



Beetle News



Circulation: An informal email newsletter circulated periodically to those interested in British beetles

Copyright: Text & drawings © 2011 Authors Photographs © 2011 Photographers

Citation: Beetle News 4.1 May 2012

Editor: Richard Wright, 70, Norman road, Rugby, CV21 1DN Email:richardwrightuk@yahoo.co.uk

Contents

Editorial - Richard Wright	1
Introductory photoguide to British beetles - advance notice Richard Wright	1
Beetle recording in Gloucestershire – an appeal for records - Keith Alexander	2
Beetle recording in Cornwall – an appeal for records - Keith Alexander	2
A major disadvantage of the ‘Typomap’ system for recording locality data - Andrew Duff	2
An Australian weevil, <i>Achopera alternata</i> Lea, 1910 (Curculionidae), in Wales - John Bratton	3
Flood Debris in Warwickshire, Spring 2012 - Richard Wright & Steve Lane	4
Observations of <i>Hypulus quercinus</i> (Melandryidae) - John Bratton	7
Westmorland <i>Plateumaris sericea</i> (Chrysomelidae): a clarification - John Bratton	7
<i>Philonthus parvicornis</i> Gravenhorst in Kent - Ron Carr	8
Eucnemids in Warwickshire – A Summary - Steve Lane	9
Beginner’s Guide : Broad-nosed weevils in broad-leaved trees - Richard Wright	10

Editorial

Richard Wright

This is the first issue for seven months, the main reason for the delay being a lack of contributions. My particular thanks to John Bratton for sending three articles and my apologies to him and to other authors for the delay in publishing some articles.

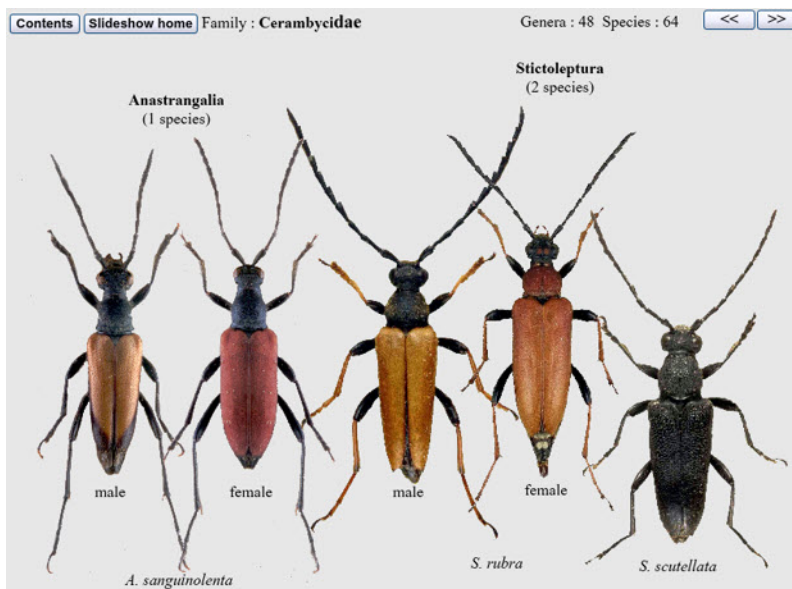
In spite of the difficulty of obtaining enough material, I intend to continue producing Beetle News. However, I have decided to reduce the planned number of issues from four to three each year.

Introductory photoguide to British beetles - advance notice

Richard Wright

A question I am often asked is “How can I get started on beetles?” and another is “What is the best field guide to beetles?”. The second question is easy to answer, there are no true field guides to beetles as most species cannot be identified in the field! The first is more difficult. In order to help beginners familiarise themselves with the more distinctive species, and also to recognise beetle families more easily, I have been working on a simple onscreen guide using photographs of set specimens. This will show over 2,000 species, more than half of British beetles, including all of the more distinctive species and at least one representative from each genus, except for the smallest and most difficult groups. A sample screenshot is shown opposite, though obviously the quality is much better in the actual product.

This guide will be made available as a free download. I had hoped to complete it by now, but although 90% complete we have now entered the main survey season and time is at a premium. It will certainly be ready by the next issue of Beetle News, where full information will be available, but the first announcement will be made on the beetles-britishisles group :
<http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/beetles-britishisles/>



Beetle recording in Gloucestershire – an appeal for records

Coleoptera of Gloucestershire was published by David Atty in 1983. I have been acting as ‘county recorder’ for the Gloucestershire Naturalists Society for some time since then and have been collating all records from the county in order to produce an up-date to David Atty’s review. I moved away from the county in 2003 and so it is time to terminate my official duties and to finish with publication of a new review of the beetle fauna. My personal deadline is next winter and I would like to invite anybody who has visited the county in recent years and made beetle records to send me copies for incorporation into the county record.

The species entries are all written and my main task for this year is to write the introductory texts. The aim is to produce a companion volume to Michael Darby’s *Wiltshire Beetles* (2009) and Andrew Duff’s *Beetles of Somerset* (1993). Three of the South West’s six counties will then have modern beetle reviews.

