



Het News

Newsletter of the UK Heteroptera Recording Schemes

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2nd Series

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Editorial:

Our apologies for the late publication this time, we'll try harder next time!

When assembling HN there sometimes emerges, inadvertently, some sort of theme, as was the case this time, the HN16 theme being 'het species spreading in the British Isles'. It is surprising how many times this crops up in this issue. In view of which, we'd ask that you let us know of further examples of this to document in future issues. A secondary theme this time is 'museum Heteroptera', so if there are other museum people out there who have British Heteroptera in their care and can find time to write-up a short (or longer) account thereof, then please do.

Sheila Brooke: 18 Park Hill Toddington Dunstable Beds LU5 6AW - brooke.aquahet@btopenworld.com Bernard Nau: 15 Park Hill Toddington Dunstable Beds LU5 6AW - nauhet@btinternet.com

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RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Book Review: *Suomi luteet*. [Finnish bugs]

Teemu Rintala & Veikko Rinne

Tibiale, Helsinki, 2010, pp 352. Hardback. ISBN 978-952-92-7512-0. Price: ca £56.

This work on Finnish Heteroptera has to be one of the most beautifully produced & designed books on bugs ever published. Chapters on 'what is a bug?'; a history of Heteroptera study in Finland; photos of habitats in Finland & of live specimens; and sampling & preservation introduce the main section which is a family by family, species by species account of the 500+ species of the Heteroptera fauna.

Each species is illustrated by a dorsal view in full colour, of the highest quality. Three species are covered on each page so illustrations are of good size. Species text covers description, distribution & biology. For most species only one photo is given, which may be a problem for variable or sexually dimorphic species. Months of the year when the species is active are indicated. Symbols indicate habitat type. A small map of Finland illustrates distribution. More detailed distributions of Heteroptera in Finland are given on the website of the *Expert Group on Hemiptera*:

www.sci.utu.fi/projects/biologia/elainmuseo/hemi/het/ludemaps.htm

The taxonomic format for families is 'traditional'; Lygaeidae is used in the wider sense, not subdivided into

the more recent families such as Lygaeidae, Blissidae, Rhyparochromidae (but none the worse for that). Divisions between subfamilies & tribes are not given - this might have been clearer with a species checklist.

Keys are provided to families, genera & species - with line drawings of characters; 31pp of colour plates (largely the images used previously) are also provided. An index to genera & species, and a bibliography complete the book. Given the quality of the book it is a very good price.

If I have any comments on omissions my only wish would be that a checklist of the species could have been provided. This book sets a new standard for identification guides in its presentation of the Finnish fauna. It will be used more widely than Finland but its use would be even more widespread if keys & some text were also in English. However, that does not detract from the author's achievement and they are to be congratulated on this work. I greatly look forward to the second edition- perhaps also with some text in English?

Mike Wilson

PENTATOMIDAE

Picromerus bidens in autumn

The following is an edited chain of e-mails from the discussion forum at hets@yahoogroups.com.

30 Oct 2010 — Steven Teale wrote:-

This morning I saw two *P. bidens* basking in the sun in Newhaven (VC14, E Sussex, TQ459027). There is a Sussex record from 18th November 2006, but today's bug seems later than usual. Has anyone else seen it this late in the season?

30 Oct 2010 — Peter Hodge wrote:-

Mike Edwards & I found one in pond-side vegetation at St Osyth (VC19, N Essex) on 9th. Oct. 2010.

31 Oct 2010 — Janet Boyd wrote:-

We found two on wet vegetation close to a 'rhyne' in Somerset on 10th October 2010 they looked rather gravid but I'm not sure if it's the right time of year for that. Previous latest record was 1st October 2004.

1 Nov 2010 — Dmitry Musolin wrote:-

It is believed that the adults do not have a winter diapause - they oviposit in autumn as long as they can & then die. However, there are records of active adults in spring, suggesting that some survive the winter. It has been suggested that such adults might be parasitized by tachinid flies. You can find discussion of this in the following publications (pdfs are available):

Summer dormancy ensures univoltinism in the predatory bug *Picromerus bidens*. Musolin, D. L. & Saulich, A. H., *Entomologia Experimentalis et Applicata*, 2000, **95**: 3, 259-267.

