

BRITISH MYRIAPOD

GROUP, NEWSLETTER No. 18

March 1993

Editor: Dick Jones

THE MAPS CONTINUE TO GROW

Gordon Corbet has written to say that he has not found *Glomeris* in Fife yet but would *Stygioglomeris crinita* do instead! He found a single live specimen in a small soil sample that he collected from the base of the outside wall of an old lime-kiln. The record, which is the northern most for this species in Britain, could easily have been mistaken for a snail or slug egg when scanning the sample. There are many old lime workings along the high spine of Fife which will turn up some more goodies soon I'm sure. How about a *Macrosternodesmus palicola* or even a *Ophiodesmus albonanus*? Gordon figures largely in the vice-county list below as you will see.

Paul Lee has also turned up a goodie in Suffolk. As well as covering every square in the two vice-counties, something I still have yet to do in Norfolk, he has found *Stosatea italica*. He writes on "Garden Goodies" below.

Adrian Rundle has found *Pachymerium ferruginum* on, or rather in, a beach at Durlston Bay, Dorset the 3.9.92. I mention this partly because it is a rare beast and partly to show that Rundle is still around, fossil fish otoliths having taken the place of dandelions at the moment!

Keith Alexander sent me a load of tubes from Northern Ireland but alas there were no new species, just good work filling in the background.

Scotland, or rather Edinburgh, continues to put things on the map. Charles Rawcliffe has been joined by Bob Saville and a team of workers. They have already refound *Craspedosoma rawlinsii* which has not been seen for a long time.

It is good to see that people are turning to foreign parts for excitement! Ted Eason obviously has been at it for years, and so has John Lewis, but I had a request for information from Paul Lee, on North American millipedes, that I could not provide. If anyone out there has identification literature, or knows who can provide it, write to Paul, address below. I have started work on Australian Geophilomorphs; they have not been looked at since the early years of this century. The worst part is the fact that each person who studied them did not look at what was done before, hence there is much synonymy. I'll keep you posted if I do not go mad first.

Andy Key is begining to get to grips with the fauna of Surrey. I went to visit him and he picked up a *Lithobius muticus* right under my nose. He says that there is a lot to find in Surrey. So far he has seen *L. piceus*, *Cylindroiulus vulnerarius* and *Leptoiulus kervillei* and he has hardly started.

Steve Gregory has added yet another millipede to the county lists, *Chordeuma proximum*. Like Paul Lee in Suffolk he has filled in most of Oxfordshire and much of Berkshire but there are still plenty of things left to find.

BISG/BMG MEETING 1993

On the 22nd of April sixteen of us will be at Hassocks in Sussex for the field weekend. For once I am not going to make predictions, just say that anything could turn up and it probably will. With the coast, the South Downs, the Weald and a few synanthropic sites to chose from we should be kept busy. This is, after all, the territory in which John Lewis found *Geophilus pusillifrater* and *Pachymerium ferrugineum* in the late 1950s so keep your eyes peeled.

Now is the time to spare a thought as to where we should go next year. I rather fancy a weekend in the Scottish Borders or Stranraer, Ayr or Dumfries. What do you think?

VICE-COUNTY DISTRIBUTION: MILLIPEDES

Species	Vice-counties	Finders
<i>Boreoiulus tenuis</i>	17	A. N. Keay
<i>Chordeuma proximum</i>	23	S. J. Gregory
<i>Cylindroiulus britannica</i>	26	P. Lee
<i>C. nitidus</i>	108	G. B. Corbet
<i>Melogona scutellare</i>	85	G. B. Corbet
<i>Polydesmus inconstans</i>	85	G. B. Corbet
<i>Polyxenus lagurus</i>	113	A. N. Keay
<i>Stosatea italica</i>	25	P. Lee
<i>Stygioglomeris crinita</i>	85	G. B. Corbet

Please update lists given in the Bulletin, 1993.

AN UNUSUAL CASE OF PHORESY

During the clearance of a pile of leaf/twig litter from my garden at Woodmansterne, Surrey I observed several fairly large millipedes evacuating the site across the surface of the soil. All these millipedes were determined as *Cylindroiulus caeruleocinctus*, a common garden species in this area.

One specimen of *C. caeruleocinctus* appeared to be dragging a "blob" along on its tail, which, on closer inspection, was found to be a group of four pseudo-scorpions. They were clasped onto the hairs on the anal valves of the millipede and did not seem to impede the forward progress of the specimen in any way.

Having sent them to Dick Jones for identification I was surprised to find that they were 2 *Roncus lubricus* and 2 *Chthonius orthodactylus*. (Not as surprised as I was. Ed.) These two species have not to his knowledge been recorded before as being phoretic on any hosts at all. To find one species clinging to the anal hairs of a millipede is pretty good but to find two species on one host is remarkable.