Keith Alexander

Send records to :
keith.alexander@waitrose.com

Beetle recording in Cornwall – an appeal for records

The most up-to-date review of Cornwall’s beetle fauna was published as part of the *Victoria County History* in 1906! At present we have no up-to-date checklist let alone a modern review. With encouragement from the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Federation of Biological Recorders (CISFBR) and the Environmental Records Centre for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (ERCCIS), I have begun work on developing a county checklist and a full review of the beetle fauna. Ian McClenaghan has been helping where he can. We are fortunate in having a stand-alone biological records database – ERICA – which has been populated with the historic data by the old Cornwall Biological Records Unit (CBRU) and which has been kept current by Colin French. This makes the checklist and review task much easier as so much of the groundwork has already taken place. Cerambycidae have already been reviewed and good progress has been made on the Carabidae. If any readers have beetle records from Cornwall I would be very pleased to hear from them. The intention is to maintain the ERICA record and to use it to develop the checklist and full review, which will form a parallel resource for people who are interested in the county’s beetle fauna. These will be available on-line through the CISFBR and ERCCIS websites.

Keith Alexander
keith.alexander@waitrose.com

A major disadvantage of the ‘Typomap’ system for recording locality data

Andrew Duff
110 Cromer Road
West Runton
Norfolk
NR27 9QA

Balfour-Browne’s ‘Typomap’ system of two-letter subcounty abbreviations is briefly described in *A Coleopterist’s Handbook* (Cooter & Barclay, 2006: 327-328). However these authors failed to point out a fundamental flaw of this now largely outdated system: the two letter codes are only unique within each country, not within the British Isles as a whole. The following codes are duplicated: AN = North Aberdeenshire and Antrim; EC = East Cornwall and East Cork; ED = Edinburgh and East Donegal; NS = North Somerset and North Sutherland; SG = Stirling and South Galway; SK = Selkirk and South Kerry; SL = South Lancashire and Sligo; SS = South Somerset and South Sutherland; ST = Staffordshire and South Tipperary; WC = West Cornwall and West Cork; WI = West Invernesshire and Wicklow; WX = Wexford and West Sussex. The ‘Typomap’ system also deviates from the Watsonian vice-county system in several places, including the use of an ill-defined central London area, which is confusingly given the symbol of a

gothic ‘L’ (as distinct from the non-Gothic ‘L’ which represents Lundy).

Used sensibly, where records are first sorted by country, the ‘Typomap’ system might have some merit, although hardly anyone now knows what the abbreviations stand for. However in an electronic age of databases and spreadsheets, where unique codes are required, the system simply doesn’t cut it. Having recently tried to understand the late Leslie Frewin’s card index of beetle records, which used the ‘Typomap’ abbreviations but didn’t specify which country was being referred to, I can vouch for just how confusing this can be, more especially as he collected widely in Britain and Ireland. In my view the ‘Typomap’ system always was an abomination and is best forgotten about and never mentioned ever again.

Reference

COOTER, J. & BARCLAY, M.V.L. (eds.) 2006. *A Coleopterist’s Handbook* (4th edition). Orpington: Amateur Entomologists’ Society.

An Australian weevil, *Achopera alternata* Lea, 1910 (Curculionidae), in Wales.

At the end of a hot afternoon's collecting with Mike Howe in the National Trust's Erddig Park, SJ3247, vice-county Denbighshire, on 16 May 1998, I picked up a 6.5 mm long (measured from the tip of the elytra to the tip of the rostrum), brown, scale-covered weevil beside a sap-run on a beech. Weevils are not a group I routinely try to identify, but I was under standing orders from my then line manager Adrian Fowles to collect all weevils I found in Wales, so this one went into the pot and was passed to Adrian a few days later. He quickly realised it was not a weevil known from Britain, nor did it appear to be a European species. The first consequence was that Mike received a late-night phone call asking whether he had actually seen me take the weevil. Once I had persuaded Adrian it was not a practical joke, it was dispatched to Howard Mendel in the Natural History Museum, where it was recognised as Antipodean. At the end of July 1998 Howard sent the following e-mail.

“Richard Thompson had one last search of the collections to identify John Bratton's mystery weevil, before sending it off to Australia - and managed to identify it. It is *Achopera alternata* Lea. We have two specimens in the collection, from Tasmania, but John's specimen better matches the form of the species described from Eastern Australia.”

I can find no information on the web about the biology of this species and cannot offer any explanation of how it arrived at Erddig. A gift shop selling peat-free plants is advertised on the Erddig web page but there doesn't appear to be an extensive garden centre. The weevil was caught in semi-natural parkland well away from buildings, and there is no reason to suppose the National Trust was involved in its occurrence at Erddig.

A. alternata has since been found a second time in Britain, in Hertfordshire, according to the website of the Watford Coleoptera Group (Thewcg.org.uk). The specimen is on long-term loan in Adrian Fowles' collection. I thank all the above-named people for their contributions to the tale (Mike Howe for transport to Erddig); also Ilija Vukomanovic for photography, and whoever carded it much more neatly than I would have managed.

