

**MORE RECORDS OF UNCOMMON IRISH BEETLES (COLEOPTERA), INCLUDING *CHILOTHORAX CONSPURCATUS* (LINNAEUS, 1758) (SCARABAEIDAE)**

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**Abstract**

Records of uncommon and under recorded species of Irish beetles (Coleoptera) are presented, many relating to County Sligo. Fourteen beetle families are represented: Carabidae, Staphylinidae, Geotrupidae, Scarabaeidae, Dermestidae, Ptinidae, Cleridae, Nitidulidae, Cryptophagidae, Coccinellidae, Tenebrionidae, Cerambycidae, Chrysomelidae and Curculionidae. Johnson and Halbert (1902) listed *Chilothorax conspurcatus* (Linnaeus, 1758 as Irish based on a specimen in the National Museum of Ireland which had been in the collection of the 19th century entomologist James Tardy (1782-1835). The species was retained on the most recent Irish list (Anderson, Nash and O'Connor, 1997) but having studied the Tardy collection, Good (2013) rejected the record. The present record therefore confirms the presence of this distinctive dung beetle in Ireland.

**Key words:** Coleoptera, beetles, Ireland, uncommon species, under recorded species, new records, *Chilothorax conspurcatus* (Linnaeus, 1758) confirmed.

**Introduction**

Non-intensive collecting of beetles in County Sligo has resulted in the discovery of a number of uncommon and under recorded beetles. These finds are listed below, along with a few records from additional counties.

**CARABIDAE**

***Carabus glabratus* Paykull, 1790**

**SLIGO:** Copes Mountain (G742413), 1 June 2016, two specimens active on the mountain summit at *circa* 440m, with *Patrobus assimilis* Chaudoir also present. The only other record that I can trace for *Carabus glabratus* in the Dartry Range is that contained in Anon. (1901), and the species was unrecorded by McCormack, Nolan and Regan (2006) in their extensive survey of upland invertebrates in these parts.

***Syntomus foveatus* (Geoffroy in Fourcroy, 1785)**

**WICKLOW:** Arklow (T261747), 15 August 2017, frequent in grass cuttings at a coastal caravan part, and present also on nearby sandy ground.

## STAPHYLINIDAE

### *Micralymma marina* (Ström, 1783)

**SLIGO:** Culleenamore (G609339), 28 May 2020, active on damp sand just below the high water mark. Accompanied by the carabid *Cillenus lateralis* Samouelle, with *Bembidion minimum* (Fabricius) and *Aepus marinus* (Ström) also present a short distance further up the shore. Both Halbert (1898) and Johnson (1913) note an association of these species with *Cillenus*.

### *Deleaster dichrous* (Gravenhorst, 1802)

**DONEGAL:** Tullan Strand (G827603), 12 June 2013.

**SLIGO:** Trawalua Strand (G697548), 26 April 2011. Colgagh Lake (G743364), 13 June 2011, singleton under a stone on a small patch of lake shore sand. Bartragh (G262290), 5 June 2013, scattered under pieces of wood on sand dune fore shore.

### *Stenus geniculatus* Gravenhorst, 1806

**LEITRIM:** Crocknagapple (G892445), 15 July 2015, male in moss at *circa* 320m.

**SLIGO:** Carrowkeel (G753117), 2 July 2015, a male sieved from mosses, collected under *Calluna* on a hilltop heath at *circa* 300m, with *Quedius nigriceps* Kraatz (1♂) also present. The latter specimen was damaged on collection.

### *Ochtheophilum fracticorne* (Paykull, 1800)

**SLIGO:** Trawalua (G695543), 9 September 2014, a male under a piece of wood on bare sand in exposed sand dunes.

### *Pseudomedon obsoletus* (Nordmann, 1837)

**SLIGO:** Doonweelin (G649401), 17 April 2015, two females, sieved from a dung heap, in an abandoned quarry and bordering a *Phragmites* stand. A very diverse beetle fauna was present, many species of which were beyond my identification skills but included the rove beetles *Platystethus arenarius* (Fourcroy), *Philonothus tenuicornis* Mulsant and Rey, *Quedius cinctus* (Paykull) and *Dinothenarus pubescens* (De Geer). I revisited the site on 15 June 2015. The dung heap, unchanged from April, proved almost lifeless but I did collect *Philonthus debilis* (Gravenhorst). The few other Irish records for *P. obsoletus* are summarised by Anderson and Bryan (2012).

