

CRANEFLY RECORDING SCHEME

NEWSLETTER 7

May 1994

Six newsletters were produced in the period 1973 to 1976 (for an account of these years see *Dipt. Dig.* 6: 2-6). This newsletter launches a renewal of active promotion of the scheme after a prolonged period when my 'free' energies were absorbed 'by popular demand' in the book on hoverflies and more recently preparing the sequel on Larger Brachycera .

The scheme has not been idle all these years. A large body of data has been assembled, including that from all the field meetings and many samples from other sources.

Here I offer a brief outline of what is in hand, the aim being to give some encouragement as the new season gets underway.

PRESENT INTEREST IN CRANEFLIES.

The recent revision of recording schemes addresses reveals that 68 people are registered under all schemes and a further 24 are specifically listed for craneflies, giving a total of 92. Relatively few are as yet regularly submitting records or samples (apart from field meetings).

At the workshop in March, a poll was taken as topics for future workshops. Conopids won, narrowly, with Larger Brachycera and Craneflies as next near equals. Hence the aim is to cover craneflies in March 1996. This sounds a long way off but it is clear that those who gain most from workshops are the people who have already gathered material and can go home with lots of names on their collection. As a scheme organiser it has been a spur to know so many people have a desire to get over the hump and make progress with these flies. Hence some action in the two year gap before 1996 is called for.

RECENT ATLASES

Readers of the Bulletin will already know that BRC has published two atlases: one on long-palped craneflies (Tipulinae of Coe) and another on Ptychopteridae (the latter includes a key to species).

DATA PROCESSING

The RECORDER computer package is being used. A considerable body of data is already on but it will take time to catch up on the 30+ years backlog. Fortunately several people are putting their data onto this or other refutable systems.

MATERIALS WITH THIS NEWSLETTER

A new generation of keys needs to be devised but at least a start has been made. Hence I am here issuing the following.

1. Key to families within Nematocera (note old Tipulidae now 4 families)
2. Key to genera of long-palped craneflies (Tipulidae)
3. Key to species of long-bodied craneflies (Cylindrotomidae)

- \$. Key to hairy-eyed crane-flies (Pediidae) [using Russian illustrations by Savchenko]
6. Key to Molophilus, including lackschewitzianus and variispinus. The long standing species are illustrated from Edwards 1938. These are small species (c. 3-5mm) with long hairs on the wing veins (tend to rub off). The body is orange, orange-brown or black. The male genitalia are distinctive. The genus is common in summer, with up to 10 species occurring at once in some localities. Most species occur in moist woods but some are on wet meadows, bogs and moorland.
7. Key to Tasiocera, with all five British species (re-formatted from Freeman, 1951); only 1 species in Coe, 1950.. These are dark brown bodied, like diminutive Molophilus. Species such as murina are often common in woods, swarming around bluebells or ferns in May. The scarcer species tend to occur in July and August.

FORTHCOMING STARTER PACK

I am in discussion with BRC over the production of a starter pack. If this proves feasible, the hope is to have it ready by the November meeting. Items under consideration are mainly in late draft or will involve a re-vamp of starter papers of the 1970's.

1. A more expanded statement on the progress of the scheme.
2. Notes on field craft.
3. Hints on identification, curation and record making.
4. Main references to adults and early stages: including BRC atlases.
5. A revised British check list (modelled on the 1991 Palaearctic list)
6. A list of additions since Coe, 1950; there are about 37, mostly rare.
7. Notes on the additions which enable identification.

MEANWHILE

A new key to long-palped crane-flies has been written, the main task being to complete the illustrations. This should be ready for circulation later this year. The account that I published in the Bull. Amat. ent. Soc. (1972-4) should remain pretty useful.

This newsletter will reach you in mid May as crane-flies start to get going in earnest. There is a succession of species though to October (or even early November). Hopefully you will be stepping up your interest in these flies now that the recording scheme is trying to provide the necessary help.

Happy hunting, and remember, legs are optional extras.

Alan Stubbs

Scheme organiser

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