John H. Bratton, 18 New Street, Menai Bridge, Anglesey, LL59 5HN
jhnbratton@yahoo.co.uk



Flood Debris in Warwickshire, Spring 2012

Richard Wright & Steve Lane

With newspaper and television coverage of drought and hosepipe bans, it has been impossible not to notice that the last two years have been extremely dry in many parts, especially Midland, southern and eastern England. River flooding has become almost a thing of the past, a loss to those coleopterists who are aware that debris left behind by flooding is a rich source of specimens. Following a wet April, Warwickshire Wildlife Trust organised a recording meeting on 30th at their Whitacre Heath SSSI nature reserve, a low-lying area of grassland and former gravel extraction areas adjacent to the River Tame. On arrival, it was noted that parts of the reserve were flooded, not by the river topping its banks but rather by ground water rising. Considerable amounts of debris were recovered, sieved and searched. Some of this originated from a wet field, some from wet woodland and some from a rather bare area normally with sparse short vegetation. The species recorded in these three areas varied considerably but had all obviously originated on the reserve itself. A total of 164 species of beetle was recorded. Among the more interesting was *Acupalpus parvulus* a ground beetle with only one other known county site. Several specimens of *Bembidion obliquum* were also found, a species which in Warwickshire has so far only been recorded from catchments of rivers which flow into the Trent and so to the North Sea. It has never been found in the majority of the county which is drained by the River Avon, which flows to the west, in spite of suitable habitat being present, a situation which reflects the mainly eastern national distribution of the species. While the majority of species recorded were typical ground dwellers, including 53 Staphylinidae and 42 Carabidae, a few were more surprising. For example, where water had risen through wet woodland, a number of the weevil *Phyllobius oblongus* were found. No doubt these were freshly emerged adults waiting to make their way into the trees to feed on the new foliage.

SL then proceeded to visit other sites later the same day. The River Blythe had not really flooded and was relatively unproductive, producing 46 species. At Kingsbury, again on the River Tame, the area that had flooded included horse-grazed pasture and a shingle bar (which explains the presence of *Bembidion punctulatum*), although the river hadn't dramatically burst its banks. A footbridge was partially immersed and many beetles could be seen aggregating on the tops of the hand rails and posts. Particularly striking were the thousands of *Gastrophysa viridula* huddled together in their predicament. It was also odd to see several *Silpha atrata* crossing the main bridge and to observe staphs and carabids occupying niches in the concrete here. The main samples taken here were from matted grass and dung refuse which had been deposited against a wire fence that had become partially submerged. A total of 108 species was recorded.

Later, SL continued to the Brandon Marsh SSSI Nature Reserve on the River Avon. He has been recording at this reserve for many years and there were already 766 beetle species on the reserve list. He was thus selective in sampling, but nevertheless recorded 77 species. The sampling was carried out in a partially flooded river meadow. Although there was little refuse here, thousands of beetles were observed clinging onto the tops of grass stems above the rising tide and large samples were obtained by netting through the water and emergent grass stems and putting the contents into the sieving bowl for sorting. Many specimens were also observed from the bank of the river as they drifted helplessly past in the torrent. Among the more interesting finds was *Cassida prasina* only the fourth county record and the first since 1994. An oddity was the Lily Beetle *Lilioceris lili* though the origin of the specimen is unlikely to be on the reserve. The vast numbers of the weevils *Hypera zoilus* and *Graptus triguttatus* was also surprising.

During the following few days, with rain continuing on and off, RW visited several other sites but debris proved difficult to find. At the tiny Eathorpe Nature Reserve, on the River Leam, only a couple of handfuls of debris were found, but nevertheless it yielded 21 species. At the Swift Valley Reserve, north of Rugby, debris could only be found in trees overhanging the river and some was retrieved using a pond net, producing 54 species. The River Avon upstream of Rugby floods rapidly, but the floods also fall equally quickly. When it was visited on 5th May, it had already risen and fallen twice and although debris was found, only 54 species were present.

The total number of species recorded from all of the sites combined was 297, but with some Staphylinidae, Aleocharinae still to be identified it will reach over 300. This is by no means an exceptional catch, but nevertheless illustrates the value of this method of obtaining records and will add nearly 550 extra records to our county database.

The main families recorded are shown below, with the first two producing over half of the total.

Staphylinidae	99
Carabidae	65
Chrysomelidae	30
Curculionidae	26
Hydrophilidae	21

No species was recorded at all seven sites, with only one *Pterostichus strenuus* found at six sites and ten species found at five sites. Indeed of the 297 species 166 (56%) were recorded from only one site, reflecting the different habitat types which were flooded. For those who have not tried this method of finding beetles, it can be thoroughly recommended.

A full list of the species recorded follows.