A. N. K.

FAREWELL *Mastigonodesmus boncii* ?

While I was at the British Museum (NH) a few days ago I picked up a few old papers that were duplicates and were going spare. One of them was by Bagnall from the Annals and Magazine of Natural History, 1922. It appears that the record of *Mastigonodesmus boncii* rests on a single specimen. The specimen was broken and was a ♀ to boot. This has set me thinking, should we have it on our list or should we cross it off? The site given is Gibside, Co. Durham. Your comments would be much appreciated.

SOME GARDEN GOODIES FROM SUFFOLK

After several years recording in Doug Richardson country I have found it very frustrating at times to work in Suffolk. It is far more difficult to get access to large areas of the countryside than in Yorkshire with its three National Parks and numerous, well used footpaths. The centre of Suffolk in particular seems to have acres of barren agricultural land with all the footpaths ploughed up and the hedges and copses ripped out. Where footpaths still exist they seem to be so poorly used and they become an impenetrable tangle of vegetation.

In such a landscape I decided gardens must be accessible oases of myriapods if only I could get into them. An appeal through the Suffolk Naturalists' Society newsletter brought some response at the start of 1992. This was picked up by the local press and more offers of open access followed. To date I have had the chance to collect in or have received specimens from a dozen gardens across the county, but especially in the Lowestoft area. Time has prevented me from following up the other enquiries and most gardens have only been visited once, not necessarily at the best time of year.

The gardens have ranged from urban to rural and from pocket handkerchief patios to plots of 3-4 acres. No attempt was made to record the sites systematically, I just spent as long in the garden as seemed profitable or in some cases as long as I could before I was due somewhere else. For what they are worth I present the results below.

The centipede fauna seems to have been more consistent with the expected species, i.e. *Necrophloeophagus flavus*, *Cryptops hortensis*, *Lithobius forficatus* and *L. microps* turning up in the majority of gardens. What these results do not show is that *Geophilus electricus* appears to be something of a garden species in Suffolk, 50% of records coming from that habitat and 90% of records are from sites heavily influenced by man.

The millipedes seem much more of a mixed bag with only *Tachypodoiulus niger* turning up in at least 50% of the gardens. The expected species have been recorded again eg, *Brachychaeteuma bradeae*, *Blaniulus guttulatus*, *Cylindroiulus caeruleocinctus*, *Macrosternodesmus palicola* and *Ophiodesmus albanus* but generally only from two or three of the gardens and no one garden seems to be home to all of these species. This could be a result of the times at which I visited these sites or it may be that millipedes are more dependent than centipedes on the exact type of garden.

I hope to increase further my knowledge of the private gardens of Suffolk in the coming year.

P. Lee.

Table 1: Site details

1. Camps Heath TM510942 My own garden; small, rural and sampled regularly.
2. Lowestoft TM536909 Large, suburban garden. Visited V-91 & II-92.
3. Ipswich TM189439 Small, urban garden. Sampled X-91, V-92 & IX-92.
4. Pakefield TM537903 Small, suburban garden. Visited IV-92.
5. Oulton TM534947 Very small, paved suburban garden. Visited V-92.
6. Barton Mills TL721739 Large, village garden, deer paddocks. Visited X-92.
7. Polstead TL991382 Large, village garden. Visited X-92.
8. Kessingland TM532861 Large, grounds of converted school. Visited V-92.
9. Creeting St. Mary TM093557 Large, rural garden. Visited IV-92.
10. Monks Eleigh TL963741 Large, village garden in old quarry. Visited V-92.
11. Charsfield TM254564 Large, village garden of vicarage. Visited VII-92.
12. Oulton Broad TM515936 Small, suburban garden. Sampled V-92.

Table 2: Species recorded from each garden.

Sites;	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
CENTIPEDES												
<i>S. nemorensis</i>	■	■		■		■		■			■	
<i>S. acuminata</i>										■		
<i>G. carpophagus</i>			■									
<i>G. electricus</i>			■					■				
<i>N. flavus</i>	■	■	■	■		■		■	■		■	
<i>B. truncorum</i>						■	■	■				
<i>C. hortensis</i>	■	■	■	■				■	■	■	■	
<i>L. forficatus</i>	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
<i>L. melanops</i>	■		■		■	■		■				
<i>L. microps</i>	■	■	■	■		■	■	■	■	■		
MILLIPEDES												
<i>G. marginata</i>										■		
<i>N. polydesmoides</i>	■					■				■		
<i>B. bradeae</i>	■								■			
<i>N. varicorne</i>		■									■	
<i>P. fuscus</i>		■				■		■				
<i>B. guttulatus</i>	■	■		■	■	■						
<i>O. sabulosus</i>							■					
<i>T. niger</i>	■				■	■	■	■		■		
<i>C. caeruleocinctus</i>			■				■		■			
<i>C. punctatus</i>						■	■	■		■	■	
<i>J. scandinavius</i>							■	■				
<i>O. pilosus</i>		■					■			■		
<i>P. angustus</i>						■		■	■	■		
<i>B. superus</i>					■				■	■		
<i>M. palicola</i>		■				■						
<i>O. albonanus</i>	■	■										

