/5/1988
Orthonevra brevicornis 21/5/1988
Orthonevra nobilis 14/5/1988
Paragus haemorrhous 21/6/1997
Parasyrphus punctulatus 23/4/1988
Pipiza luteitarsis 9/5/1988
Pipiza noctiluca 14/4/1989 (F)
Pipizella viduata 31/7/1993
Platycheirus ambiguus 6/5/1989
27/4/1991
Platycheirus albimanus 9/5/1988
Platycheirus discimanus 23/4/1988
Platycheirus granditarsus 28/5/1988
Platycheirus peltatus 14/5/1988
Platycheirus rosarum 14/8/1944 (F)
28/5/1988
Platycheirus scutatus. 21/6/1947
Platycheirus tarsalis 30/4/1988
Portevinia maculata 30/4/1988
Rhingia campestris 30/8/1997
Sphaerophoria scripta 21/6/1997
Sphegina clunipes 29/4/1989
Sphegina elegans 30/8/1997
Syritta pipiens 31/7/1993
Syrphus ribesii 19/9/1998
Syrphus torvus 29/3/1997
Syrphus vitripennis 31/7/1993
Volucella bombylans 21/6/1997
Volucella inflata 21/6/1997
Volucella pellucens 31/7/1993
Volucella zonaria 30/8/1997
Xanthogramma citrofasciatum 18/5/1948
Xanthogramma pedissequum 21/6/1997
Xylota segnis 9/5/1998
Xylota sylvarum 19/9/1998
Xylota xanthocnema 24/6/1925 (F)

FIELD IDENTIFICATION OF SOME BRITISH HOVERFLY SPECIES USING CHARACTERISTICS NOT INCLUDED IN THE KEYS

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Most keys are constructed as a result of close examination of dead specimens and are generally intended to be used for species determination of captured specimens (not necessarily dead). The success of the Hoverfly Recording Scheme would however be far less impressive if its records were based only on specimens that had been caught. Fortunately there are many species that can readily be identified in the field without capture. In a few such cases the species can more easily be determined using characteristics other than those traditionally used to separate species in the keys. The following paragraphs describe characteristics, which are not in the keys, of certain species, which can be used in this way. These are based on the colours of markings on the insects, and in some instances are suitable only for identification of live specimens, since, while most of the colours of

hoverflies remain stable after death, some do not; we are probably all familiar, for example, with the tendency of the bright yellow markings of *Chrysotoxum* to darken to a brownish colour soon after death.

***Scaeva pyrastri* and *Scaeva selenitica* :**

All the major British keys (Verrall, Coe and Stubbs & Falk) distinguish *S. pyrastri* from *S. selenitica* by the different orientation of the pale markings on the tergites. None of them makes any mention of the much more obvious difference, the fact that these markings are white in *S*. *pyrastri* and yellow in *S. selenitica*. The reason for this omission is no doubt the fact that after death the white colour in *S. pyrastri* often darkens, so probably it was assumed that the markings on the abdomen of specimens of *S*. *selenitica* had also, like those of *pyrastri* been white in life. I remember my first encounter with *S. selenitica*: as I had expected this species to have white abdominal markings it did not occur to me at first that the hoverfly I was observing was a *Scaeva*; my first thought was that it might be an especially large example of a *Dasysyrphus*, such as *D. pinastri*; closer examination revealed its true identity. Those who have followed **British Hoverflies** through its various reprints may have noticed that the colour of the markings on Steve Falk's illustration of *S. selenitica* in the plates has been altered from white to yellow in the later versions.

***Melangyna umbellatarum* and *Melangyna labiatarum/compositarum*:**

Melangyna umbellatarum and Melangyna labiatarum are two relatively common species in the summer months, with characteristically rectangular spots on the abdomen. *M. compositarum* is considered very close to *labiatarum*, and is believed by some to be the same species. Neither the key nor the text of **British Hoverflies** mentions the fact that these spots are white in *M. umbellatarum* (though Verrall does mention this) and a rather acid yellow in *M. labiatarum*. This feature, coupled with the difference in colour and shininess of the thorax (shiny black in *M. umbellatarum* and dull brownish in *M. labiatarum*) enable these two species to be easily separated by eye in the field. I assume that *M. compositarum* will also have yellow spots; the two examples I have caught that keyed to this species (both males) certainly did.

