

Sciomyzidae Recording Scheme

Newsletter 5

Spring 2010

Progress with preparing new identification keys

Unfortunately, due to my health problems during the first six months of 2009, progress was much slower than planned on the finalising the new identification keys that were last tested at the BENHS Workshop on 17 May 2008. However, some work has been done to address the problems identified with the key to genera and the next stage will be to prepare detailed figures for the keys and plates. A new microscope has been ordered to enable digital images to be taken of Sciomyzidae wings and other identification features, so work will resume on preparing the figures and refining the species keys over the coming months in early 2010.



Some recent publications on Sciomyzidae

There have been several recent publications from detailed investigations in Ireland into Sciomyzidae in wetland biotopes, which have added a species new to the British Isles and others new to Ireland. This research is also adding to our knowledge of the ecology and status of the Irish Sciomyzidae fauna, this information will help greatly with the future management and conservation of threatened wetlands.

Pherbellia stackelbergi Elberg was reported as a species new to Ireland from an Owen Emergence Trap by Staunton et al. (2008). This species has not yet been seen in Britain, so small (3.0-3.5mm long) *Pherbellia* resembling *P. brunnipes* (Meigen) should be carefully examined. *P. stackelbergi* differs from *P. brunnipes* by possessing a row of tiny hairs along the inner, lower front margin of the eye and hairs between the front orbital seta and the base of the antenna. There are also differences in the structure of the male genitalia (see Rozkošný, 1987) and probably there will be differences between these species in the female postabdomen as well, when these structures are investigated.

Staunton, J., Williams, C.D., McDonnell, R.J., Maher, C., Knutson, L. & Gormally, M.J. 2008. *Pherbellia (Oxytaenia) stackelbergi* Elberg, 1965 new to the British Isles, with comments on generic and sub-generic placement. *Entomologist's Record & Journal of Variation* **120**: 173-177.

It is quite possible that other additional *Pherbellia* may yet be found in Britain, so it is certainly worthwhile collecting numerous *Pherbellia* and carefully examining the male genitalia alongside the illustration in the standard European publications (listed in the identification references cited below).

Gittings and Speight (2008) reported *Colobaea pectoralis* (Zetterstedt, 1847) and *Pherbellia dorsata* (Zetterstedt, 1846) as new to Ireland from Malaise Trap studies on wetland sites. Both of these species are known from Britain, this paper shows the value of intensive trapping surveys in characterising Sciomyzidae faunas.

Gittings, T. & Speight, M.C.D. 2008. *Colobaea pectoralis* (Zetterstedt, 1847) and *Pherbellia dorsata* (Zetterstedt, 1846) snail-killing flies (Diptera, Sciomyzidae) new to Ireland. *Irish Naturalists' Journal* **29**: 116-118.



Sepedon sphegea - Judy Webb

Alan Stubbs found a male *Tetanocera montana* Day from Bruern Abbey in the North Cotswolds, England on 9 June 2008 (Stubbs, 2009), following the previous discovery of the species in Ireland (Speight, 2007). This species is most reliably separated from *Tetanocera arrogans* Meigen by carefully checking the male genitalia, although it is likely that there will also be good identification characters in the female postabdomen (yet to be defined and illustrated).

Stubbs, A. 2009. *Tetanocera montana* Day, 1881 (Diptera, Sciomyzidae) new to Britain from Midland England. *Dipterists Digest* **16**: 14.

Speight, M.C.D. 2007. *Rhaphium nasutum* (Diptera: Dolichopodidae), *Pherbellia rozkosnyi* & *Tetanocera montana* (Dip.: Sciomyzidae), insects new to Ireland and *Geomyza balachowski* (sic) (Dip.: Opomyzidae), presence in Ireland confirmed. *Entomologist's Record & Journal of Variation* **119**: 85-91. Adds *T. montana* new to Ireland from Co. Cork.

Identification References for European Sciomyzidae

This list is repeated from previous reports for those new to recording Sciomyzidae. Of these volumes the monograph by Vala is the easiest to obtain (currently at £55 excluding postage from Pemberley Books) and this also has the considerable advantage of including all the known British species.

Rivosecchi, L. 1992. *Sciomyzidae*. Fauna d'Italia. xi + 270pp. Edizione Calderini, Bologna. *Keys to British species except* *Colobaea pectoralis*, *Pteromicra angustipennis*, *P. glabricula*, *P. leucopeza*, *P. pectorosa*, *Pherbellia argyra*, *P. knutsoni*, *P. stackelbergi*, *P. stylifera*, *Antichaeta brevipennis*, *Renocera striata*, *Tetanocera freyi*, *T. montana*, *T. phyllophora*, *T. robusta*.

Rozkošný, R. 1984. The Sciomyzidae (Diptera) of Fennoscandia and Denmark. *Fauna Entomologica Scandinavica* **14**: 1-224. *Keys to all British species except* *Pherbellia knutsoni*.

Rozkošný, R. 1987. *A review of the Palaearctic Sciomyzidae (Diptera)*. University J.E. Purkyně, Brno. *Keys to all Palaearctic species known at the time of publication*.

Vala, J.-C. 1989. *Diptères Sciomyzidae Euro-Méditerranéens*. Faune de France 72. 300pp + 9 plates. Fédération Française des Sociétés de Sciences Naturelles, Paris. *Keys to all British species*.

Processing records for the Recording Scheme

Many thanks to all those who have sent in records to me during 2009, there have been some substantial contributions including from counties with relatively few records previously. These are currently being processed and compiled onto Recorder 6.

It is now realistic for me to prepare distribution maps in 2010 for publication in a new atlas. Therefore, if you have any records of Sciomyzidae and Phaeomyiidae please send them to me as E-mail attachments or on paper for me to process. I plan to abstract data from the material in the Natural history Museum this winter, a task begun some years ago but not yet completed.

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