

BRITISH MYRIAPOD GROUP

Newsletter Number 7 - September 1987

Honorary Editor - D T Richardson

BMG AT LANGFORD 23-26 April 1986

D T Richardson

The fifth joint meeting of BMG and BISG was held at the University of Bristol School of Veterinary Science at Langford, on the edge of the Mendips, 23-26 April.

The meeting was attended by 29 people including Dr's Marie-Louise Célérier and Jean-Jacques Geoffroy from Paris and Dr Maija and Martin Rantala from Finland. Regrettably some UK 'regulars' didn't make it as well as a number of European colleagues all of whom sent their regrets and wished us well. We did however host quite a number of newcomers to BMG, which was very encouraging and good for the long term prospects of the Group and its work. Dr Ted Eason joined us for dinner on Saturday and spent the rest of the evening with us.

Included in the formal myriapod business were talks on "Further studies of the glue produced by Henia vesuviana" by Steve Hopkin; "Insight into problems presented by Lithobius forficatus and L. variegatus" by John Lewis; a most illuminating lecture on the "Metabolism of isopods and diplopods" by Dr's Célérier and Geoffroy and yet another selection of Isopod/Myriapod slides by Dick Jones. Dr Geoffroy and Messrs Harding and Richardson put on a variety of displays and Adrian Rundle once again organised and ran workshop sessions in the laboratory.

The decision to invite our European colleagues was well justified - many useful contacts were made and the opportunity to discuss current research and exchange ideas face-to-face, both at professional and amateur level, was obviously one of the highlights of the meeting.

Field work - we visited over 30 major sites and the enthusiasm shown by everyone is reflected in both the number of species found (28 diplopods, 25 chilopods) and the new vice-country records.

The final business sessions on Saturday evening was rounded off by Noel Jackson, in a way which only Noel could do, by following his vote of thanks in a tremendously humorous way by reciting the accompanying 'ode'.

Finally my most grateful thanks to you all for your support and an extra special thank you to those who helped me organise the event.

THE 1987 INVERTERS GATHERING

By Noel Jackson

This ode was commissioned by Andy Keay & Dick Jones. Any resemblance to invertebratologists, living or dead, is purely coincidental.

There's a well known port town that's called Bristol,
 In the new-fangled county A-vo-n,
 And the British (and foreign) woodlousers,
 Went there one weekend for some fun.
 There were one great, big fella called Tony,
 Whoose face were covered with scar,
 And he lay in a somnolent posture,
 Resting his head on the bar.

Some disreputable types stood around him,
 Arguing the toss about who,
 Should Dick get the next round of whisky,
 Or was it the turn of the screw?
 Chairman Doug, who hails from Yorkshire,
 Said "I'll pay for thy sup!"
 Several moths flew from his wallet
 And Paul Harding were treated for shock.

Then a cloud of blue smoke in the corner,
 Spoke in a voice soft but clear,
 It was Gordon from Manchester Uni,
 "Would someone please get him a beer?"
 A cry arose of "Where's Adrian?"
 Not being a great one for booze,
 He'd just got three new county records
 From the mud trapped in Helen Read's shoes.

Then Arthur went looking for Pauline,
 Who was watering the plants in her car,
 But he looked the wrong way down his binos,
 And thus couldn't see very far.
 An NCC man made suggestions,
 'Bout fieldwork from the warmth of his bed,
 And Ian from Wales made a comment,
 But no-one understood what he'd said.

Then Andy and Dick's started shouting,
 'Bout methods that they ought to use,
 To extract invertebrate animals
 From cracks in municipal loos.
 Andy Keay preferred using his winkler,
 An eight-inch long hardened steel tool,
 But Dick said that he preferred jelly,
 For banging away as a rule.

Steve Hopkin erected five species
 As he walked cross the room to the bar,
 He's a bit of a whizz kid at Reading,
 'Specially now that he's got a new car.
 Then John Lewis burst into the company
 Shouting "Scutigera down near Taun-ton"
 A great silence fell, then all as one,
 With a rattle of tubes they were gone.