Liist of beetle species recorded in flood debris in Warwickshire April 30th - May 5th 2012**Anthicidae***Anthicus antherinus***Apionidae***Apion frumentarium**Eutrichapion ervi**Perapion violaceum**Protapion apricans***Byrrhidae***Byrrhus pilula**Cytilus sericeus***Carabidae***Acupalpus dubius**Acupalpus exiguus**Acupalpus meridianus**Acupalpus parvulus**Agonum emarginatum**Agonum fuliginosum**Agonum gracile**Agonum marginatum**Agonum micans**Agonum thoreyi**Agonum viduum**Amara aenea**Amara communis**Amara familiaris**Amara lunicollis**Amara ovata**Amara similata**Amara tibialis**Anisodactylus binotatus**Badister bullatus**Bembidion aeneum**Bembidion articulatum**Bembidion biguttatum**Bembidion dentellum**Bembidion guttula**Bembidion lampros**Bembidion lunulatum**Bembidion obliquum**Bembidion obtusum**Bembidion properans**Bembidion punctulatum**Bembidion tetracolum**Bradycellus harpalinus**Bradycellus verbasci**Calathus fuscipes**Calathus melanocephalus**Carabus nemoralis**Clivina fossor**Demetrias atricapillus**Elaphrus cupreus**Harpalus affinis**Harpalus rufipes**Leistus ferrugineus**Leistus fulvibarbis**Leistus terminatus**Nebria brevicollis**Notiophilus biguttatus**Notiophilus substriatus**Ocys harpaloides**Ophonus rufibarbis**Paradromius linearis**Paranchus albipes**Platynus assimilis**Poecilus cupreus**Pterostichus diligens**Pterostichus minor**Pterostichus nigrita**Pterostichus strenuus**Pterostichus vernalis**Stenolophus mixtus**Stomis pumicatus**Trechoblemus micros**Trechus obtusus**Trechus quadristriatus**Trichocellus placidus***Chrysomelidae***Altica lythri**Altica palustris**Aphthona euphorbiae**Bruchus loti**Cassida flaveola**Cassida prasina**Cassida rubiginosa**Cassida vibex**Chaetocnema hortensis**Chrysolina oricalcia**Chrysolina polita**Chrysolina staphylaea**Crepidodera aurata**Crepidodera fulvicornis**Crepidodera plutus**Gastrophysa viridula**Hydrothassa marginella**Lilioceris lili**Longitarsus dorsalis**Longitarsus melanocephalus**Phaedon armoraciae**Phaedon cochleariae**Phaedon tumidulus**Phyllotreta diademata**Phyllotreta exclamationis**Phyllotreta tetrastigma**Phyllotreta undulata**Plagiodera versicolora**Psylliodes napi**Psylliodes picina***Clambidae***Clambus armadillo***Coccinellidae***Adalia bipunctata**Anisosticta novemdecimpunctata**Calvia quattuordecimguttata**Coccidula rufa**Coccinella septempunctata**Propylea quattuordecimpunctata**lobora vigintiduopunctata**Rhyzobius litura**Scymnus femoralis**Scymnus haemorrhoidalis**Tytthaspis sedecimpunctata***Cryptophagidae***Atomaria mesomela**Telmatophilus caricis**Telmatophilus typhae***Curculionidae***Anthonomus rubi**Barynotus obscurus**Barypeithes araneiformis**Barypeithes pellucidus**Ceutorhynchus obstrictus**Ceutorhynchus pallidactylus**Ceutorhynchus typhae**Dorytomus taeniatus**Glocianus distinctus**Graptus triguttatus**Hypera nigrirostris**Hypera plantaginis**Hypera zoilus**Leiosoma deflexum**Mecinus pyraster**Mogulones asperifoliarum**Nedys quadrimaculatus**Parethelcus pollinarius**Pelenomus comari**Phyllobius oblongus**Phyllobius pomaceus**Phyllobius pyri**Rhinoncus pericarpus**Rhinoncus perpendicularis**Sitona lepidus**Sitona lineatus***Dryopidae***Dryops ernesti**Dryops luridus***Dytiscidae***Hydroporus angustatus**Ilybius fenestratus***Elateridae***Agriotes obscurus**Agriotes sputator**Hypnoidus riparius***Eriirhinidae***Notaris acridulus**Notaris scirpi***Helophoridae***Helophorus brevipalpis**Helophorus grandis**Helophorus obscurus***Histeridae***Margarinotus purpurascens*

Hydraenidae

Hydraena riparia
Limnebius nitidus
Ochthebius minimus

Hydrophilidae

Anacaena bipustulata
Anacaena globulus
Cercyon analis
Cercyon convexiusculus
Cercyon haemorrhoidalis
Cercyon marinus
Cercyon melanocephalus
Cercyon pygmaeus
Cercyon quisquilius
Cercyon sternalis
Cercyon ustulatus
Cryptopleurum minutum
Enochrus coarctatus
Enochrus testaceus
Hydrobius fuscipes
Laccobius colon
Megasternum concinnum
Sphaeridium bipustulatum
Sphaeridium lunatum
Sphaeridium scarabaeoides