***Xanthogramma pedissequum s.l.* and *Xanthogramma citrofasciatum*:**

The two British species of *Xanthogramma* are distinguished from one another in all keys by the shape of the triangular spots on abdominal tergite 2, which are almost equilateral in *X. pedissequum* (as in the logo at the head of this newsletter), and narrow wedges in *X. citrofasciatum*, and by the black leading edge to the wings in the former species (absent in the latter). There is however a colour difference between the two species: while *X. pedissequum* (and species A and B which have been split off from it) could be described as a black and yellow hoverfly – the scutellum, thoracic side stripes and front and middle legs are of the same bright yellow as the spots on the abdomen – *X. citrofasciatum* is a black, yellow and orange hoverfly: the thoracic stripes are bright yellow like the abdominal markings, but the legs and the tip of the

scutellum are orange. The contrast between the yellow and orange shows up instantly in the field and at once separates *X. citrofasciatum* from *X. pedissequum* and its allies. This colour difference is retained in dead specimens, and is clearly illustrated by Steve Falk in the plates in **British Hoverflies**.

***Volucella zonaria* males and *Volucella inanis*:**

I have known two occasions when male *Volucella zonaria* have been incorrectly identified by recorders as *Volucella inanis*. In both cases the mistake was made because the thoracic dorsum was predominantly black (as is always the case with *V. inanis*), instead of the expected chestnut, as illustrated in the plates in **British Hoverflies**. In one of the two cases the error was reinforced because the markings on tergite 2 were the same shade of yellow as those of the other tergites (like *V. inanis*) rather than chestnut as is usual with *V. zonaria*. It seems to me that this is an easy mistake to make. While the thoracic dorsum of female *V. zonaria* is predominantly chestnut, in all males that I have seen in life it is mainly black, with some chestnut markings – narrow stripes and an "onion dome" shape in the centre of the rear part – extremely like that of both sexes of *V. inanis.* To verify this I recently examined the 100-plus specimens of *V. zonaria* in the British hoverfly collection in the Natural History Museum in London. While there were variations in the shades of the thoracic dorsum between the blackest and the most chestnut, there was a consistent difference in those of the males (predominantly black) and the females (predominantly chestnut) to the extent that it would be possible to determine the sex of every specimen by looking at the thoracic dorsum alone. This sexual dimorphism gives the female a somewhat more hornet-like appearance than the male, an interesting phenomenon since it is the female that enters hornets' nests.

How then can the male *V. zonaria* be confidently distinguished from *V. inanis* in the field? *V. zonaria* is of course typically significantly larger, but it is not always easy to assess relative size when looking at a single insect in isolation, and of course under-sized examples can occur. A totally reliable way of separating the two species is to look at the sternites; sternite 2 is black in *V. zonaria* and yellow in *V. inanis*. However it is not always easy to observe the sternites in the field without capturing the insect. In most examples of *V. zonaria* the paired pale marks on tergite 2 are chestnut-coloured (in both sexes), but, as mentioned above, there are examples, both among those that I have seen alive, and among the specimens in the NHM collection, where these markings are of the same yellow shade as those on the other tergites. The shape of these markings, and their position on the tergite, does however seem to be a consistent distinction between the two species. In *V. zonaria* they have a curved inner edge and the front and rear edges are not parallel, while in *V. inanis* the inner edges are straight and parallel with each other, and the front and rear edges are almost parallel, giving the markings a nearly rectangular appearance. In *V. zonaria* the rear edge of the markings is positioned further forward on the tergite than in *V. inanis*, resulting in a much broader black band at the rear of the tergite.

HOVERFLIES OF NORTHUMBERLAND

Stuart Ball has drawn my attention to Jim Parrack's publication of an atlas of Hoverflies of Northumberland. It was published in 3 parts in Vasculum. The maps are at 10km square resolution. The text lists all the records in full. Details are as follows:

PARRACK, J.D. 2000. Hoverflies of Northumberland - Part 1 (Syrphidae, Syrphinae, Syrphini). Vasculum 85(4): 1-33.

PARRACK, J.D. 2001a. Hoverflies of Northumberland - Part 2 Syrphinae (Bacchini, Paragini), Milesiinae (Cheilosiini, Chrysogastrini). Vasculum 86(1): 1-32.