DIPLOPODA

NEW VICE-COUNTY RECORDS

D T Richardson

VC6 N. Somerset

<u>B. melanops</u>	(REJ)
<u>B. pusillus</u>	(SPH;REJ;HR)
<u>C. almatus</u>	(JGB;REJ)
<u>C. proximum</u>	(REJ)
<u>C. parisiqorum</u>	(HR)
<u>J. scandinavius</u>	(ADB;DB;JGB;SPH)
<u>M. pallicola</u>	(ADB;DB;SPH;REJ)
<u>M. gallica</u>	(DB, SPH)
<u>P. denticulatus</u>	(JGB)
<u>S. italica</u>	(ADB)
<u>S. crinita</u>	(REJ)

VC7 N. Wilts

<u>B. guttulatus</u>	(ADB;DB;SPH;AJR)
<u>C. caeruleocinctus</u>	(ADB;ANK)
<u>J. scandivavius</u>	(ADB)
<u>O. albonanus</u>	(DB;SPH)
<u>O. pilosus</u>	(DB;SPH)

VC8 S. Wilts

<u>M. scutellare</u>	(REJ;ANK)
<u>S. crinita</u>	(REJ)

BMG LANGFORD 23-26 APRIL 1987

		LOCALITY							
CONTRIBUTORS		VC NGR 3(S)7	5 14-28-	HASLE					
K. ALEXANDER					6 70-43-		AISHAM WOODS		
A. D. BARBER					6 798664		BATHFORD HILL AND BROWNS FOLLY		
D. BILTON					6 29-53-		BERRON SANDS		
J. G. BLOWER,					6 50-58-		BLAGDON VILLAGE		
J. BRATTON					6 297590		BREAN DOWN		
S. P. HOPKIN					6 301588		NORTH OF BREAN DOWN FARM		
N. JACKSON					6 342574		BRENT KNOLL		
R. E. JONES					6 343523		BRENT KNOLL - FIELDS		
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J. G. LEWIS					6 480587		BURRINGTON COMBE		
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		6 464597		MENDIP LODGE WOOD					
		6 329529		SAND POINT					
		6 322630		WESTON WOODS					
		6 422560		WINSOMBE					
		6 33-63-		WORLEBURY HILL - BEACH - WOOD					
		7 950680		BEWLEY COMMON SSSI					
		7 837729		COLERNE PARK WOOD SSSI					
		7 838725		GRAINS QUARRY PLANTATION SSSI					
		7 95-67-		SPYE PARK SSSI					
		7 850760		WEST YATTON, DOWN SSSI					
		8 828397		BIDCOMBE WOODS					
		8 797413		GREAT BRADLEY WOOD					
		8 792417		LITTLE BRADLEY WOOD					
		8 87-42-		SOUTHKILGIGH WOOD					
BLANIULUS GUTTULATUS									
BRACHYCHAETEUMA MELANOPS									
BRACHYDESMUS SUPERUS									
BRACHYIULUS PUSILLUS									
CHONEIULUS PRAMATUS									
CHORDEUMA PROXIMUM									
CYLINDROIULUS BRITANNICUS									
CAERULEOINCTUS									
LATESTRIATUS									
PARISIORUM									
PUNCTATUS									
GLOMERIS MARGINATA									
JULUS SCANDINAVIUS									
MACROSTERNODESMUS PICCOLA									
MELOGONA GALICA									
SCUTELLARE									
NANOCONA POLYDESMODES									
NEMASOMA VARICORNE									
OMMATOIULUS SABULOSUS									
OPHIODESMUS ALBOANUS									
OPHYIULUS PILOSUS									
POLYDESMUS ANGSTUS									
DENTICULATUS									
GALLICUS									
PROTEROIULUS FUSCUS									
STOSATEA ITALICA									
STYGIOLOMERIS CRINITA									
TACHYPODOIIULUS NIGER									
BRACHYGEOPHIUS TRUNCORUM									
CRYPTOPS ANOMALUS									
HORTENSIS									
PARISI									
GEOPHIUS CARPOPHAGUS									
ELECTRICUS									
INSCULPTUS									
OSQUIDATUM?									
HAPLOPHILLUS SUBTERRANEUS									
HENIA BREVIS									
LAMYCTES FULVICORNIS									
ALTHOBIOUS CURTIPES									
FORFICATUS									
MACILENTUS									
MELANOPS									
MICRIPS									
MUTICUS									
VARIEGATUS									
CALCARATUS									
NECROPHILOPHAGUS FLAVUS									
SCHENDYLA NEMORENSIS									
PEYERIMHOFFI									
STRIGAMIA ACUMINATA									
CRASSIPES									
MARITIMA									

Eleven firsts for VC6 bringing the overall total to 28 species; 5 for VC7 -total 18; and 2 for VC8 -total 17.