Summary: The seasonal cycle of *P. bidens* is usually considered to be univoltine with an obligatory winter egg diapause. Seasonal adaptations of the species were studied in the laboratory and in field experiments. When reared with short-days (light 12:dark 12 & L14:D10), all females began to lay eggs soon after emergence. However, in the females reared under long-day conditions (L18:D6 and L20:D4), outdoors in June-July, oviposition was significantly delayed. This delay in reproduction induced by photoperiodic conditions and then spontaneously terminated was considered to be aestivation. Egg batches laid by females in the laboratory and in the field were kept at 25 deg C for two months. From 30.8 to 93.8% of batches contained eggs which hatched without cold treatment between day 14 and 60 after oviposition. The proportion of eggs hatched was 17.7 to 20.9% in the short-day regimes, while it was significantly less (5.7 to 6.0%) under long-day conditions. It is concluded that in some eggs diapause is of low intensity and that if under natural conditions the first batches had been laid at the end

of June, nymphs would have hatched at least from some eggs during the same season even without cold treatment. Such untimely hatching would have resulted in the death of nymphs and adults unprepared for overwintering. A photoperiodic response which induces aestivation in the early emerging adults in June-August may prevent early oviposition and occurrence of a second generation and thus maintains univoltinism in *P. bidens*.

Photoperiodic induction of aestivation in the stink bug *Picromerus bidens*. Musolin, D. L., *Zool.Zhurnal.*, 1996. **75**: 12, 1901-1904.

Summary: Nymphal growth & reproduction of the predatory pentatomid *P. bidens* were studied in the laboratory at constant temperatures (23 ±1C) & two photoperiods (light:dark 20h:4h & 12h:12h). There were no differences in nymphal growth. All females of the 12:12 variant began oviposition 16.4 ±2.33 days after adult moult. Reproduction continued until females died (about a month after emergence). Females of the 20:4 variant delayed oviposition. Only 2 of 21 females oviposited eggs before the end of the experiment (35th day of adult life). The 20:4 delay of oviposition was considered aestivation. It was concluded that females emerging early probably enter aestivation in early summer & begin ovipositing in Aug-Sep when days become shorter. Females emerging later begin reproduction without delay.

1 Nov 2010 : — Tristan Bantock wrote :-

Thanks Dmitri, very interesting. I wonder if there are records of apparently overwintered *Picromerus* adults from the UK? I saw several this year in north Wales on 9th October.

***Picromerus bidens* — now in NE Scotland (VC 92 & 93)**

Nick Littlewood

P. bidens appeared for the first time in north-east Scotland this year, I found one at Dinnet (VC92, S Aberdeenshire, NJ442002), then another was found at Windyhills (VC93, Banffshire) on 25th September by Helen Taylor & Glenn Roberts (who sent me a photo).

n.littlewood@macaulay.ac.uk

***Dolycoris baccarum* — unusual host-plant**

John Campbell

This species was present at Burford (vc23,Oxfordshire, SP21) throughout September 2010, there were many adults & immatures feeding on flower heads of Downy Woundwort (*Stachys germanica*), a maximum of 22 on one plant on 29th August 2010. This is a very rare plant in the wild so will not normally be a food plant.

campbell397@btinternet.com

OPAL Grants Scheme — open for applications.

The Natural History Museum, London, invites applications for grants of £500-£5000 in the 3rd (final) round of funding of the OPAL Grants Scheme, now open for applications from :-

natural history societies; recording schemes; & regional branches of national organisations.

Theme this year: 'Sharing your skills'.

Projects should transfer knowledge & skills between members of a group, or from a group to the wider community.

This may involve helping beginners develop new skills, or enhancing skills of the more experienced.

Activities could range from informal public events to advanced training courses but should help people move a little way up the ladder from beginner to more expert.

Deadline for applications: midday Monday 7th February 2011

Guidance notes are available from: <http://www.opalexplornature.org/?q=Societyfunding>

If you have questions or need help with an application contact:

Lucy Carter, OPAL Project Officer, UK Biodiversity, Department of Botany, The Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road, London SW7 5BD,

Tel: 020 7942 5188, lucy.carter@nhm.ac.uk