

**NEW IRISH VICE-COUNTY RECORDS FOR CENTIPEDES (CHILOPODA)**

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Barber (1983) produced the first list detailing the vice-county distribution of centipedes in Ireland, comprising 226 records from 37 of the 40 Irish vice-counties. Updated versions have been produced by Keay (1989,1993), the latter comprising 301 records, and with all 40 vice-counties being represented. A few additional vice-county records are contained in Richards (1961), Bilton (1990), and Cowen *et al.* (1990). The primary purpose of this paper is to give details of a further 108 centipede vice-county records which I made between June 1993 and January 1998. During that period I visited all of the Irish vice-counties, with the exception of South Kerry (H01), primarily with the intention of recording harvest-spiders (Opiliones), however I also collected millipedes, and to a lesser extent centipedes. Initially a small collection of centipedes were determined by Dick Jones and Andy Keay, however the great bulk of specimens were determined by myself using Eason (1964). Specimens were usually collected from under stones, pieces of wood, etc, and to a lesser extent from beneath bark, in moss, and from leaf-litter. In all, I managed to gather over 850 centipede records from a total of 176 Irish 10km squares. The fieldwork generated 677 centipede 10km square records, of which almost 600 are additional to the data contained in Barber & Keay (1988) and Jones (1992). Three species, one geophilomorph and two lithobiomorphs, were collected which appear to be additions to the Irish fauna. The identity of these specimens is currently being checked by an expert and they have not been included in this report. I failed to collect three species for which there are modern Irish records, namely *Henia brevis* (Silvestri), *Geophilus osquidatum* Brölemann and *Geophilus fucorum seurati* Brölemann. All of the information gathered will be submitted to the British Myriapod Group recording scheme using the centipede record card (RA58). The overall results of the fieldwork are summarised in Table 1.

I have retained a collection of voucher specimens, and it is my intention to eventually deposit these at the National Museum of Ireland, Dublin. The summary notes at the end of each species account are loosely based on my own field observations.

***Haplophilus subterraneus* (Shaw)**

North Kerry (H02): Killarney, V9590, 2 November 1995, mixed deciduous woodland.

South Tipperary (H07): Bansha Wood, R9233, 3 November 1996, under rubbish in hedgerow bordering conifer plantation.

Clare (H09): Cratloe, R4861, 2 August 1996, mixed deciduous woodland.

Wexford (H12): Enniscorthy, S9840, 11 October 1994, waste ground.

South-east Galway (H15): Lough Cutra, R4699, 25 July 1995, deciduous woodland.

North-east Galway (H17): Toghermore, M4549, 14 April 1995, *Fagus* hedge at edge of field.

Roscommon (H25): Boyle, G8002, 8 April 1995, field border.

East Mayo (H26): Devlis, M5179, 1 June 1995, road verge.

West Mayo (H27): Ballina, G2418, 26 May 1994, waste ground.

West Donegal (H35): Greenan, G9685, 9 April 1996, base of an old stone wall.

*H. subterraneus* is clearly widespread in Ireland, and, as in Great Britain it is often common in deciduous woodlands. Appears to be more frequent than *N. flavus* in the milder western half of the country.

