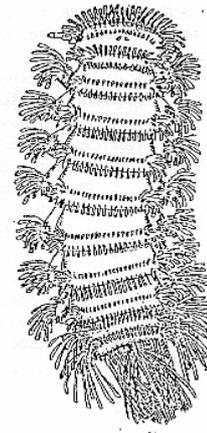




British Myriapod and Isopod Group



Spring 2006

Newsletter number 12

Editor: Paul Lee

BMIG business

Glyn Collis has been extremely busy organising this year's Field Meeting in Ayr. Apart from making all the usual arrangements he has been encouraging local recorders to get involved and has obtained almost £1000 of funding from Scottish Natural Heritage to support attendance by BMIG members and local naturalists. The AGM will be held on Friday evening (see below) and Tony Barber has agreed to run a workshop on the identification of *Lithobius* species on the Saturday evening. So if you have not yet booked your place you had better get your skates on and contact Glyn.

Update on *Adenomeris gibbosa*

You may recall the discovery of *Adenomeris gibbosa* at Aston Clinton during the BMIG Annual Meeting in 2004. If you were not there yourself the discovery was reported in BMIG Newsletter No. 9. Prompted by this, Helen Read and Steve Gregory, spent a day earlier this year hunting for *Adenomeris* in likely looking habitat further south in Buckinghamshire. They succeeded in their quest and collected specimens from two sites, a woodland and a churchyard, near Great Missenden (SP90). As at Aston Clinton, the woodland also contained *Geoglomeris subterranea*. Steve has checked and confirmed that all of his specimens from Oxfordshire are *Geoglomeris*. However, as the two species appear to occur together, then I would ask all BMIG members to look carefully again at any specimens of *Geoglomeris* you may have in your collection. You never know what might be hiding there.

Paul Lee, Oakdene, The Heath, Tattingstone, Ipswich IP9 2LX

AGM notice

All BMIG members are invited to attend the AGM to be held at 7pm on Friday 7th April. The venue will be the Scottish Agricultural College at Auchincruive. The minutes of the 2005 AGM held at Collingwood College, Durham are on the BMIG website so you can check what was said last time.

The present committee is keen to receive nominations for new committee members from any BMIG member. Ideally nominations would be communicated to the secretary beforehand but they can also be made from the floor at the AGM.

Ayr meeting: Scottish Agricultural College, Auchincruive, Ayr 6-9th April 2006.

Nineteen BMIG members have now booked for the meeting and a number of local naturalists have indicated they will be joining us. Although we have passed the deadline, staff at the college have indicated that they will probably be able to accommodate a few additional people.

As various people have pointed out, in the original literature on the Ayr meeting, the web address for Scottish Wildlife Trust reserves did not work. SWT has undergone a major re-organisation which extended to its web pages. The correct web address is now

<http://www.swt.org.uk/wildlife/westregion.asp>

This site gives some useful information on the range of habitats that can be found in the area.

For further information on the meeting, contact Glyn Collis:

email g.m.collis@warwick.ac.uk

tel 01700 504429

Glyn Collis, Seasgair, Ascog, Isle of Bute, PA20 9ET

Bulletin of the British Myriapod and Isopod Group Volume 21

Readers will be pleased to hear that the next volume of the Bulletin will appear this year. More than enough material was submitted to the editors but it is not too early to send in your papers and other contributions for volume 22.

Equipment and chemicals for Myriapodologists

Over the last nine years, whenever I ran a course on invertebrate identification for the FSC, one of the questions I was sure to get asked by someone attending the course was, "Where can I get the equipment and chemicals needed to study invertebrates?" Initially I did my best to provide the details of suitable suppliers but always ran up against the problem that flammable chemicals such as ethyl acetate and alcohol could not be supplied by mail order. In the end I began supplying a small range of equipment and chemicals myself so that course participants could take away much of what they needed to get started with their studies.

For the identification of myriapods and isopods I consider the basic equipment and chemicals required comprise:

A **stereo microscope** capable of producing good quality images at magnifications of at least x30 and ideally up to x100;

A **light source** of sufficient intensity for the microscope;

An **excavated glass block** for holding specimens in alcohol whilst viewing them under the microscope;

A pair of **soft forceps** for manipulating specimens without damaging them;

A very fine **mounted needle** (a headless entomological pin in a pin vice is ideal) for manipulation and dissection of specimens;

A supply of glass **specimen tubes** (I find 12x50mm tubes with polythene stoppers to be most suitable) for collection and storage of preserved specimens;

A quantity of preservative, **either industrial denatured alcohol** (IDA) (this used to be known as industrial methylated spirits - IMS) or **iso-propyl alcohol**, diluted with distilled water to 70%.

