

Larger Brachycera Recording Scheme

Newsletter 28 Spring 2010

Welcome to an overdue update from the Larger Brachycera Recording Scheme. I do hope I have been able to answer all the enquiries received but my apologies if some of these have taken a while. Hopefully, service will be improved in 2010. Work has been progressing steadily on the planned atlas as well. My thanks to all those who have sent spreadsheets of records – from a few tens to several thousands. They all feed into the bigger picture and will see their way into the atlas and subsequently the NBN Gateway. Some momentum was lost with BRC moving offices and losing Peter Brown as the contact. Peter had provided much help but we will be looking to timetable in production soon and will keep you posted.

Significant records received

To give some flavour of the data that has arrived during 2009 I have summarised some of the significant records for each family:

Acroceridae

A few records were received for *Paracrocer orbiculus*, *Acrocera* and *Ogcodes* spp. from a scattering of localities across Southern England (MP, KA et al).

Asilidae

Our largest Asilid *Asilus crabroniformis* has been well reported from Cornwall, Dorset, Hampshire, Surrey, Berks, Bucks and Oxford. New records of *Leptarthrus vitripennis* continue to arrive, including Colley Hill, Surrey (KA), Crowsley Park Woods, Berks (CW) and Prestwood LNR, Bucks (TM). Good numbers of records of *Lasiopogon cinctus* and *Choerades marginatus* have been added (AJ, JP, MH, RD et al). North of the border, *Machimus cingulatus* was found on 9.9.09 near Dornoch at Blackmuir wood, Inverness (MM) and *Rhadiurgus variabilis* at Ballinluig Island (SH) and in June 2009 near Dornoch at Meikle Ferry Links (MM). *Machimus rusticus* was reported from Portsdown and Bulford Field, Hants (RD, GE). Star-billing has to go to the discovery of *Machimus cowini*, previously only known from Ireland and the Isle of Man, at a SSSI in South Cumbria in 2006 (RW per SH).

Athericidae

Atherix ibis continues to be sporadically reported while the only reports received of *Atherix marginata* were from Bodmin Moor, Cornwall and Hembury Woods and Holne Wood, Devon in the 1980s and 90s (KA) and four sites in Cumbria (SH) up to 2008.

Bombyliidae

Bombylius major and the much scarcer *Bombylius discolor* continue to be well reported with some good photos and interesting



observations reported. 2009 records of *Bombylius minor* came from several Dorset heaths (MP, AP, SR). Records of *Bombylius canescens* were pre-2009 but included Golden Cap, Dorset (KA), Hauxton Down and Great Cheverell Hill, Hants (GE) and 1991 records for 2 South Cumbrian woodlands (SH). *Thyridanthrax fenestratus* was seen at several sites in Dorset, Hampshire, Surrey (MP, IC, RD, SR, AP, SB) and across to Wildmoor Heath NR, Berks (MH). Alan Stubbs' comments on this species in his DD paper 'Pearce's photographs in Typical Flies' produced quite a response and many records were sent through following its publication. This prompts the plea to submit records to the Scheme so that status can be monitored, especially for such scarce species. It is worth emphasising that all records are valuable to the Recording Scheme even if they do not add a dot to a map. They can be used in many other ways relating to research and conservation. *Villa cingulata* (RDB 1) was reported from a BBOWT reserve in Bucks in 2007 and another site just across into Oxfordshire in 2008 (MH).

Rhagionidae

Of the uncommon species, *Ptiolina obscura* was reported from Duncombe Park, Yorks in 2004 and *Ptiolina nigra* from Gait Barrows NNR and Moor House NR (SH). *Rhagio strigosa* was found at its traditional site at Box Hill (KA) whilst MM reported "large numbers" of *Rhagio notatus* along the River Conlon, north-west of Inverness (MM).