B. guttulatus, B. pusillus, C. caeruleocinctus, C. parisorum, J. scandinavicus, O. pilosus, and P. denticulatus represent our most widely distributed and in some cases ubiquitous species and it is understandable that they should have turned up - that this has not happened earlier only emphasises how poorly these particular VC's have been worked.

M. gallica and M. scutellare as well as M. pallicola and O. albonanus reflect the advantages of 'concentrated collecting' by a large party when extra time is spent on looking for the smaller species.

C. proximum was, until recently, thought to be a comparatively rare animal, but work by Ian Morgan in South Wales showed it to be widely distributed and quite common in VC's 44, 45 and 46 so it is perhaps not surprising it is turning up in adjacent areas. The fact that adults are around only between October and April doesn't help because this is one of the less popular periods in the year for collecting.

The finding of S. crinita in both VC6 and VC8, by Dick Jones, is most interesting; it extends the distribution range of the animal and clearly illustrates that it is not, as originally thought, restricted to the Carboniferous limestone.

The 'gems' of the weekend are surely B. melanops, C. palmatus and S. italica all of which are known from only a few sites and which the majority of us have never before seen live in the field.

CHILOPODA

NEW VICE-COUNTY RECORDS

A D Barber

VC6 N. Somerset

B. truncorum
C. anomalans
C. parisi
G. electricus
G. insculptus
G. osquidatum
L. calcaratus
L. curtipes
L. macilentus
S. peyerimhoffi

VC7 N. Wilts

S. acuminate

VC8 S. Wilts.
N. flavus

An interesting collection of records, including some 12 new vice-county records, an indication of the need for collections from the area. A total of 25 centipede species was found, rather more than half the number of species on the current British list and comparing with the 19 species recorded at the Manchester meeting.

The somewhat greater number of species is a reflection of the richer fauna of south Britain, but there are two interesting absences from the list. These are Lithobius crassipes, which everyone from northern and eastern Britain knows as the common small lithobiid of rural areas and L. borealis which has a somewhat similar niche in Devon. We did find L. microps in a large number of sites however; a pattern somewhat resembling that of the south east.

Brachygeophilus truncorum; Curiously a new vice-county record for VC6, reflecting the previous lack of collecting in the area. There are ten site records, perhaps rather less than might be expected; the provisional atlas

suggests that it is not as common in the SW as elsewhere. Cryptops anomalans found at Langford itself, a site which yielded both other Cryptops species, also from Great Bradley Wood (ANK). Probably our most spectacular centipede and always exciting to find it turning up in a number of sites across southern England and in south Wales.

Cryptops parisi : Our other 'big' Cryptops which also seems to be turning up more frequently. Six sites for what was always regarded as an uncommon animal is impressive and it looks as though it must be regarded as a fairly common component of the urban/suburban/rural fringe of the Avon area. Geophilus species; Not as many records as might have been expected, but four species, including the more or less south western G. osquidatum. Only one record of G. insepultus, often a common animal in some areas. G. electricus as usual, was not a common animal.

Haplophilus subterraneus Eighteen records, the common geophilomorph of the area, a notable southern and western feature. Commoner than the ubiquitous Necrophloeophagus flavus (= longicornis).

Henia brevis A single record (AJR) of this widespread, but uncommon, usually synanthropic, species. Has been found before near Bath.

Lamyctes fluvicornis Most commonly found between July and October so not really surprising that only one example (AJR) was found.

Lithobius curtipes Never common, a record of this is valuable and is the first one from this immediate area of England (DTR).

Lithobius macilentus A very patchily distributed animal, usually recorded from woodland and not known from most of south west England.