Many invertebrate workers use IDA as their preservative of choice. However, whereas iso-propyl alcohol can be bought by anyone, the receipt and use of IDA requires authorisation from the National Registration Unit of HM Revenue & Customs. Further information can be found in their *Notice 473: Production, distribution and use of denatured alcohol*. This document can be downloaded from their website: <http://customs.hmrc.gov.uk>

(Type 'IDA' into the search box to find the relevant page.) Alternatively you can phone 0845 010 9000 to obtain a paper copy. It includes an application form for authorisation which requires you to give your name, address etc, to state the purpose for which the IDA will be used and your annual requirement in litres. Provided you apply for authorisation of no more than 20 litres per annum (more than adequate for BMIG members) an application to use IDA "for the preservation of biological specimens for scientific study only" will normally be approved. If this is the case you will receive a formal letter of authorisation. Having received authorisation you should be aware that HMRC officers have the right to inspect the premises where you use IDA at any time although this very rarely happens. When purchasing IDA your supplier will need a copy of your authorisation letter. You can obtain IDA through specialist laboratory chemical suppliers although not all are willing to deal with members of the public and / or to provide small quantities. Alternatively local High Street pharmacies may be able to help. Entomological equipment suppliers tend not to sell IDA because it cannot be sent by post.

I am not in the business of buying and selling microscopes and light sources but the smaller items such as forceps, glass blocks, pin vices etc I do supply. I can also supply specimen tubes in boxes of 100 or in smaller quantities and alcohol in 500ml bottles. If anyone would like further details I can send a price list. I will take some stock up to the Ayr meeting next month but if you have specific requirements then let me know beforehand to make sure I have what you want.
Paul Lee, Oakdene, The Heath, Tattingstone, Ipswich IP9 2LX

The myriapod papers of F.A.Turk and of S.W. Rolfe
Below are listed the myriapod papers that I know to have

been published by F.A. Turk and by S.W. Rolfe. I am appealing to other members for help in compiling a final list which could eventually be published in the Bulletin.

F.A.Turk

- 1944 Myriapoda from Cornwall with Notes and Descriptions of Forms new to the British Fauna. *Annals and Magazine of Natural History*, (Ser.11) **11**: 532-551.
- 1945 Myriapodological Notes I. *Northwestern Naturalist*, September-December **1945**: 137-144.
- 1945 On two new diplopods of the family Vanhoeffenidae from Indian caves. *Annals and Magazine of Natural History*, (Ser. 11) **12**: 38-42.
- 1945 A correction and additional data to two former papers on Opiliones and diplopods from Indian caves. *Annals and Magazine of Natural History*, (Ser. 11) **12**: 430.
- 1947 Myriapodological Notes II. *Northwestern Naturalist*, September-December **1947**: 226-234.
- 1947 On a collection of diplopods from North India, both cavernicolous and epigeal. *Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London*. **117**: 65-78.
- 1951 Myriapodological Notes III. The iatro-zoology, biology and systematics of some tropical 'myriapods'. *Annals and Magazine of Natural History*, (Ser. 12) **4**: 35-48.
- 1952 Chilopods and diplopods from the island of Cyprus. *Annals and Magazine of Natural History*, (ser. 12) **5**: 656-659.
- 1955 The myriapods of Dr Cloudsley-Thompson's expedition to the Tunisian desert. *Annals and Magazine of Natural History*, (ser. 12) **8**: 277-284.
- 1955 The chilopods of Peru with descriptions of new species and some zoogeographic notes on the Peruvian chilopod fauna. *Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London*, **124**: 469-504.
- 1956 Millipedes from Nyasaland: a new species and a rediscovered one. *Annals and Magazine of Natural History*, (Ser. 12) **9**: 532-551.
- 1967 The non-aranean arachnid orders and the myriapods of British caves and mines. *Transactions of the Cave Research Group*, **9** (3): 142-160.
- 1972 A new blind millipede (*Tyhopymaerosoma hazeltonae* n.ge., n.sp.) from a Himalayan cave, with notes on its zoographic importance. *Transactions of the Cave Research Group*, **14**: 195-198.

F.A.Turk & S.M.Turk

- 1958 *The Foreshore of Cawsand Bay and District*. Plymouth, NUT. [*Strigamia maritima*]

S.W.Rolfe

- 1934 Notes on Diplopoda I. The Re-study of a widely distributed British Millipede, *Ophiulus pilosus* (Newport). *Annals & Magazine of Natural History*, (Ser.10), **14**: 192-203.
- 1935 Notes on Diplopoda II. On one of the rarer of the British Polydesmidae (*Polydesmus testaceus* C.L.Koch) *Annals & Magazine of Natural History*, (Ser.10), **15**: 284-290.