**TABLE 1**  
**SUMMARY OF IRISH CENTIPEDE DISTRIBUTION RECORDS**

Species	Cawley 1993-1998		Total Irish*		Rank in Ireland
	10km Squares	Records No. %	10km Squares No. %		
<i>H. subterraneus</i>	64	78 9.1	91	7.1	6
<i>H. submarina</i>	1	1 0.1	2	0.2	19
<i>S. nemorensis</i>	18	22 2.6	47	3.6	10
<i>H. brevis</i>	0	0 0.0	1	0.1	21
<i>S. crassipes</i>	2	2 0.2	9	0.7	17
<i>S. maritima</i>	15	19 2.2	49	3.8	9
<i>G. carpophagus</i>	10	13 1.5	30	2.3	14
<i>G. electricus</i>	5	5 0.6	20	1.6	15
<i>G. osquidatum</i>	0	0 0.0	1	0.1	22
<i>G. fucorum seurati</i>	0	0 0.0	1	0.1	20
<i>G. oligopus</i>	43	52 6.1	67	5.2	8
<i>N. flavus</i>	49	57 6.7	104	8.1	4
<i>B. truncorum</i>	55	76 8.9	86	6.7	7
<i>C. hortensis</i>	19	21 2.5	35	2.7	13
<i>C. parisi</i>	3	5 0.6	6	0.5	18
<i>L. variegatus</i>	100	131 15.3	193	15.0	2
<i>L. forficatus</i>	120	162 19.0	232	18.0	1
<i>L. melanops</i>	39	43 5.0	91	7.1	5
<i>L. borealis</i>	24	33 3.9	39	3.0	11
<i>L. crassipes</i>	8	11 1.3	13	1.0	16
<i>L. microps</i>	84	103 12.1	137	10.6	3
<i>L. fulvicornis</i>	18	20 2.3	36	2.8	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>677</b>	<b>854 100</b>	<b>1290</b>	<b>100</b>	

\* Based on the data contained in Barber & Keay (1988), and Jones (1992), together with new 10km square records generated by my own fieldwork. Includes also a small number of records contained in Bilton (1990), Cowen *et al.* (1990) and Richards (1961).

***Hydroschendyla submarina* (Grube)**

West Cork (H03): Ringalurisky Point, W6141, 10 July 1997, 3 specimens under a stone on a substrate of sand and gravel, at the base of an inter-tidal rock exposure, and just above LWM.

Usually associated with inter-tidal rock crevices, and likely to be under-recorded because of the difficulty of collecting from that microsite. The only other Irish records appear to be from West Mayo (Johnson 1912) and North-east Galway (Keay 1993).

***Schendyla nemorensis* (Koch)**

West Galway (H16): Seaweed Point, M2522, 28 March 1993, under moss on stone, coastal headland.

Longford (H24): Newtown Forbes, N1080, 29 March 1995, planted deciduous woodland.

Sligo (H28): Enniscrone, G2728, 19 October 1993, grassy bank in coastal field.

Fermanagh (H33): Belcoo, H0939, 5 November 1996, *Corylus* scrub.

East Donegal (H34): Pollarock, G8565, 4 June 1996, coastal heath.

This centipede has been recorded from all parts of the country, although in my experience it is rather easier to locate in coastal areas. It is likely to be under-recorded because of its small size.

***Strigamia crassipes* (Koch)**

Sligo (H28): Aughris Head, G5036, 21 August 1993, coastal headland.

West Donegal (H35): Dooey, B9034, 3 September 1996, one specimen under a stone in sand dunes.

*S. crassipes* appears to be genuinely rare in Ireland. The total number of records now stands at 9, from 8 vice-counties, and about half of these are pre-1920. The records do however come from all parts of the island.

***Strigamia maritima* (Leach)**

North-east Galway (H17): Lough Atalia, M3024, 3 August 1996, shingle beach.

Sligo (H28): Carrickadda Point, G3538, 21 April 1985, under rocks between the tide marks. This specimen was collected by Dr D.C.F. Cotton, and determined by A.N. Keay.

Appears to occur all around the Irish coast. In Co Sligo, I have found it to be present, but not common in the more exposed shingle beaches.

***Geophilus carpophagus* Leach**

Wexford (H12): Lough Doo, T1029, 10 October 1994, well drained, acid hillock.

Carlow (H13): Slievebawn, S8054, 22 November 1997, upland heath.

Available records suggest that this large geophilomorph is much less common in Ireland than in Great Britain. The grand total of Irish records is just 39, of which about half are pre-1970. All of my records are from wild habitats, usually near the sea, and generally from acid soils.

