

Tachinid Recording Scheme Update

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The TRS isn't known for producing many newsletters or reports but the 100th Bulletin has prompted us to do a little summary of where we are in the tachinid world

We've continued to devote most of our time & energy into training more people in how to identify tachinids – in most cases this isn't in the form of a structured course but instead we just get people working through the keys and we help them to decide on the features that tend to be hardest to understand when you start off. Last year we ran a marathon 2-day DF workshop at Preston Montford which was very successful and saw me bringing 32 drawers of my personal collection up for everyone to pour over. Later this year we will run a 1-day workshop for the Tanyptera Project in Liverpool, which we're both very excited about!



Preston Montford February 2024

The last few years have been marked by the arrival of many species from mainland Europe, particularly warm-loving species which suggests the spread is due to a warming climate. In 2019 we saw *Ectophasia crassipennis* (now widespread in all southern & eastern coastal counties); *Eliozeta pellucens* (arriving in the Brecks in the east and now spread across Beds & Bucks to north Oxon); and *Phasia aurigera* (single observations from Kent and then Wilts). Then in 2020 the anticipated arrival of *Pales processioneae* (an Oak Processionary Moth parasitoid) was confirmed by Andy Halstead. Then we had a gap of a few years but in 2023 another flurry of arrivals: *Tachina magnicornis* & *Catharosia albisquama* (both in East Suffolk); *Cylindromyia bicolor* (seems to have established at Rainham Marshes reserve); and, in the north, *Gymnocheta magna* & *lucida* were discovered after the publication of a key to Scandinavian *Gymnocheta* spp

Many of these species arrived without much comment, except that they are an interesting addition to the British fauna. But others, like *Tachina magnicornis* and the 2 *Gymnocheta* spp. have created a few more headaches because they make previously “easy” species quite tricky. *Tachina fera* was a

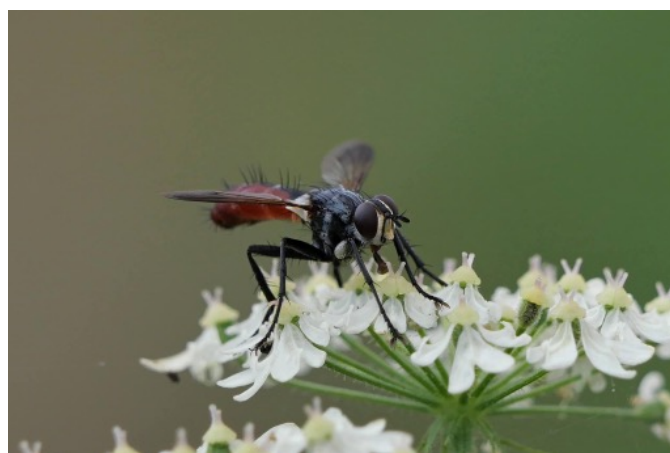
simple ID but now, with *Tachina magnicornis* spreading quite rapidly, we have to be much more careful to spot individuals with a wider frons and dark front tarsi. The same goes for any “*Gymnocheta viridis*” found in Scotland or Ireland because *G. magna* & *lucida* seem to be species that are limited to fairly boreal / montane habitats and have probably existed undetected in this region for quiet some time. They are quite a bit harder to determine from photos but so far we haven't found either in England ... yet!



Ectophasia crassipennis (male), Tony Mathews, Torbay 20/7/2023

2025 has seen a relative of *Gonia* being found (by Steven Falk, in prep.) in roughly the same area as *Tachina magnicornis* so the eastern counties seem ripe for the discovery of more species. The same goes for Kent which seems only slightly behind Suffolk in number of new arrivals being detected there. *Cylindromyia brassicaria*, a rare and local British species, seems to have had a good year and has popped up in a lot of new locations.

I'm sure that we will see the spread of some species and the arrival of many others over the coming years so it's an exciting time to study tachinids!



Cylindromyia bicolor – Lawrence Rogers, Rainham Marshes RSPB TQ548789 19/7/2023