Stratiomyidae

Finding *Oxycera leonina* anywhere is good but to see one in your Norfolk garden on 14.7.09 was a notable event (IR). Equally good was the discovery of *Odontomyia argentata* near Bristol on 5.5.09 (AJ) whilst the species was also found at the Lower Test NR in 2000. *O. angulata* was reported from one Norfolk site during 2004-06 (JP) and *O. ornata* from 3 Norfolk sites (JP) as well as new localities in Dorset and Hants (RA). *O. tigrina* was reported from 3 Norfolk sites plus localities in Gloucestershire and Sussex (KA). *Stratiomys chameleon* reports came from a traditional site in Oxford (MH) with *S. longicornis* from Thorney Island, Sussex and North Hayling, Hants (GE). Stratiomyids were well reported generally with good numbers of records of *Chorisops nagatomii* and *Vanoyia tenuicornis*

Tabanidae

After the rediscovery of *Atylotus fulvus* in Glen Moriston in 2007 (JB), it was good to find further specimens nearby in June and July 2009 (JB, RL per MM). *Atylotus latistriatus* was represented by records from Hythe/Calshot Marshes SSSI, Hants in 2003 (MH) and Brancaster Staithe, Norfolk in 2006 (JP). Other Hampshire records from a large batch of mainly malaise trap data from Richard Dickson included *Tababus miki*, *T. glaucopsis* and *T. maculicornis*.

Therevidae

Two females of *Thereva plebeja* were observed ovipositing in dry sandy soil at the Devil's Spittleful NR, Worcestershire on 12.5.09, with other records from Petersfield, Hants (RD). KM also observed a female *Pandivirilia melaleuca* around an oak stump at Drakes Broughton, Worcestershire. PP and RD found a female *Acrosathe annulata* at Whisby NR, Lincs on 12.7.09 with black erect hairs on the thoracic dorsum, corresponding to Form Y of Stubbs & Falk. *Thereva cinifera* was found at Methyr Mawr Warren on 8.7.09 (MP) and five separate *Thereva handlirschi* were located in Highland Scotland during Aug 2009, including Strathconon, Inverness and Grantown-on-Spey (MM). Pre-2009 records included *Pandivirilia melaleuca* at Churcham Orchards, Gloucestershire and a good set of records of *Spiriverpa lunulata* and *Clorismia rustica* from river shingles across Northern England, including Cumbria, Cheshire, Yorkshire and Northumberland (SH).

Xylomyidae

Solva marginata was reported from Surrey, Derbyshire and several sites in Hants (KA, RD).

Xylophagidae

There was a larval report of *Xylophagus cinctus* from Beinn Eighe NNR along with quite good numbers of reports of the more common *X. ater* (KA, RD), especially from Hants.

Recorders

Thanks are due to the following recorders:

Keith Alexander/NT, Robert Aquilina, Jane Bowman, Peter Brash, Barry Brigden, Sam Bosanquet, Gordon Corbett, Ian Cross, Richard Davidson, Richard Dickson, Scotty Dodd, George Else, Peter Floyd-Spong, Robin Harley, Martin Harvey/BBOWT, Steve Hewitt/Tullie House Museum, John Hunnisett, Andy Jukes, Brian Little, Richard Lyzkowski, Murdo Macdonald/HBRG, Kevin McGee, Tony Marshall, Ken Merrifield, Ian Morgan, J. M. Parmenter, Mick Parker, Angela Peters, John Phillips, Philip Porter, Ian Rabarts, Stuart Roberts, Alan Stubbs and Chris Webster.

Rhagio perrisi – species or not?

Keith Alexander has examined an alleged *Rhagio perrisi* in Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter. The Curator, Dave Bolton, let him examine the specimen identified by Audcent (from Stoke Woods, Exeter, 3.vi.1933) and the Museum also has an Audcent identified *R. tringarius* so there must have been something about it to make Audcent distinguish it from *R. tringarius*. However, it is slightly unusual that he does not appear to have published the record nor sought further confirmation.

Séguy (1926) separates the two species on the basis of *R. perrisi* having the femur and tibiae of the hind leg more of less blackish at the apex. The femur and tibia of Audcent's does have some darkening but falls in the middle range when compared with other material. This character does not therefore seem reliable in isolation and it would be very useful if anybody knows of any other named '*R. perrisi*'.

Peter Chandler is not sure that *R. perrisi* is a good species. He advises that it is recognised in Fauna Europaea and recorded from France, Spain, Austria and Switzerland but was omitted, even as a synonym, from the Palaearctic Catalogue and from the Palaearctic Die Fliegen key, possibly due to oversight. *R. tringarius* is very variable in colour and Verrall even regarded darker specimens as a separate species *R. nigriventris*. The Palaearctic Catalogue has that and several other names as subspecies of *tringarius* but with dubious validity. Presumably Audcent named his specimen from Séguy's key but structural differences would need to be demonstrated to accept *R. perrisi* or the Exeter specimen as distinct. (Thanks to Keith for this information)

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