- 1934 Notes on Diplopoda III. Short notes on three injurious millipedes recently observed. *Journal of the South-Eastern Agricultural College, Wye, Kent*, **34**: 258-259. [*Choneiulus palmatus*, *Blaniulus guttulatus*, *Cylindroiulus londinensis* v. *caeruleocinctus*]
- 1937 Notes on Diplopoda IV. The recognition of some millipedes of economic importance. *Journal of the South-Eastern Agricultural College, Wye, Kent*, **40**: 99-107. [Polydesmidae, Strongylosomidae, Iulidae]
- 1938 Notes on Diplopoda V. The recognition of some millipedes of economic importance II. *Journal of the South-Eastern Agricultural College, Wye, Kent*, **42**: 214-215. [*Cylindroiulus londinensis* v. *caeruleocinctus*, *C. britannicus*, *C. oweni*, *Tachypodoiulus niger*, *Ophiulus pilosus*]
- 1939 Notes on Diplopoda VI. The recognition of some millipedes of economic importance III. *Journal of the South-Eastern Agricultural College, Wye, Kent*, **44**: 180-181. [Polydesmidae & Strongylosomidae]
- 1964 New or uncommon plant diseases and pests. Glasshouse millipedes damaging "tom pots". *Plant Pathology*, **13** (1): 45. [*Oxidus gracilis*]

If anyone can add to or correct these lists please let me know.

Helen Read, 2 Egypt Wood Cottages, Egypt Lane, Farnham Common

***Armadillidium pictum* at Tarren yr Esgob, Breconshire**

Over the years I have had several requests for information about *Armadillidium pictum* at Tarren yr Esgob in eastern Breconshire. The most recent request came from John Bratton of CCW, who suggested that I should publish a summary in the Newsletter, so blame him!

The Tarren yr Esgob escarpment (part of the Black Mountains (Eastern) SSSI) faces north-east and is at the western end of the Vale of Ewyas (also known as the Llanthony Valley). On a good day (even in midwinter) it is a heavenly place, but on a wet or foggy day it is bleak and dangerous. *Armadillidium pictum* was originally found here by Roger Bray (17/9/1975), with subsequent records (that I know of) by Roger Bray, Maurice Massey and me (29/4/1977), several BISG members including me (2/4/1982), Steve Hopkin (April 1988), John Harper (2004, pers.comm.), and by me again (30/1/2005). There may be other records. The Tarren yr Esgob escarpment is over 4km long. Rocks of the Lower Old Red Sandstone continental facies, including some calcareous cornstones, surface as a range of outcrops and cliffs. The south-eastern end is known for its calcareous flora and rare whitebeams (*Sorbus* spp.). Logically this is where one would look for *A. pictum*, but both John Harper (pers.comm.) and I have searched in vain for it here in short calcareous turf among bands of rock. Just to confuse would-be collectors, *A. pictum* occurs in an area with bracken, heather and scattered hawthorns, among the scree below a tufa spring, more than 2km further northwest. Tufa is a porous rock, usually formed as a deposit around a spring with water containing a lot of calcium carbonate. Although usually soft when wet, tufa makes a good and ornamental building stone.

To find the *A. pictum* site start at the bridge at Capel-y-ffin (SO (32) 254314) – it is possible to park a car here. Take the tarmac (dead end) road to The Monastery and continue about 300m on this road past a stile under a stone arch. Turn left towards a riding centre and The Grange and follow the roadway up to The Grange. A way-marked footpath rises steeply left, just outside the gates of the house. Once on to the open moor head due west towards a ruin and enclosures named Waun-goch on the OS map. Continue due west to the foot of the escarpment and follow this edge (heading northwest) until you reach an isolated stone, 1.5 m square, standing in grassland. Walk a further 200m northwest along the foot of the escarpment until you reach a low-lying area with rushes. Cross one stream coming into this slough from the left, but at the second (larger) stream, after about 100m, you have reached the base of the largest tufa scree (SO (32) 238315). This scree runs for 60m below a tufa outcrop, which is halfway up the escarpment. The outcrop is noticeably pinkish brown, with dark green, mossy faces and running water. A short way up the scree is a huge tufa boulder, the size of a bus, with little caves on the north side; this has probably fallen from the tufa face within the last 20 years. On 30/1/2005, *A. pictum* was found near the top of this scree under large flat slabs of sandstone. Thyme (*Thymus* sp.) seemed to be growing in this area. On earlier visits *A. pictum* was found under drier stones within the scree, but away from running water. A line of smaller tufa springs occurs along the slope towards the north. This line is not easily distinguished approaching from the east, but if approached from the north it can be seen easily as a distinct line of strata with vertical surfaces.

Steve Gregory (pers. comm.) has speculated that *A. pictum* probably occurs elsewhere in the area and he may be correct in that it was found in woodland at Coed Aber Edw in Radnorshire by Arthur Chater in April 1988 (BISG Newsletter of the Isopod Survey Scheme, No 24, May 1988, p2). Elsewhere in Britain *A. pictum* often seems to occur in relatively inaccessible localities and much of the Welsh borderland is poorly recorded. I know of no other tufa screes in the Brecon/Radnor/Hereford borders similar to that at Tarren yr Esgob.