Latridiidae

Aridius bifasciatus
Corticaria impressa
Corticarina minuta
Enicmus transversus

Leiodidae

Catops morio
Choleva jeanneli
Nargus velox
Ptomaphagus subvillosus

Nitidulidae

Meligethes aeneus
Meligethes ovatus

Phalacridae

Olibrus liquidus
Stilbus testaceus

Pyrochroidae

Pyrochroa serraticornis

Scarabaeidae

Aphodius ater
Aphodius haemorrhoidalis
Aphodius prodromus
Aphodius sphaelatus

Silphidae

Silpha atrata

Silvanidae

Psammoecus bipunctatus

Staphylinidae

Aleochara brevipennis
Alianta incana
Aloconota insecta

Amischa analis
Anotylus rugosus
Anotylus tetracarinatus
Anthracus consputus
Atheta graminicola
Atheta melanocera
Bisnius sordidus
Bolitobius castaneus
Callicerus obscurus
Carpelimus corticinus
Carpelimus manchuricus
Carpelimus rivularis
Deinopsis erosa
Dinaraea angustula
Drusilla canaliculata
Gabrius appendiculatus
Gabrius breviventer
Geostiba circellaris
Gyrophypnus angustatus
Hygronoma dimidiata
Ischnosoma splendidum
Lathrobium brunnipes
Lathrobium fulvipenne
Lathrobium geminum
Lathrobium longulum
Lesteva longoelytrata
Lesteva sicula
Lobrathium multipunctum
Myllaena dubia
Myllaena minuta
Ocypus aeneocephalus
Ocypus brunnipes
Omalium rivulare
Othius angustus
Othius punctulatus
Oxypoda elongatula
Oxytelus laqueatus
Pachnida nigella
Philhygra debilis
Philonthus carbonarius
Philonthus cognatus
Philonthus laminatus
Philonthus marginatus
Philonthus quisquiliarius
Philonthus sanguinolentus
Philonthus splendens
Platystethus alutaceus
Proteinus laevigatus
Proteinus ovalis
Quedius curtipennis
Quedius levicollis
Quedius maurorufus
Quedius nitipennis
Quedius picipes
Quedius schatzmayri
Quedius semiobscurus

Rugilus orbiculatus
Rugilus rufipes
Rybaxis longicornis
Sepedophilus marshami
Stenus bifoveolatus
Stenus bimaculatus
Stenus boops
Stenus brunnipes
Stenus canaliculatus
Stenus cicindeloides
Stenus clavicornis
Stenus fulvicornis
Stenus impressus
Stenus junco
Stenus latifrons
Stenus nanus
Stenus nitidiusculus
Stenus ossium
Stenus providus
Stenus solutus
Sunius propinquus
Tachinus marginellus
Tachinus rufipes
Tachinus subterraneus
Tachyporus atriceps
Tachyporus chrysomelinus
Tachyporus dispar
Tachyporus hypnorum
Tachyporus nitidulus
Tachyporus obtusus
Tachyporus pallidus
Tachyporus pusillus
Tachyporus solutus
Tachyporus tersus
Thinodromus arcuatus
Tychus niger
Xantholinus elegans
Xantholinus linearis
Xantholinus longiventris
Zyras haworthi

Observations of *Hypulus quercinus* (Melandryidae)

On the sunny afternoon of 25 May 1987 I was collecting insects in an ancient broad-leaved wood and came across several well-patterned beetles, including a pair, on an old tree stump. The tree had been felled many years earlier and the stump was skeletal, but I guessed it was an oak. I took one of the beetles and it keyed easily to the Red Data Book saproxylic species *Hypulus quercinus* (Quensel), subsequently confirmed by Roger Key. At the time I was concerned that if I announced the exact locality, there was a risk of over-collecting and destruction of the tree stump, so I reported something vague along the lines of "VC 32 within 10 miles of Peterborough". Years later I came across the record cards collated for the beetle review (Hyman & Parsons 1992) and noticed the site of my *Hypulus* had been guessed as Castor Hanglands NNR. Twenty-five years on, I feel it is safe to put the record straight and reveal the true locality as Old Sulehay Forest SSSI, TL0698.

Exactly nineteen years later I was taking part in an invertebrate survey of Coed Crafnant for the North Wales Wildlife Trust, and in mid-afternoon came to an area of long-dead fallen ash trees (SH6128, VC 48). In a crevice on the trunk of one sat an attractively marked click beetle. I eased it into my palm, but made the mistake of taking a closer look before transferring it to a tube. It clicked out of my hand and disappeared into the leaf-litter where a frantic search for the next 45 minutes was unsuccessful. Nevertheless, with such a strong pattern I was sure it would be identifiable from the plates in Laibner (2000). I consulted these as soon as I got home, and gloom descended when I realised there was nothing in the book that resembled my lost beetle. Then I remembered the 1987 *Hypulus*, extracted the specimen, and sure enough, it matched the one that had got away that afternoon.

