

BRITISH MYRIAPOD GROUP

Newsletter Number 5 - February 1986

Honorary Editor - D T Richardson

BMG/BISG SPRING MEETING, MANCHESTER POLYTECHNIC 2-6 APRIL 1986

The SECOND CIRCULAR requesting firm bookings and deposits was sent out on 7 January, the THIRD listing the names of members who intend to be present, a detailed programme, maps and other information was posted on 3 February and the FOURTH and FINAL CIRCULAR will be posted in mid-March. LATE BOOKINGS may be accepted up to the 7 March, but we would like them earlier if possible please. You may book for part or the whole of the five days. Some 40 BMG/BISG members have already booked.

The meeting includes visits to the Delamere Forest and other sites in Cheshire (Joan Fairhurst has invited us to her Field Centre at Delamere); a day is set aside for an excursion on to the carboniferous limestone in Derbyshire, and half a day for urban sites around Manchester.

Dr Bellairs of University College, London is bringing a film and a poster on swarming polydesmids in India; and in addition to Professor Dohle, who is giving the Charles H Brooks Memorial Lecture on Myriapods and the Ancestry of Insects, we expect Dr Enghoff from Copenhagen and several other colleagues from adjacent European countries. If you are bringing a display, exhibition or colour slides for a short talk please let me know immediately so that details can be included in the final programme.

If you HAVE NOT HAD a booking form please drop me a note and I will send you one forthwith.

J Gordon Blower, Department of Zoology, The University, Manchester M13 9PL.

SYNOPSIS OF THE BRITISH FAUNA

J Gordon Blower

Volume 35 MILLIPEDES by J Gordon Blower (240 pages, 74 figures)

Glory be!! Advance copies are in the hands of the author and it is highly likely that copies will be available at the BMG/BISG meeting in April. The price is not yet fixed, but will probably be within the range of £17 - £19.50. Members may be offered a discount of 25%, possibly more.

BULLETIN OF THE BRITISH MYRIAPOD GROUP Volume 3

A D Barber

It is hoped that Volume 3 (1986) will be available at the Manchester meeting of the BMG/BISG. It includes articles on a new British millipede Trachysphaera lobata, Irish centipedes, Henia (= Chaetechelyne) vesuviana predation, Shetland centipedes and other items. It is anticipated that the cost will be similar to Volume 2, copies of which are still available price £2.60 plus postage (30p). Hopefully the Bulletin, now constituted as a formal publication (ISSN 0267 - 2154), will be published on an approximately annual basis, but this depends on adequate numbers of articles being submitted. Regional studies, observations, new or unusual species, etc, all are welcome.

PAUROPODA AND SYMPHYLA

A D Barber

Pauropoda do exist, despite the doubts of some myriapodologists. Gordon Blower has already come up with one new to Britain and Northwest Europe (see below) so if you are finding any while hand-sorting or in Tullgren funnel samples, don't throw them away. They are very small, 1 - 2 mm, whitish animals, sometimes seen moving about on the underside of stones but should not be confused with the six-legged springtails of similar habits. Seen under the microscope they are definately "many legged" and the antennae are rather curious having two branches. There is no readily available key.

Symphyla, rather larger, should also occupy our attention. There is a key, C A Edwards 'Revision of the British Symphyla', but little other recent British studies. The reference is Proc. Zool. Soc. London 132, 403-439 (1959).

If you find any, keep the specimens, taking care to record the exact locality and habitat data. Perhaps we could persuade someone to take a serious interest in both of these groups. Something we could profitably find a few minutes to discuss at Manchester.

A PAUROPOD NEW TO BRITAIN AND NORTH-WEST EUROPE

J Gordon Blower

I have recently extracted several examples of a pauropod of the family Eurypauropodidae from litter and soil samples from a mixed deciduous wood near Windermere. Dr Scheller has kindly identified the material as Gravieripus cordatus Scheller.

DOWROG COMMON, PEMBROKESHIRE - AN APPEAL FOR RECORDS

Keith Alexander

Dowrog Common lies just over a mile to the north-west of St David's at SM 772270, and consists of some 200 acres of lightly grazed common with extensive development of wet grass-heath. In the north-east corner and around the River Alun and Dowrog Pool, tall herb, marsh and fen communities are developed. There are several small pools in addition to the main one, some permanent, some seasonal.