REMEMBER you can't quote any paper in this Newsletter as being published. The Newsletter is not a publication, just a communication, so if you should want to include any article or note in a bibliography it must say UNPUBLISHED after it.

HELP WANTED WITH LEGS!

I have recently looked at the argument surrounding the number of legs found in species of Geophilomorpha from natural versus synanthropic habitats and wondered how to help solve this quandary (see Eason, 1979, in Myriapod Biology, ed. Camatini, Academic Press).

Rather than study the species which have a large disparity in leg count I have chosen, possibly unwisely, to study *Haplophilus subterraneus* from both natural and synanthropic sites. The leg count, in pairs of legs, for *H. subterraneus* is:

Males	65 to 71 pairs.
Females	67 to 75 pairs.

It must be noted that female specimens with 75 pairs of legs are distinctly rare; I know of only two specimens with this number.

Initial statistical research into the data I currently hold on computer indicates that there is a correlation between habitat and the number of leg pairs by sex, but I now need many more specimens from both habitat types.

The present database is composed of nearly 90% of specimens from Surrey and it is possible that these specimens are descended from virtually the same "blood stock" and therefore could be genetically related which would distort the validity of the research.

I am therefore requesting the assistance of the B.M.G. in collecting a wide sample group of either sex of *H. subterraneus* from either synanthropic or natural habitats but from widely differing geographical areas. The information required is either the specimen, I'll do the counting, or a record with a leg count and sex, but I must have an indication of habitat type, either natural or synanthropic. Specimens lent to me for the purpose of this research will be returned with my thanks.