***Geophilus electricus* (L)**

South Tipperary (H07): Carrick-on -Suir, S4021, 13 January 1995, waste ground.

Laois (H14): Dunmore, S4078, 3 May 1996, mixed deciduous woodland.

Widespread, but not common in the southern third of the country, and almost unknown in the northern two-thirds.

***Geophilus oligopus* (Attems)**

Mid Cork (H04): Blarney, W6075, 12 February 1995, mixed woodland.  
Kilkenny (H11): Kilkenny Castle, S5155, 21 January 1995, planted woodland.  
Wexford (H12): Ladys Island, T1007, 25 October 1994, overgrown garden.  
Laois (H14): Carrick Wood, N5410, 25 March 1995, *Fagus* woodland.  
South-east Galway (H15): Lough Cutra, R4699, 25 July 1995, deciduous woodland.  
West Galway (H16): Barna Wood, M2423, 29 February 1996, *Quercus-Fagus* woodland on slightly acid soil.  
North-east Galway (H17): Tuam, M4351, 11 December 1993, ancient graveyard.  
Longford (H24): Newtown Forbes, N1080, 29 March 1995, planted deciduous woodland.  
Roscommon (H25): Boyle, G8002, 20 March 1995, under rubbish in town park.  
East Mayo (H26): Claremorris, M3474, 27 October 1993, town garden.  
East Donegal (H34): Bundoran, G8159, 7 December 1993, waste ground.  
West Donegal (H35): Donegal, G9278, 31 December 1994, mixed riverine woodland.  
Numerous recent records suggest that this geophilomorph is widespread and reasonably common in Ireland, however it is noticeably less in evidence in counties along the south coast.

***Necrophloeophagus flavus* (De Geer)**

Mid Cork (H04): Kinsale, W6549, 24 March 1995, coastal erosion bank.  
North Tipperary (H10): Templemore, S1071, 14 April 1996, grassy bank.  
Laois (H14): Portarlinton, N5310, 4 November 1997, roadverge.  
South-east Galway (H15): Gorbally, M8231, 16 February 1996, edge of field.  
North-east Galway (H17): Doonmacreena, M4367, 20 June 1995, grassy bank.  
Roscommon (H25): Boyle, G8002, 8 April 1996, edge of field.  
West Mayo (H27): Garrycloonagh, G1816, 13 April 1995, edge of field.  
East Donegal (H34): Pollarock, G8565, 4 June 1996, coastal erosion bank.  
West Donegal (H35): Letterkenny, C1610, 18 January 1996, waste ground.  
Again a widespread and common centipede, however there are areas of relative scarcity, most noticeably Co Sligo where it only comprises 5 of my 120 centipede records. The eastern tendency which has been noted in Britain (Barber & Keay 1988) seems to hold true for Ireland also.

***Brachygeophilus truncorum* (Bergsøe & Meinert)**

Mid Cork (H04): Blarney, W6075, 12 February 1995, mixed woodland.  
East Cork (H05): Knockaroura, W5796, 2 November 1997, conifer plantation.  
South Tipperary (H07): Brittas, S1261, 5 February 1996, under dead bark in beech *Fagus sylvatica* L woodland.  
Kilkenny (H11): Kilkenny Castle, S5155, 21 January 1995, planted woodland.  
Wexford (H12): Bunclody, S9157, 23 November 1997, *Quercus-Fagus* woodland.  
Carlow (H13): Corrabut Gap, S8356, 22 November 1997, conifer plantation.  
South-east Galway (H15): Ballinasloe, M8531, 16 February 1996, waste ground.  
West Galway (H16): Seaweed Point, M2522, 28 March 1993, under moss on stone, coastal headland.  
North-east Galway (H17): Merlin Park, M3325, 23 June 1996, *Fagus* woodland.  
Meath (H22): Mosney, O1669, 12 January 1998, under dead bark in copse.  
Roscommon (H25): Killukin, M9297, 12 December 1996, edge of field.