I've returned to Coed Crafnant five times, including a visit in late May, and always spent some time searching the fallen ashes, as well as beating hawthorn blossom when available, but have never found another *Hypulus*. Other

recent records of this species are from early May to the end of June (McClenaghan 2009; Townsend & Denton, 2010) so it is of little significance that both mine were found on 25 May.

References

Hyman, P.S., & Parsons, M.S. 1992. *A review of the scarce and threatened Coleoptera of Great Britain. Part 1*. Peterborough, JNCC. (UK Nature Conservation, no. 3.)

Laibner, S. 2000. *Elateridae of the Czech and Slovak Republics*. Zlin, Kabourek.

McClenaghan, I. 2009. *Hypulus quercinus* (Quensel) (Melandryidae) in Cornwall. *The Coleopterist*, 18: 47.

Townsend, M., & Denton, J. 2010. *Hypulus quercinus* (Quensel) (Melandryidae) in Scotland. *The Coleopterist*, 19: 24.

John H. Bratton, 18 New Street, Menai Bridge, Anglesey, LL59 5HN
jhnbratton@yahoo.co.uk

**Westmorland *Plateumaris sericea* (Chrysomelidae): a clarification**

I was recently browsing accumulated photocopies and came across a note on reed beetles (Denton 1998) which attributed records from 1993 of *Donacia vulgaris* and *Plateumaris sericea* from Swardale Gill, Westmorland, NY7206, to Roger Key and me. This was puzzling, as I had no recollection of this trip. Looking through my notes I found Roger Key collected at this site on 28 June 1993, the reed beetles were donated to Alistair Crowle's collection, and in September 1993 I had identified them as one *D. vulgaris* and six *P. sericea sens. lat.*, the latter with the "thorax quite rugose, towards the *discolor* form". In 1991 *P. sericea* and *P. discolor* had been synonymised (Askevold 1991), and these *Plateumaris* specimens may well be within what is once again widely considered to be a separate species, *P. discolor*.

References

Askevold, I.S. 1991. Classification, reconstructed phylogeny, and geographic history of the New World members of *Plateumaris* Thomson, 1859 (Coleoptera: Chrysomelidae: Donaciinae). *Memoirs of the Entomological Society of Canada*, no. 157: 1-175.

Denton, J. 1998. Additional records of British reed beetles (Coleoptera: Donaciinae). *British Journal of Entomology and Natural History*, 11: 5.

John H. Bratton, 18 New Street, Menai Bridge, Anglesey, LL59 5HN
jhnbratton@yahoo.co.uk

***Philonthus parvicornis* Gravenhorst in Kent.**

Ron Carr

9 The Mallows Maidstone Kent ME14 2PX
RONCARR200@aol.com

Taking advantage of the gloriously sunny early autumn recently experienced in southeast England together with a downturn in work, I took the opportunity to visit a number of local sheep fields in search of dung-dwelling Staphylinids, particularly those of the genus *Philonthus*. I had dabbled with mainly hygrophilous members of this group in the past but enthusiasm had been renewed by my acquisition of the recently published key by Derek Lott and Roy Anderson (2011), a review of which was provided by Richard Wright in Beetle News Vol. 3:2 page 6.

A satisfactory method of collecting such insects was the utilisation of a deep-sided white tray into which sheep or horse dung could be scooped with a small stick or trowel then broken up for examination. Being predaceous, *Philonthus* are fast runners and often the initial action of disturbing the dung was sufficient to dislodge the beetles onto the base of the tray, from which they could easily be captured and transferred to collecting tubes. A degree of urgency was necessary with this process during particularly warm weather as the beetles rapidly took to the wing. Due to its soft consistency, cattle dung was not examined by this method. The tray was washed after each outing and the resultant residue poured onto garden plants.

Should beginners embark upon such practices, skill will soon be acquired in the recognition of which dung is likely to contain beetles. Obviously it is necessary for time to elapse in order for fresh material to be colonised, the warmer the weather the more rapid colonisation being likely as the beetles are active in favourable conditions. Other than possibly containing

larvae of *Aphodius* species, old dung which has become too dry is generally unproductive.

Although most species I encountered during the collecting trips were relatively widespread, I was pleased to take *Philonthus parvicornis* in sheep dung on several occasions in a field adjacent to the M20 motorway near Maidstone (TQ 7657). *P. parvicornis* is one of three related species that are characterised by an asymmetric paramere. Lott and Anderson (2011) refer to modern records of the *P. parvicornis* being mainly from the south of the UK and consider its habitat as uncertain. Coiffait (1974) provides distributional information as the whole of France, together with Corsica, Great Britain and Scandinavia and its habitat as cattle and sheep dung in addition to manure heaps. I am informed by Eric Philp that *P. parvicornis* is very local in Kent, Peter Hodge confirming a similar situation in East Sussex. Oscar Vorst reports that in the Netherlands the species has become more common in recent years, being found typically in exposed, dry situations. The field in which the beetle occurred near Maidstone fits such a description, comprising a south facing slope with an underlying sandy soil. It is therefore possible that *P. parvicornis* may be found more regularly throughout the UK in forthcoming years.