The Common belongs to The National Trust but is managed by the West Wales Trust for Nature Conservation as a nature reserve. It has been designated a SSSI by the NCC, and has recently been added to the Nature Conservation Review as a Grade 1 Heathland Site, ie on a par with sites such as Thursley and Hankley Commons (Surrey) and Morden Bog (Dorset). This recognition is based on vegetational characteristics but the limited entomological work carried out to date certainly suggests that it is a very important site.

The West Wales Trust are very keen to have further information on the invertebrate fauna, particularly as regards the implications to their management work. It is hoped that a base can be found to support meetings in the area, but in the meantime, if anyone is likely to be visiting West Wales, and would be interested in sampling the Dowrog fauna, then they should contact John Comont, at West Wales Trust for Nature Conservation, 7 Market Street, Haverfordwest, Dyfed SA61 1NF (Tel 5462), and he will issue permits, give you details on how to find the site, car parking, and supply maps of the Reserve.

There are no millipede records to my knowledge, and only two common species of centipede known.

CENTIPEDE RECORDS - LEVEL OF RECORDING - ENGLAND AND WALES

A D Barber

The summary shows the total number of records from each vice-county in the print-out obtained in 1984. Since then there has been substantial input in certain areas and there are clearly still some mistakes and omissions, but this gives a fair indication of the level of recording and of under-recorded areas.

Total records are given with pre-1960 records shown in brackets. Vice-counties for which a number of additional records have been put in subsequently are shown *.

V-C	Name		Total records	V-C	Name		Total records
1	Cornwall	(W)	213 (92)	30	Beds		534 (2)
2		(E)	104 (5)*	31	Huntingdon		22 (3)
3	Devon	(S)	1029 (50)	32	Northants		13 (10)
4		(N)	62 (23)	33	Glos	(E)	56 (48)
5	Somerset	(S)	56 (28)	34		(W)	88 (9)
6		(N)	36 (3)	36	Hereford		66 (3)
7	Wilts	(N)	122 (0)	37	Worcs		87 (37)
8		(S)	29 (0)	38	Warcs		20 (19)
9	Dorset		53 (1)	39	Staffs		23 (12)
10	I.O.W.		937 (6)*	40	Shropshire		26 (0)
11	Hants	(S)	255 (167)	53	Lincs	(S)	43 (9)*
12		(N)	78 (0)	54		(N)	32 (1)*
13	Sussex	(W)	112 (0)	55	Leics		112 (0)*
14		(E)	80 (61)	56	Notts		22 (17)*
15	Kent	(E)	149 (25)*	57	Derby		62 (38)
16		(W)	273 (82)*	58	Cheshire		131 (95)
17	Surrey		978 (20)	59	Lancs	(S)	169 (126)
18	Essex	(S)	37 (29)	60		(W)	65 (22)
19		(N)	19 (11)	61	Yorks	(SE)	90 (10)
20	Herts		23 (9)	62		(NE)	72 (1)
21	Middx		53 (4)	63		(SW)	344 (0)
22	Berks		169 (22)	64		(NW)	404 (0)
23	Oxon		58 (3)	65		(NW)	101 (0)
24	Bucks		0 (0)		Total Yorkshire		1011 (11)
25	Suffolk	(E)	19 (5)	66	Durham		80 (27)
26		(W)	15 (4)	67	N'humb	(S)	73 (19)
27	Norfolk	(E)	69 (9)	68		(N)	232 (0)
28		(W)	221 (14)	69	Westm		209 (73)
29	Cambs		33 (24)	70	Cumb		107 (4)
				71	I.O.M.		6 (0)

WALES

35	Monmouth		2 (0)*	47	Montgomery		18 (1)
41	Glamorgan		26 (9)	48	Merioneth		38 (2)
42	Brecon		3 (0)	49	Caernarvon		43 (36)*
43	Radnor		20 (0)	50	Denbigh		21 (4)
44	Carmarthen		2 (0)	51	Flint		14 (14)
45	Pembroke		49 (2)*	52	Anglesey		10 (6)*
46	Cardigan		10 (3)				

PROVISIONAL ATLAS OF CENTIPEDES OF THE BRITISH ISLES

A D Barber

Thanks to the help of BRC we hope that this will be published in 1986. Some 16,000 records, including those from the literature, have been incorporated. Maps are now in preparation on a 10 km square basis and analysis of habitat information is being carried out so that, as was the intention of the scheme, ecological information similar to that in the recent 'Woodlice in Britain and Ireland' will be included.