A. N. K.

ADDRESSES OF CONTRIBUTORS

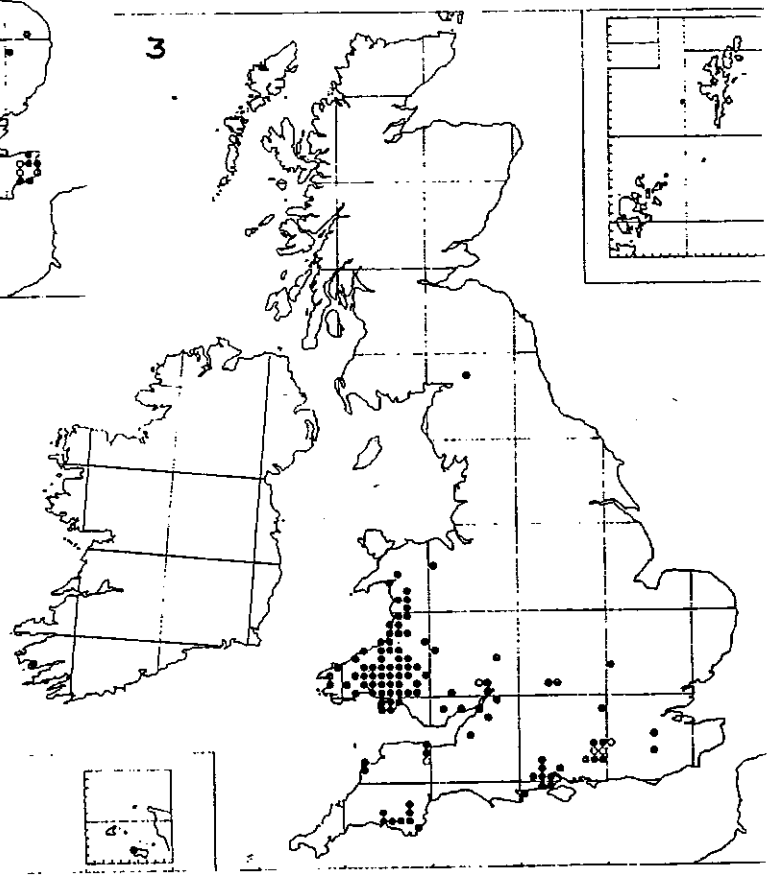
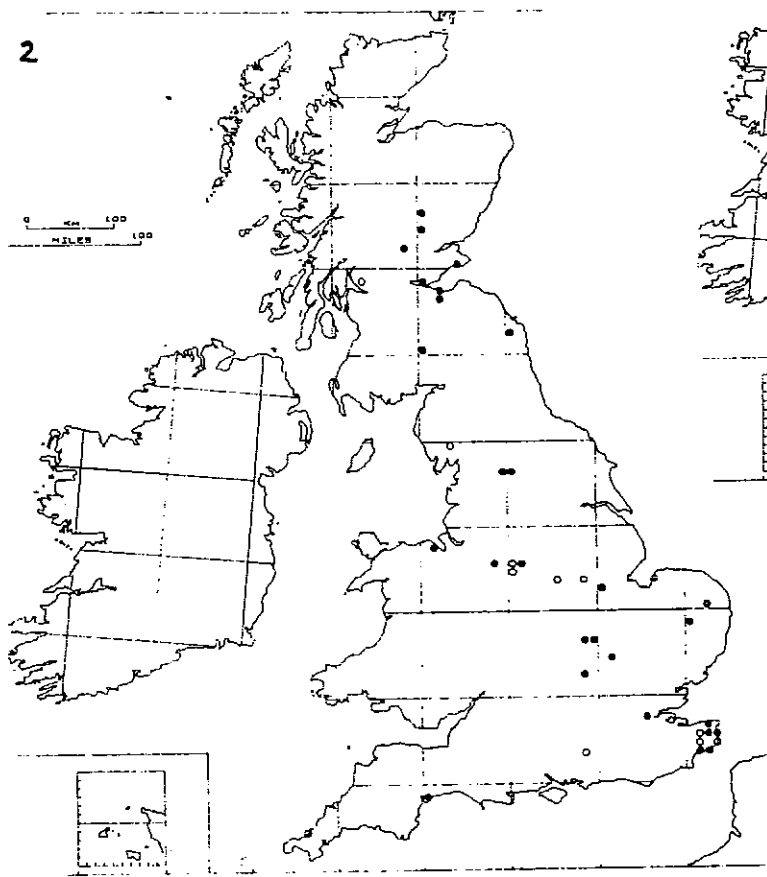
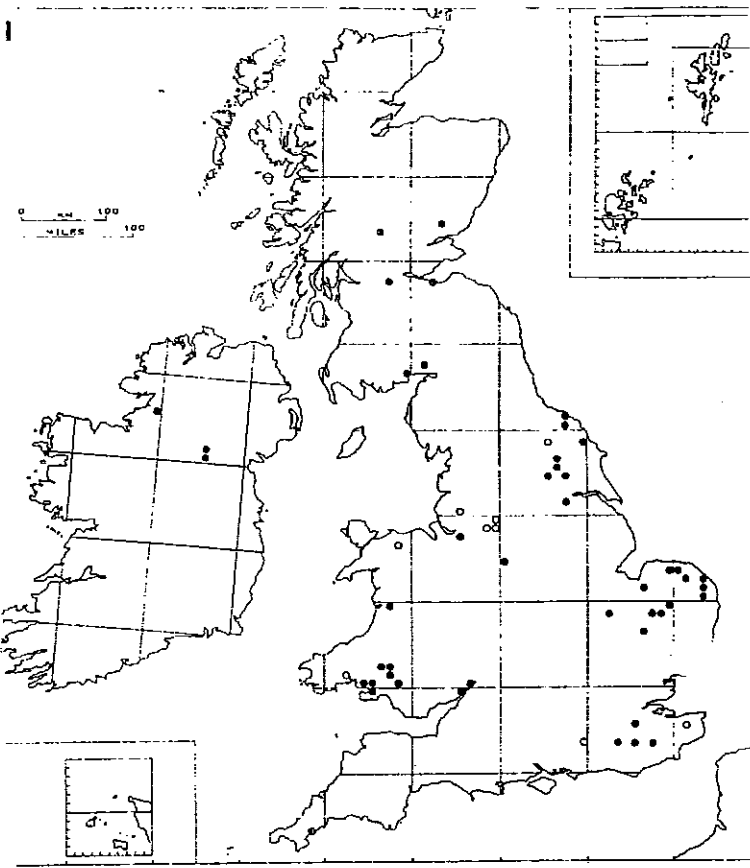
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NEXT BMG NEWSLETTER

Copy for inclusion should reach R.E.J. by August 14. Material should preferably be typed but floppy discs using Locoscript 1 or 2 for Amstrad 8000 series PCWs are especially acceptable as they save me extra typing.



Three more maps to fill in an empty space.

- 1 *Craspedosoma rawlinsii*
- 2 *Cylindroiulus nitidus*
- 3 *Chordeuma proximum*

All have added to their range since they were published in the Provisional Atlas.