East Mayo (H26): Claremorris, M3474, 27 October 1993, edge of field.  
East Donegal (H34): Troopers Hill, H1298, 17 January 1996, acid woodland.  
West Donegal (H35): Donegal, G9278, 31 December 1994, mixed riverine woodland.  
Another frequently recorded centipede. Common in woodlands and often the only geophilomorph present on blanket bogs.

#### ***Cryptops hortensis* Leach**

East Cork (H05): Cork Docks, W7072, 4 May 1995, waste ground.  
South Tipperary (H07): Bansha Wood, R9233, 3 November 1996, under rubbish in hedgerow.  
North-east Galway (H17): Tuam, M4351, 14 April 1995, waste ground at disused railway station.  
Wicklow (H20): Bray, O2618, 13 January 1998, waste ground.  
East Mayo (H26): Claremorris, M3474, 27 October 1993, waste ground.  
West Mayo (H27): Ballina, G2418, 26 May 1994, waste ground.  
Sligo (H28): Curraghmore Lake, G6340, 14 March 1993, coastal grassland.  
The status of *C. hortensis* in Ireland approximately mirrors its status in Britain: widespread, if somewhat local, in the south, but becoming increasingly scarce, coastal, and synanthropic in the north. The Sligo record comes from a species rich coastal site, and may possibly represent a natural population.

#### ***Lithobius variegatus* Leach**

Laois (H14): Carrick Wood, N5410, 27 March 1995, beech, *Fagus sylvatica* L woodland.  
North-east Galway (H17): Tuam, M4351, 14 April 1995, waste ground at disused railway station.  
Roscommon (H25): Killukin, M9297, 12 December 1996 edge of field.  
East Mayo (H26): Barnalyra, M4495, 2 February 1994, acid woodland.  
Widespread and common in a variety of natural habitats throughout Ireland, and shows no sign of the east coast scarcity which is such a feature of its distribution in Britain. Regularly turns up with *L. forficatus*, but unlike that species rarely found in synanthropic habitats.

#### ***Lithobius forficatus* (L)**

South-east Galway (H15): Lough Cutra, R4699, 25 July 1995, deciduous woodland.  
Roscommon (H25): Doyles Bridge, N0141, 6 October 1996, waste ground.  
East Mayo (H26): Charlestown, G4701, 16 November 1993, field border.  
*L. forficatus* is the most frequently encountered and widespread centipede in Ireland, as it is in Great Britain. Turns up in a remarkably wide variety of habitats, from city centres to remote offshore islands.

#### ***Lithobius melanops* Newport**

North Tipperary (H10): Templemore, S1072, 14 April 1996, poorly drained woodland.  
Wexford (H12): Enniscorthy, S9840, 11 October 1994, waste ground.  
Laois (H14): Carrick Wood, N5410, 27 March 1995, *Fagus* woodland.  
North-east Galway (H17): Toghermore, M4549, 14 April 1995, *Fagus* hedge at edge of field.  
Longford (H24): Newtown Forbes, N1080, 29 March 1995, planted deciduous woodland.

East Mayo (H26): Claremorris, M3474, 27 October 1993, town garden.  
Leitrim (H29): Drumshanbo, G9610, 8 June 1996, mixed woodland.  
Tyrone (H36): Dungannon, H7962, 9 October 1995, edge of field.  
Again a widely recorded centipede. Noticeably commoner in coastal areas, especially in sand dunes.

***Lithobius borealis* Meinert**

East Cork (H05): Knockaroura, W5796, 2 November 1997, conifer plantation.  
South Tipperary (H07): Bansha Wood, R9233, 3 November 1996, conifer plantation.  
Limerick (H08): Knightsgrove, R5918, 17 August 1997, conifer plantation.  
Carlow (H13): Slievebawn, S8054, 22 November 1997, upland heath.  
Offaly (H18): Clonard Wood, N3219, 25 May 1997, conifer plantation.  
Roscommon (H25): Cornaglia, G7604, 8 January 1998, under moss on tree stumps in conifer plantation.  
East Mayo (H26): Barnalyra, M4495, 2 February 1994, acid woodland.  
West Donegal (H35): Rathmelton, C2120, 21 February 1996, riverine woodland.  
Now recorded from all parts of the island. Appears to be rather common in upland areas. In the lowlands, usually associated with acid soils.