Our thanks are due to all those many recorders who over the years have sent in specimens and/or record cards, or records, that have made this possible. As readers will be aware we are now using a new record card, RA58 which incorporates certain changes from the old RA14 used for the present habitat analysis and the scheme will continue allowing us to further refine the quality of our information and improve our coverage, especially on a regional level.

Examination of our print-out for a common species, such as Lithobius forficatus, indicates noticeable gaps for the following areas: North/central Cornwall and Devon, Dorset, Wiltshire, Sussex, Essex, Suffolk, Cambs, Northampton, Lincs, Gloucester, Hereford, most of Wales, Staffs, Cheshire, Cumbria, parts of Northumberland, most of Scotland and almost all parts of Ireland - but ALL RECORDS from wherever are welcome.

Print-outs for particular species, or areas such as vice-counties, or 100 km grid squares are available by arrangement with Paul Harding.

A paper incorporating some preliminary comments on distribution was published at the Amsterdam congress and reprints are available on request from myself. (Distribution patterns in British Chilopoda. Bij. tot de Dierkunde, 55, 16-24 (1985)).

MILLIPEDE SURVEY

D T Richardson

Records continue to dribble in, albeit in small numbers, on a moderately regular basis with Keith Alexander (Cirencester), Charles Rawcliffe (Edinburgh) and Ian Morgan (Llanelli) leading the field.

Please note the non-availability of an up to date key to British millipedes will no longer be accepted as a valid excuse for not collecting - see note from Gordon Blower.

Remember to use the new RA59 record cards.

MILLIPEDE SURVEY - PROCESSING OF DATA

P T Harding

Having recently completed work on the centipede data (see above), the Biological Records Centre (with continued and gratefully received help from Andy Keay) has begun work on the millipede data. Thanks to Colin Fairhurst, approximately 6000 RA13 record cards are now deposited at BRC. Circa 10,000 records have been put onto computer file at BRC (a similar number is also on computer file at Salford University). These are now being checked at BRC for a variety of errors (including mistakes in grid references, a not uncommon problem with the centipede data). A further 2-3000 records will be received from Doug Richardson on 1 March to complete the data set (except for Irish records currently held by Colin Fairhurst).

Unfortunately the time available for work on the millipede data is very limited, but it is to be hoped that draft 10 km square distribution maps will be available at Easter 1987. These will complement the analyses and 50 km square maps (derived from 10,000 records) produced by Colin Fairhurst in 1984. I hope that it will be possible to reach agreement to produce a Provisional Atlas of Millipedes of the British Isles in 1987.

VICE-COUNTY DISTRIBUTION: MILLIPEDES

D T Richardson

Species	Vice-county
<u>Blaniulus guttulatus</u>	18, 44
<u>Brachydesmus superus</u>	18
<u>Chordeuma proximum</u>	44, 46
<u>Cylindroiulus britannicus</u>	100
<u>Cylindroiulus latestriatus</u>	79, 83, 100
<u>Melogona gallica</u>	46
<u>Nemasoma varicorne</u>	48
<u>Ophyilus pilosus</u>	79
<u>Oxidus gracilis</u>	41
<u>Polydesmus denticulatus</u>	11
<u>Polydesmus inconstans</u>	24, 100
<u>Proteroiulus fuscus</u>	18, 100

Please update the lists which were given in Newsletter No 4, July 1985.

ANOTHER NEW BRITISH HOTHOUSE MILLIPEDE - Poratia digitata

A J Rundle

Specimens of this small, pale-pink millipede were found both in the tropical fern house at the Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew and in the orchid house of the Leicester Museum Botanical Gardens in 1985. It belongs to the family PYRGODESMIDAE and is very similar in appearance to the somewhat smaller, white Prosopodesmus panporus with which it is associated at Kew.

CENTIPEDES OF THE BRITISH ISLES (1964)

A D Barber

Copies of Ted Eason's book are still sought. Apparently £20 to £25 is the going rate IF you can find one.

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NEXT BMG NEWSLETTER

Material intended for the next Newsletter should be forwarded to Douglas Richardson by 31 August 1986.