Lithobius muticus Until the BISG/BMG meeting in 1986, we thought this was a south eastern animal, but we now have it from Southleigh Wood (HR) as well as north west England.

Schendyla peyerimhoffi A predictable, but none-the-less welcome, record from VCG (ANK) which fits in with the distribution of this maritime species. Several of us looked for it in vain. Geophilus fucorum was also expected, but didn't show up.

Strigamia species A surprisingly high number of records of the two terrestrial forms (S. crassipes, S. accuinata) and welcome further records of S. maritima.

Of the British species not recorded, other than those referred to above Henia vesuviana (known from Bristol), Brachyschendyla dentata (small and soil dwelling); Clinopodes linearis (rare, but found in London and Plymouth), and Lithobius pilicornis (scattered synanthropic records across southern England) might all turn up in the area of study. Others are more local in occurrence (but then we thought we knew Lithobius muticus!).

NEWS FROM THE BIOLOGICAL RECORDS CENTRE

P T Harding

Centipede atlas

Inevitably the atlas has been delayed in the editing/proof reading stage, but I hope it will flood into the nation's bookshops in time for the Christmas (1987!) wade. All BMG members will be notified when it is published.

Millipede data

Following an appeal for help, made at the Langford meeting, I am pleased to say that there has been considerable progress with the millipede data, due largely to the hard work and impetus provided by Dick Jones. Some 14,000 records from RA13 cards are now a computer file and records from RA59 cards are being processed at present. There is still a long way to go, and a number of apparent problems have to be resolved, but if Dick keeps up the pressure (on himself and BRC) there may be draft maps available at the BMG/BISG meeting in 1988. Thanks also to Andy Keay for some early work on checking computer listings and, of course, to Doug Richardson for his usual efficient job of checking and tidying up cards before they come to BRC.

VICE-COUNTY DISTRIBUTION : MILLIPEDES

D T Richardson

Additional records from 1st September 1985 to 31st August 1987.

Species	Vice-county
<u>Archiboreoiulus pallidus</u>	84
<u>Blaniulus guttulatus</u>	7, 24, 80
<u>Brachychaeteuma bradeae</u>	22, 70
<u>melanops</u>	6, 12, 18
<u>Brachydesmus superus</u>	45
<u>Brachyiulus pusillus</u>	6, 38, 41, 45
<u>Choneiulus palmatus</u>	6, 44
<u>Chordeuma proximum</u>	6
<u>Craspedosoma rawlinsii</u>	46
<u>Cylindroiulus britannicus</u>	70
<u>caeruleocinctus</u>	7
<u>londinensis</u>	46
<u>parisiorum</u>	6
<u>Julus scandinavicus</u>	6, 7
<u>Leptoiulus belgicus</u>	44
<u>kervellei</u>	12
<u>Macrosternodesmus pallicola</u>	6, 18, 44, 64
<u>Melogona gallica</u>	6
<u>scutellare</u>	8, 70
<u>Ommatoiulus sabulosus</u>	33, 40
<u>Ophiodesmus albonanus</u>	7, 44
<u>Ophiulus pilosus</u>	7
<u>Polydesmus denticulatus</u>	6, 22, 109
<u>gallicus</u>	45, 53
<u>inconstans</u>	109, 111
<u>Polyxenus lagurus</u>	2, 24, 46, 70, 105
<u>Proteroiulus fuscus</u>	23
<u>Stosatea italica</u>	6
<u>Stygioglomeris crinita</u>	6, 8, 52
<u>Thalassisobates littoralis</u>	44

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

GENTIPEDE ATLAS AND BEYOND

A D Barber A N Keay

Due to inevitable delays in the publication of the atlas the data in it is only that which had been received and processed up to the time of preparation. Hence it may well be that "dots" you added do not appear on the maps.

It is our intention, following the example of Steve Hopkin's isopod maps, to prepare and update 10 km maps for each species which will be available for

examination at meetings. In addition we would hope, at intervals, to produce sets of maps, possibly as a supplement to the Bulletin. It will obviously be some years before a further atlas, incorporating habitat data will be published, but meanwhile we hope the ecological data in the provisional atlas will be of interest and will justify filling in the relevant sections of the record card.