***Lithobius crassipes* Koch**

Sligo (H28): Ben Wiskin, G7249, 2 May 1985. This specimen was collected by Dr D.C.F. Cotton, and determined by A.N. Keay.  
Fermanagh (H33): Ballindarragh, H3137, 14 October 1996, field border.  
West Donegal (H35): Camusmore Bay, Tory Island, B8646, 31 August 1996, exposed coastal grassland.  
The above constitute the first modern Irish records for *L. crassipes*. Appears to be genuinely rare in Ireland, in contrast to Great Britain where it is a frequently recorded species. Older Irish records have tended to come from the north-east, a part of the country which has been largely neglected by modern workers.

***Lithobius microps* Meinert**

Clare (H09): Inishmore, L8809, 19 July 1996, limestone pavement.  
Laois (H14): Carrick Wood, N5410, 27 March 1995, *Fagus* woodland.  
South-east Galway (H15): Lough Cutra, R4699, 25 July 1995, deciduous woodland.  
West Galway (H16): Barna Wood, M2423, 29 February 1996, *Quercus-Fagus* woodland.  
North-east Galway (H17): Tuam, M4351, 11 December 1993, ancient graveyard.  
East Mayo (H26): Ballindine, M3668, 20 June 1995, conifer plantation.  
West Mayo (H27): Castle Gore, G1918, 13 April 1995, acid woodland.  
Monaghan (H32): Monaghan, H6733, 2 October 1995, rank grassland.  
Fermanagh (H33): Enniskillen, H2344, 15 January 1996, grassy bank.  
East Donegal (H34): Bundoran, G8258, 2 December 1996, grassy bank.  
Londonderry (H40): Coleraine, C8531, 23 October 1996, hedgerow.  
*L. microps* is widespread in Ireland, where it is the only commonly encountered small lithobiomorph. Turns up in a great variety of habitats.

### *Lamcytes fulvicornis* Meinert

North Kerry (H02): Tralee, Q8213, 8 September 1996, waste ground.

Wexford (H12): Wexford, T0422, 9 October 1994, waste ground.

North-east Galway (H17): Galway Docks, M3024, 3 August 1996, waste ground.

Sligo (H28): Colgagh Lake, G7436, 11 October 1992, marshy grassland.

Tyrone (H36): Dungannon, H7962, 9 October 1995, edge of field.

Thinly scattered throughout Ireland, but likely to be under-recorded because of its restricted season. My records fall in the period end of July to mid-October, with single outliers in May and June.

## SUMMARY

The addition of the above records bring the grand total of Irish centipede vice-county records to 415, giving an average of 10 species recorded per vice-county. The counties with the richest faunas are Mid Cork (H04) and Sligo (H28), each with 16 species recorded. The least recorded county is Cavan (H30) with 5 species. I have been able to collect centipedes from most parts of the country, and this has helped reduce the geographical bias in my data, however there has been a definite concentration of effort in the north-west, and the high species total for Sligo is clearly a reflection of this. On the other hand this may help to balance the south and east recording bias which is evident in Barber & Keay (1988). I have few records from Northern Ireland, which remains the most under-recorded part of the island for mapping purposes.

It should be born in mind that much of my centipede recording was carried out as an adjunct to other natural history activities. This is likely to lead to large, obvious species such as *L. forficatus* being well recorded, whereas small, soil dwelling species such as *S. nemorensis* will tend to have been missed. Also I have few collections from garden sites, which may explain the small number of *G. electricus* records.

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