References:

- Coiffait H. 1974. Coléoptères Staphylinidae de la région paléarctique occidentale. II Sous famille Staphylininae Tribus Philonthini et Staphylini. *Nouvelle Revue d'Entomologie* 4 (supplément) 593 pages.
- Lott D. A. & Anderson R. 2011. The Staphylinidae (rove beetles) of Britain and Ireland Parts 7 & 8: Oxyporinae, Steninae, Euesthetinae, Pseudopsinae, Paederinae, Staphylininae. *Handbooks for the Identification of British Insects* 12:7. Field Studies Council 340 pages.

Eucnemids in Warwickshire – A Summary

There can be few counties that have more than two or three of the British Isles' complement of Eucnemid species. The false clicks as they are also known, develop in rotting and diseased wood, often on standing trees. The group is currently represented by a mere seven species in Britain and Ireland, all of which are, with the exception of *Melasis buprestoides* (Linnaeus, 1761) highly localised, rare or endangered. Even *M. buprestoides* qualified as Nationally Scarce in Hyman (1992), although its distribution may possibly no longer justify such a classification.

When Mendel (1996) was published, Warwickshire only had claim to one Eucnemid species, the locally distributed *M. buprestoides*. This distinctive beetle had been recorded at six sites in the county, in woodland habitats. Capture notes reference a specimen caught in flight and another at rest on an oak trunk. Since Mendel's provisional atlas, it has occurred at two further V.C.38 localities where it was either swept or netted in flight. All individuals in Warwickshire were caught between May 20th and July 5th inclusive, with the exception of a record of many dead adults in a birch stump on April 30th 1997.

In recent years, three further species have been added to the county list. This undoubtedly reflects a National trend of Eucnemid species population expansion which may be associated with global warming.

The first addition to the county list occurred on June 15th 2000 when a specimen of the diminutive *Eucnemis capucina* Ahrens, 1812 was swept from short sward grassland at the base of an old pollarded apple tree in old orchard pasture at Fell Mill, south Warwickshire (SP 267413). This remains to date the only capture of this beetle in Warwickshire and it is a species which likely retains a Red Data Book status in the UK, although, according to the NBN Gateway, it has recently also turned up away from its previously known range, in a number of the home counties and also in Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire.

A less unexpected find in V.C.38 was a specimen of *Epiphaniis cornutus* (Eschscholtz, 1829) which turned up in the sweep net on the edge of Hampton Wood NR (SP 257599) on June 26th 2005. This distinctive beetle has been on the move since its discovery in the UK in Gloucestershire in 1964. Its stronghold appears to be the southern midland counties. Surprisingly, there has only been one further capture in V.C.38; at Weethley Wood (SP0456) close to the Worcestershire border, where a specimen was swept on June 16th 2011. Both Warwickshire sites contain patches of conifer plantation which probably support the species.

June 16th 2011 was a good day for Eucnemids in Warwickshire. A work colleague and I were conducting a survey, prospecting for *Byctiscus populi* within a 10 km radius of its sole Warwickshire locality of Oversley Wood. There are a number of patches of woodland in this area in the south-west region of the county and there is always the chance that something interesting will turn up. The day didn't disappoint, with not one, but two specimens of *Microrhagus pygmaeus* (Fabricius, 1793) swept at two separate locations: West Grove Wood (SP 127562) and New End Wood (SP053601). This chance encounter at two different sites on the same day probably indicates that this small beetle is also expanding its range in the UK.

Reference

HYMAN, P.S. (revised PARSONS, M.S.) 1992. *A Review of the scarce and threatened Coleoptera of Great Britain*. Part 1. UK Nature Conservation: 3. Peterborough: Joint Nature Conservation Committee.

MENDEL, H. & CLARKE, R.E. 1996. *Provisional atlas of the click beetles (Coleoptera: Elateroidea) of Britain and Ireland*. Ipswich: Ipswich Borough Council Museums.

Steve Lane



Melasis buprestoides



Epiphaniis cornutus

Beginner's Guide :
Broad-nosed weevils (Curculionidae, Entiminae)
commonly found on broad-leaved trees.

Richard Wright

There are 111 species of the subfamily Entiminae in the family Curculionidae on the British list. All species have a short broad rostrum and are commonly called broad-nosed weevils. With the exception of a few recent discoveries, these species are very well covered by Morris (1997). However, for the beginner this work may prove difficult to begin with as microscopic characters such as whether the tarsal claws are united at the base are used to define the tribes at the very beginning of the work.

The majority of the species are terrestrial and are very rarely met with above ground level. However, a small number of species are among the most abundant beetles on trees and shrubs, especially in May and June. This guide therefore introduces these species which are among the beetles which the beginner is most likely to meet with in numbers. It should only be used for species found on broad-leaved trees, not for those swept from low vegetation or from conifers.