ANCIENT WOODLANDS

A D Barber

It has been suggested that perhaps Lithobius curtipes which has an extremely patchy and puzzling distribution in southern Britain might be a species of ancient woodlands. We do not, as yet, have enough data to be clear what are in fact the myriapods of such areas and such information might be helpful in understanding some features of distribution as well as indicating which are likely to be "old" woodland species as opposed to "newcomers".

If any collectors are able to obtain material from ancient woodland sites it would be most useful and could be indicated under category 80 on the habitat data of the record cards "Site Conservation Status" in addition to any details such as SSSI.

PROJECT CRYPTOPS - THE URBAN CENTIPEDE PROJECT (and Millipedes and Woodlice)

Tony Barber - Andy Keay

We are seeking information on the occurrence of centipedes, millipedes and woodlice in urban, suburban and similar areas. There are several species which are largely known from such sites in Britain and others which occur there in areas outside their apparent "rural" distribution. For centipedes, the following points are of interest:

Haplophilus subterraneus : A very common 'rural' animal in SW Britain but quite uncommon and largely synanthropic apparently in both the north and the east (eg Kent)

Schendyla nemorensis : Seems to be equally 'at home' in rural and urban sites.

Brachyschendyla dentata : Norwich, London, Guildford, Haslemere, Ivybridge, Plymouth. Not symbiotic with bearded myriapod-ologists, as far as we know, but always at more or less urban or village sites.

Henia (Chaetechelyne) vesuviana : Andy Keay's favourite. Urban or closely so (villages also) from Kent to Devon. Large and virtually unmistakable except for the "giant" Geophilus carpophagus.

Henia brevis (C. montana oblongocribellata) : Synanthropic records from Kent to Cornwall.

Clinopodes linearis : Seems to be fairly widespread in the London area but has been found elsewhere. Looks a bit like a Geophilus electricus and the "pits" on the last coxae need lactic acid to show them up.

Geophilus carpophagus : Elongate, large forms from urban sites and gardens. Size, sex, leg numbers needed.

Geophilus electricus : Is this confined to disturbed sites? Never very common.

- Geophilus insculptus : Quite a lot of urban/suburban records.
- Necrophloeophagus flavus
(longicornis) : No special preferences.
- Brachygeophilus truncorum : Mostly rural - but it has been found on waste ground in the centre of Reading.
- Cryptops species : C. hortensis, the small, common species is widespread in most of Britain with a marked urban preference especially in the north where it seems to be entirely synanthropic. C. parisi has been reported from Faversham in Kent to Plymouth in Devon, mostly from urban areas such as waste ground and churchyards. C. anomalans, the largest of the three seems only to be found in synanthropic sites; it has been recorded from Deal to Torquay. Both of the larger species seem to be fairly widespread around the Bristol area (all three turned up at Langford) and we have the impression that they may be increasing their range. There was a theory, propounded one evening after a few pints, that they had followed the Great Western Railway, the so called "Brunel effect", but there are too many records at some distance from any station!
- Lithobius forficatus : A common urban animal, but in some sites replaced by, for instance, L. pilicornis or in the case of Sheerness, L. peregrinus. Are there any more unexpected large lithobiids in Britain?
- Lithobius pilicornis : Odd records across southern England and south Wales, mostly urban, but much more common in the south west. It may be a very large animal sometimes as in some Isle of Wight or Devon and Cornwall specimens. Does it compete with L. forficatus?
- Lithobius melanops : Newport first described this from a garden in Sandwich; it is a characteristic synanthrope, but there are more than four hundred "rural" records so its ecology is of interest.
- Lithobius crassipes : There are five "urban" records of this, 810 "rural". How far does it extend into urban areas?
- Lithobius microps
(=duboscqui) : A characteristic urban centipede, but by no means always so as we found at Langford.
- Lamyctes fulvicornis : A handful of urban records (one for the Manchester area) of what we think of as a rural animal. Markedly seasonal in its occurrence - look for it in July to October.