Paul Harding, c/o Biological Records Centre, Centre for Ecology & Hydrology, Monks Wood, Abbots Ripton, HUNTINGDON PE28 2LS

Area Organisers (AO)

In addition to our National Scheme organisers there are many people across the country who are active in their immediate area by collecting and identifying myriapods or isopods. Recently the BMIG Committee have been discussing ways in which some of our members could become more active and also how we might recruit some new members and encourage them. One way to do this would be to build up our network of area organisers who could promote the groups to their local wildlife groups and act as a point of contact. We know that there are some of you out there who are already acting as recorders for specific areas and also some who may be interested in becoming so. This brief article is to suggest some activities that regional organisers might like to consider. Below is also printed the list of those that we believe are already

fulfilling this role and the area which they cover. We would be very glad to hear from anyone who feels they would like to take on an 'area' so that we can build up a network of keen people. We appreciate that you may not feel that you could do all the 'jobs' listed below but we are keen to help out where possible and, at least initially, just having a 'champion' in each area would be a great step forward.

Tony Barber	Orkney
Jane Arnold / Gail Nesbit	Highlands
Gordon Corbet	Fife
Glyn Collis	Southern Scotland
Paul Richards	Sorby NHS (Sheffield)
Paul Lee	Yorkshire & Suffolk
Peter Harvey	Essex
David Scott-Langley	Gloucestershire
Steve Gregory	Berks, Bucks & Oxon
Isobel Girvan	Surrey
Steve Prosser (woodlice only)	Sussex
Steve Hopkin	Cornwall

Collating records – This is perhaps the core role of the AO. Making sure that information about finds is submitted both to the local biological recording centre and the National co-ordinators. This might include searches of old literature as well as accepting information from others to pass on.

Checking identifications – Ideally this should be the job of the AO along with help from the National Scheme organisers where appropriate. The AO should be able to know what is found locally and be able to check and query any records sent in that are new for the area or found in unusual places etc. Thus when information is sent to an AO they are able to 'validate it' before sending to the records centres.

Encouraging recording – This could be through the development of field meetings, raising awareness of the groups during other field meetings or simply going out themselves to look for animals and building up informational about the local fauna.

Stimulating local interest via identification workshops etc. – National scheme organisers and others within the Group may be able to help with the running of identification workshops to increase identification skills of local people.

We would be pleased to hear from anyone who is already the Myriapod or Isopod co-ordinator for an area or region (and what that area is) and is not on our list, also anyone who would like to take on the role.

Helen Read, 2 Egypt Wood Cottages, Egypt Lane, Farnham Common

The World List of Isopods

The World List of Isopods can now be downloaded. Through a new feature on the home page, the list is available as an Access database. Just click on the download function but be sure to SAVE the file to your desktop or disk before opening it. If you have questions or problems please let me know.

Home page: <http://www.nmnh.si.edu/iz/isopod/>

It is now possible to query a subset of the list. Go to the search page - direct address:
http://ravenel.si.edu/iz/isopod/isolist/isolist_search.cfm
Enter a search term and click on the box for "delimited text file". You will then see a page requesting your email

address; the list will be generated and sent to you within a few minutes.

There is also a page of links to other isopod websites, including one for the Isopod Newsletter, both current and the three most recent back issues. That specific address is: http://www.vims.edu/tcs/isopod_newsletter.htm

For questions or comments, please reply to Marilyn Schotte, Dept. of Invertebrate Zoology, NHB 163, PO Box 37012, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C. 20013-7012, USA

In the journals

The following recent paper may be of interest to newsletter readers:

Molinari, J., Gutiérrez, E.E., De Ascensão, A.A., Nassar, J.M., Arends, A. & Márquez, R.J. 2005. Predation by Giant Centipedes, *Scolopendra gigantea*, on Three Species of Bats in a Venezuelan Cave. *Caribbean Journal of Science*, **41** (2), 340-346.

This paper reports the first known cases of predation by centipedes, *Scolopendra gigantea*, on three species of bats. Observations made in a limestone cave in Venezuela show that centipedes can perform two actions that most other bat predators cannot. First, they climb cave ceilings to catch and eat flying or perching bats. Second, they subdue bats substantially heavier than themselves. This paper provides the detailed science behind the amazing footage in David Attenborough's *Life in the Undergrowth* broadcast.

NEXT NEWSLETTER: Autumn 2006

Please send your contributions to reach the editor by
30 September 2006

Supplies of record cards and additional copies of the British Myriapod and Isopod Group Newsletter can be obtained from the Biological Records Centre.

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