PARRACK, J.D. 2001b. Hoverflies of Northumberland - Part 3 Milesiinae (Eristalini, Merodontini, Pipizini, Sericomyiini, Volucellini and Xylotini). Vasculum 86(2): 2-36

INTERESTING RECENT RECORDS

Contributors are Ted Levy (ETL), Dave Levy (DAL), Mick Parker (MP), David Gibbs (DJG), David Iliff (DAI), Mike Wall (MW) and Simon Damant (SD). Simon reports that 121 hoverfly species have now been recorded from Wimpole Hall.

Arctophila superbiens	9/10/2001	Emborough, Somerset	ETL/DAL
Platycheirus ambiguus	13/5/2001	Oakers Wood, Dorset	MP
Eristalis abusivus	5/7/2001	Wolverton Lane, Dorset	ETL/DAL
Xanthandrus comtus	29/9/2001	Priddy, Somerset	ETL/DAL
Xylota florum	10/6/2001	Oakers Wood, Dorset	MP
Xylota tarda	10/6/2001	Oakers Wood, Dorset	MP
Orthonevra brevicornis	15/5/2001	Ashley Chase, Dorset	MP
Meligramma trianguliferum	13/5/2001	Oakers Wood, Dorset	MP
Callicera aurata	27/6/2002	Shortwood, Glos	DJG
Didea intermedia	19/7/2002	Blackwater Arboretum, Hants	DAI
Volucella zonaria	26/7/2002	Basingstoke, Hants	MW
Brachyopa bicolor	9/5/2002	Wimpole Hall, Cambs	SD
Epistrophe diaphana	10/6/2002	Wimpole Hall, Cambs	SD
	14/6/2002	Wimpole Hall, Cambs	SD
Epistrophe nitidicollis	21/5/2002	Wimpole Hall, Cambs	SD
Mallota cimbiciformis	20/5/2002	Wimpole Hall, Cambs	SD
Myolepta dubia	21/5/2002	Wimpole Hall, Cambs	SD
Orthonevra brevicornis	8/5/2002	Wimpole Hall, Cambs	SD
Pocota personata	12/4/2002	Wimpole Hall, Cambs	SD
Scaeva selenitica	14/6/2002	Wimpole Hall, Cambs	SD
Volucella inflata	11/6/2002	Wimpole Hall, Cambs	SD
	14/6/2002	Wimpole Hall, Cambs	SD

SECOND INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON THE SYRPHIDAE

"HOVERFLIES: BIODIVERSITY AND CONSERVATION"

(The following invitation has been received from our friends in Spain):

Dear friends and colleagues!

At the First International Syrphid Workshop at Stuttgart in July 2001, it was agreed that the Second Workshop should be in Spain. The syrphid group of Alicante University are happy to take on this responsibility.

Accordingly, the Second International Syrphid Workshop will take place at Alicante University which is 12 km from Alicante town centre (http://www.ua.es). Alicante is a Mediterranean coastal town and a popular holiday destination in the Southeast of Spain, easily reached by air, road and rail. Due to academic commitments of the people organising the workshop, we suggest the first or second weeks of June (three days for presentations) and Saturday for an optional excursion.

Before going ahead with more detailed planning we need to have some idea about the numbers attending and numbers of oral or poster communications. Please fill out the pre-registration form (attached document) and return it to the local organiser before 15 September, preferably by e-mail: Syrphidae@ua.es

The price of the workshop will be 120 Euros if you pay between September to December 2002, and 150 Euros after December 2002. This price includes registration, lunches, bus service to and from Alicante and the closing dinner. Details of other costs such as the excursion and details of financial help we may be able to offer people coming to the workshop will be given later.

In October 2002 we will send out a second communication and we hope to have ready an official homepage containing all information concerning the workshop (accommodation forms, financial and travel details, dates for sending abstracts, etc.).

We hope that this second Symposium will be another successful opportunity to share and exchange knowledge about syrphids and promote friendships and collaborations.

Any suggestions, ideas and comments will be welcome.

We look forward to seeing you at Alicante in June 2003!

Mª Angeles Marcos García, Santos Rojo and Celeste Pérez
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Fax: 34-965903815

Pre-registration Form

Name:
First name:
Address:

Fax:
Phone:
e-mail:

I intend to present a presentation (oral or poster) about the follow subject:
(orientative title)

This pre-registration form should be sent before September 15,
preferably by e-mail, to: Syrphidae@ua.es