No doubt similar comments could be made for some of the millipedes eg the status of Stosatea italica or Choneiulus palmatus. What we want is collections of myriapods and isopods from urban locations. It would be interesting to look at several sites in each town or city area of your locality and see what turns up even on a casual basis. Serious 'Rundle style' collecting in such areas would be most helpful, but even a casual look showed Cryptops parisi to be present, not only in Ivybridge, but in both Totnes and Ashburton as well as in Plymouth

and Paignton. So far I have only found C. hortensis in Exeter, but C. anomalans was found on waste ground in Torquay (and made its point with a fairly painful bite!).

Urban sites are richer in species than rural areas, a point that has been commented on elsewhere, and offer the collector the chance to find something unusual or possibly even new to Britain. Even if you do not, you are helping us to understand more about the urban fauna and its particular problems of dispersal and conservation. The centipede recording scheme has twenty times as many "rural" records as "urban" ones.

DISTRIBUTION OF BRITISH SYMPHYLA

Steve Hopkin

Thanks to a grant from the British Ecological Society, I am now in a position to begin a study of the distribution of Symphyla in Britain with the eventual aim of writing a new synopsis on their identification, distribution and ecology. What is now needed of course is specimens! Several members of BMG have already passed symphylids on to me which will be identified in the near future. Many more specimens are required from many more localities. I am therefore appealing to all BMG members to donate to me any symphylids they come across while hunting for millipedes and centipedes. Specimens should be preserved in 70% alcohol together with a label giving OS grid reference, date of capture, locality and brief habitat details. Please put only one specimen in each tube as bits tend to fall off! It will not be possible to return specimens as most will have to be mounted for light microscopy or scanning electron microscopy, but the identity of all specimens sent will be communicated to collectors.

BULLETIN OF THE BRITISH MYRIAPOD GROUP Volume 4

Volume 4 was published at Easter 1987 and copies of this (and of Volumes 2 and 3) are available from A D Barber, Rathgar, Exeter Road, Ivybridge, Devon PL21 08D.

Volume 4 Contents

Structural Abnormalities in Lithobius and Cryptops
 Myriapods of the Isles of Scilly
 Humidity Tolerance in Haplophilus subterraneus and Henia vesuviana.
Henia vesuviana and Staphylinus olens encounters
 Displaced ocelli in Blaniulids
 Centipedes and Millipedes collected in Normandy
 More myriapods from Brittany
 British Schendylidae
 Miscellanea

Please make cheques, etc payable to "A D Barber"

Volume 4 £3.40 plus £0.60 postage (Great Britain) (£0.90 elsewhere)
 Volumes 2, 3 and 4 £8.00 plus postage

BULLETIN Volume 4 - CORRECTIONS

No doubt there are other mistakes; blame it on the influence of reading the G**rdian.

1. List of Contents "More Myriapods from Brittany" not "More Millipedes...."
2. Extra page between 13 and 14 due to a page of tables being missed out during page numbering.
3. Page 51 References "Synopses Br. Fauna" not "Synapses".

4. Page 50 Enantiulus armatus map : Dot missing from Slapton area (20/84); dot at (20/75) should be at (20/74). A corrected version will be published in the next Bulletin.

BULLETIN OF THE BRITISH MYRIAPOD GROUP Volume 5

Volume 5 is due out in 1988; contributions are requested on any aspect of the ecology, systematics, biology, distribution, etc of British and Irish Myriapoda or those of nearby parts of mainland Europe.

"Miscellanea" is a section introduced in Volume 4. It is for short notes on observations or points of interest that would not be included elsewhere. So, if you have been recently bitten by a centipede, found a millipede in an unusual place, recorded a species from an unexpected area, anything worth noting for the benefit of other workers which would otherwise be lost or maybe turn up as "pers comm.", let us have details.

Editors

The following articles, submitted for inclusion in the Newsletter, have been forwarded to the Editors of the Bulletin:-

- BILTON, D An Interesting Myriapod Site at Carlisle, Cumberland.
- CELERIER, M-L Consumed and Egested fractions under laboratory conditions in an Isopod and three Diplopods living in a temperature forest ecosystem.
- HOPKIN, S Spider Mimics Millipede Shock!
- JENSEN, I M Albino Millipedes.

BISG/BMG MEETING 1988

See enclosed leaflet

NEXT BMG NEWSLETTER

Material intended for inclusion in the next Newsletter should be forwarded to D T Richardson by the 29th February 1988.

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