

**REPORT ON THE SPRING FIELD MEETING AT LUDLOW, 2007: CHILOPODA**

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During the period of the meeting, 30<sup>th</sup> March to 1<sup>st</sup> April, based at the Bishop Maskell Centre in Ludlow, some 19 species of centipede were recorded from more than 30 sites from a total of 13 10km National Grid squares in the Shropshire area with a variety of habitats varying from urban (Ludlow Castle) to very rural (Long Mynd) including some woodlands (Table 1). Records were submitted by G. Collis, S. Gregory, P. Lee, H. Read, J.P. Richards, D. Whiteley & J. Flannagan and the present author. A number of the records were from churchyards, especially those of Steve Gregory.

**Table 1:** List of sites surveyed

Code	Locality	Grid Ref.	Code	Locality	Grid Ref.
1	Titley	SO33-60-	18	Hughley	SO56-97-
2	Pembridge	SO39-58	19	Knowle Quarry	SO58-97-
3	Long Mynd	SO42-72-	20	Hanley Dingle	SO682660
4	Bromfield Church	SO418768	21	Hanley W Church	SO673660
5	Downton Gorge	SO443743	22	Stoke Bliss Church	SO651628
6	Monkland	SO46-57-	23	Stoke Bliss Wood	SO651628
7	Kingsland	SO44-61-	24	Stoke Bliss Pasture	SO651628
8	Berrington Church	SJ530068	25	Brown Clee	SO608871
9	Ludlow Car Park	SO509746	26	Cleobury N. Church	SO623870
10	Ludlow Castle	SO506747	27	Much Wenlock	SO612998
11	Ludlow BMC	SO515746	28	Much Wenlock Church	SJ624000
12	Whitcliffe Wood	SO504743	29	Wenlock Edge	SO604997
13	Milchope Park	SO52-88-	30	Wenlock Edge	SJ606001
14	Milchope Park	SO53-88-	31	Wenlock Edge Quarry	SO578970
15	Wild'hp Manor NT	SO54-92-	32	Harley Bank	SO61-99-
16	Tugford Church	SO557871	33	Ashford Bowdler C	SO519705
17	Easthope Wood	SO572967			

Most of the species were those to be expected in this area between the West Midlands and Mid Wales but there was a distinct lack of small lithobiids (other than *Lithobius microps* and *L. melanops*) and several geophilomorphs that might be expected were only recorded a relatively small number of times (e.g. *Geophilus easoni*, *G. insculptus*, *G. flavus*). A summary of the records is shown in the tables along with the 10km squares from which each species was recorded (Table 2).

Unexpectedly, *Stigmatogaster subterranea*, usually regarded as more or less a synanthrope, was found to be the most widely recorded species, occurring in Ludlow and in churchyards unsurprisingly but also at Downton Gorge and other sites. The fact that the next commonest members of that order were the two rather small species, *Schendyla nemorensis* and *Geophilus truncorum* would suggest that larger forms were not just being missed during collection. Of the remainder, one might have expected *Geophilus insculptus* or *G. flavus* to be much commoner and *G. easoni* to be found more often; the two *Strigamia* species are always intermittent in occurrence.

**Table 2:** Centipede species recorded during BMIG field trip to Ludlow

Site Code:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
<i>Stigmatogaster subterranea</i>	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x			x	x					x
<i>Schendyla nemorensis</i>					x			x		x	x	x						x			x
<i>Schendyla dentata</i>					x																
<i>Strigamia acuminata</i>																					x
<i>Strigamia crassipes</i>					x																
<i>Henia brevis</i>								x													
<i>Geophilus carpophagus</i>				x				x													
<i>Geophilus easoni</i>																					x
<i>Geophilus insculptus</i>					x											x					
<i>Geophilus flavus</i>																					
<i>Geophilus truncorum</i>			x		x									x				x			x
<i>Cryptops hortensis</i>					x			x			x					x					x
<i>Cryptops parisi</i>									x												
<i>Lithobius variegatus</i>				x	x					x		x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x
<i>Lithobius forficatus</i>	x			x	x			x			x					x		x			x
<i>Lithobius melanops</i>				x				x			x										x
<i>Lithobius macilentus</i>																					
<i>Lithobius crassipes</i>																					x
<i>Lithobius microps</i>			x	x	x		x	x		x	x			x		x	x	x			x

**Table 2: (continued).** N = number of 10km squares in which species recorded

Site Code:	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	10 km squares with records	N
<i>Stigmatogaster subterranea</i>	x				x		x		x			x	35,36,45,46,47,50,57,58,59,60,66,68	12
<i>Schendyla nemorensis</i>						x							50,57,59,66,69	5
<i>Schendyla dentata</i>													47	1
<i>Strigamia acuminata</i>				x									66,68	2
<i>Strigamia crassipes</i>													47,50	2
<i>Henia brevis</i>							x					x	57	3
<i>Geophilus carpophagus</i>													47,50	2
<i>Geophilus easoni</i>				x									66,68	3
<i>Geophilus insculptus</i>													47,57,58	1
<i>Geophilus flavus</i>								x		x			59,69	2
<i>Geophilus truncorum</i>				x	x					x			47,58,59,66,68	5
<i>Cryptops hortensis</i>		x			x					x			47,50,57,58,59,68	6
<i>Cryptops parisi</i>													57	1
<i>Lithobius variegatus</i>				x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	47,57,58,59,60,66,68,69	8
<i>Lithobius forficatus</i>	x	x	x							x			36,47,50,57,58,59,66,68	8
<i>Lithobius melanops</i>					x		x			x			47,50,57,59,66	5
<i>Lithobius macilentus</i>										x			60	1
<i>Lithobius crassipes</i>													66	1
<i>Lithobius microps</i>	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	46,47,50,57,58,59,60,66,68,69	10

*Schendyla dentata* (coll. Paul Richards), *Henia brevis* (coll. Steve Gregory & author) and *Geophilus carpophagus* (coll. Steve Gregory) are synanthropes; *S. dentata* has been recorded in Shropshire before (at Bishops Castle).

Of the scolopendromorphs, *Cryptops hortensis* is widespread and with a distinctly synanthropic bias in most areas whilst *C. parisi*, found in a car park at Ludlow is almost exclusively so. Similarly, in most areas *Lithobius microps* is a species commonly associated with human influenced habitats and this is the commonest lithobiomorph. However, lest this would suggest that most collecting was biased away from rural sites, it should be noted that *Lithobius variegatus* as well as *L. forficatus* is well recorded.

Of the remaining lithobiids, *L. melanops* is frequently associated with gardens and similar sites whilst *L. crassipes* is the common rural small lithobiomorph of much of central and eastern Britain yet the only site from which the latter was recorded was Hanley Dingle. *L. macilentus*, parthenogenetic in Britain, is patchily distributed across much of the country. The impression is gained that the common small *Lithobius* of the area is *L. microps* as it sometimes appears to be in south east England. Possibly collecting at a different time of year or during different weather would give a different perspective on the local centipede fauna.