Reference:

Morris, M.G. 1997. Broad-nosed weevils. Coleoptera: Curculionidae (Entiminae). *Handbooks for the Identification of British Insects* 5(17a),



Phyllobius argentatus

Common throughout, mainly woodland

- Anterior femora with large teeth
- Upperside with **round scales**, more or less covering the striae
- Antennae, about 2/3 length of weevil, yellowish, apex of scape not darkened
- Femora dark or light



Phyllobius maculicornis

Locally common, scarce in Scotland
 Similar to *P. argentatus* but :

- **Striae of elytra clearly visible**, not covered by scales
- Antennae about 1/2 length of weevil, yellowish, but **apex of scape darkened**
- Femora always dark



Phyllobius glaucus

Local throughout, mainly woodland.

- Anterior femora with large teeth
- Upperside covered with **elongate scales**, colour rather variable, often in patches
- Antennae yellowish, darker apically
- Legs usually mainly yellowish-brown



Polydrusus pterygomalis

Common

- Anterior femora without teeth
- Upperside with round scales and with **pale semi-erect setae** (view from side)
- Head with a **bulge behind the eyes**
- Antennae slender, yellowish

P. flavipes is scarcer, very similar but :

- Head **without a bulge** behind the eyes
- Semi-erect setae of elytra are **dark**



Polydrusus formosus

Previously scarce, now spreading

- Anterior femora without, or with very small, teeth
- Upperside with round bright metallic green scales
- Antennae yellowish, with dark club
- Head with a short, deep longitudinal groove between the eyes



Phyllobius pyri
Very common

- Anterior femora with teeth
- Upperside with **scattered elongate scales**, usually brownish or coppery, sometimes greyish or greenish
- Antennae yellowish, darker apically
- All tibiae with a sharp, blade-like external edge



Phyllobius oblongus
Locally common

- Upperside **without scales**, only with fine, sparse, pale setae
- Pronotum dark, elytra reddish-brown
- Antennae yellowish
- Legs yellowish



Phyllobius viridicollis
Widespread, but generally scarce

- Upperside dark, **without covering of scales**, only with a few scattered fine greenish scales in parts
- Antennae yellowish, darker apically



Polydrusus cervinus
Very common

- Anterior femora with teeth
- Upperside with **elongate scales**, brownish or coppery, in patches
- Antennae yellowish, darker apically
- Legs generally dark

P. pilosus is a very similar species, much scarcer and mainly northern. It is beyond the scope of this account to cover the differences between the species.



Polydrusus tereticollis
Quite common throughout

- Anterior femora without teeth
- Upperside with a distinct pattern of lighter and darker brown and pale scales as shown



Polydrusus mollis
Widespread in England and Wales, but scattered and local

- Anterior femora without teeth
- Upperside with coppery scales, occasionally greenish
- Elytra very large and wide, much larger in proportion to pronotum than in any other species.



Polydrusus marginatus
Scarce, southern England

- Anterior femora with teeth
- Elytra with fine pubescence, denser along suture, without metallic scales
- Antennae yellowish, rather short



Strophosoma melanogrammum
Very common throughout

- Eyes strongly projecting, conical
- Upperside with brownish or coppery scales but with a longitudinal bare patch along the suture



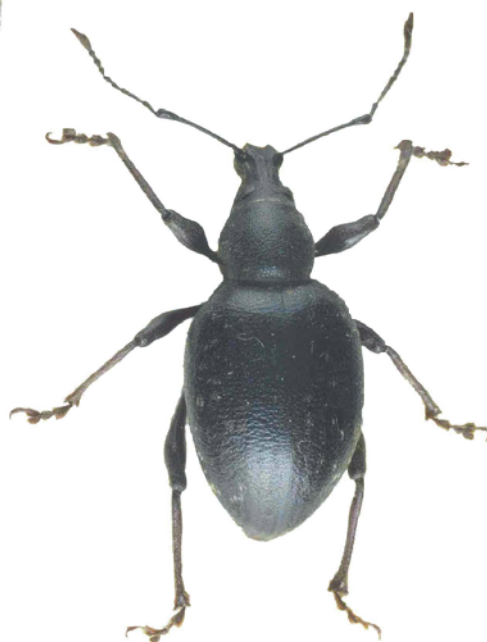
Strophosoma capitatum
Sometimes common but scarce in places

- Eyes strongly projecting, conical
- Similar to *S. melanogrammum* but **without** a longitudinal bare patch along the suture, sometimes with a small bare patch at the base



Otiorhynchus singularis
Very common throughout

- Anterior femora with teeth
- Upperside covered with various shades of brownish scales, giving a variegated appearance, and also with setae



Otiorhynchus clavipes
Local, mainly southern England

- Anterior femora without teeth
- Upperside largely smooth, with small patches of pubescence in fresh specimens
- Antennae very long and slender



Otiorhynchus sulcatus
Very common throughout
(usually terrestrial, occasional on trees)

- Anterior femora with teeth
- Elytra with small patches of elongate golden-yellow scales