### *Othius laeviusculus* Stephens, 1833

**SLIGO:** Barnaderg (G672477), 14 May 2015, a single male sieved from *Sphagnum* in a small patch of remnant blanket bog.

### *Cafius fucicola* Curtis, 1830

**SLIGO:** Killaspugbrone (G612372), 1 June 2020, a singleton under dry seaweed on a sandy foreshore. The few Irish records for *Cafius fucicola* include one from County Galway (Halbert 1895).

***Gabrius subnigritulus* (Reitter, 1909)**

= ***Gabrius appendiculatus* Sharp, 1910**

**SLIGO:** Dunmoran Strand (G525351), 10 February 2015, a single male sieved from moss on exposed sand dunes. Rathcarrick (G625353), 7 May 2020, a male on a paling post at the edge of rough grassland. A species, seemingly, with few Irish records (Anderson, 1997).

***Gabrius trossulus* (Nordmann, 1837)**

**SLIGO:** Donagh, (G443354), 5 February 2015, a single male taken with a male of *Philonthus albipes* (see below) in moss on an exposed coastal headland.

***Philonthus albipes* (Gravenhorst, 1802)**

**SLIGO:** Donagh, (G443354), 5 February 2015, a single male taken with a male of *Gabrius trossulus* (see above) in moss on an exposed coastal headland.

*Philonthus albipes* is described as being rare in Ireland by Anderson (2010), however there are a number of recent records.

***Philonthus succicola* Thomson, 1860**

**SLIGO:** Carns (G707341), 1 May 2020, a male in a jam-jar trap, baited with a dead field mouse and placed in mixed woodland. *Sciodrepoides watsoni* (Spence) (Leiodidae) was also present. A second male of *S. succicola* was found here on 27 June 2020, accompanied by *Catops fuliginosus* Erichson (Leiodidae).

***Heterothops binotatus* (Gravenhorst, 1802)**

**SLIGO:** Carrowdough, (G602348), 10 April 2015, a male and a female trapped in a hollow on the sand dune foreshore.

***Quedius humeralis* Stephens, 1832**

**SLIGO:** Barnaderg (G672477), 20 March 2015, a single male sieved from *Sphagnum* in a small patch of remnant blanket bog, with *Coccinella hieroglyphica* Linnaeus (Coccinellidae) also present.

***Quedius nitipennis* (Stephens, 1833)**

**LEITRIM:** Benbo Mountain (G848376), 11 April 2015, a male sieved from debris at the edge of Black Lough at *circa* 400m.

***Quedius picipes* (Mannerheim, 1830)**

**SLIGO:** Knocknarea (G617348), 25 June 2015, a male sieved from moss collected in limestone grassland at *circa* 150m.

## GEOTRUPIDAE

***Trypocopris vernalis* (Linnaeus, 1758)**

**SLIGO:** Mullaghmore West (G696542), 1 July 2020, three specimens active on sheep dung. The site was revisited on 11 July 2020, when six individuals were located in sheep and cow

dung. All the specimens were located at the edge of machair grassland where it joins the sand dunes. The species was not located further inland on the machair grassland itself. There is a good supply of sheep and cow dung at this site, which comprises a large area of machair grassland adjoining a narrow band of exposed sand dunes. Johnson and Halbert (1902) describe *Trypocopris* (= *Geotrupes*) *vernalis* as 'local and not common', and there appears to be few if any Irish records from the latter part of the 20th century. *T. vernalis* is listed as Nationally Scarce in Great Britain by Lane and Mann (2016).

### SCARABAEIDAE

#### *Chilothorax conspurcatus* (Linnaeus, 1758) (Fig. 1)

**SLIGO:** Carns (G705338), 13 April 2020, three beetles present in horse dung on unimproved, heavily grazed limestone grassland. Johnson and Halbert (1902) listed this beetle (= *Aphodius conspurcatus*) as Irish based on a specimen in the National Museum of Ireland which had been in the collection of the 19th century entomologist James Tardy (1782-1835). The species is retained on the most recent Irish list (Anderson, Nash and O'Connor, 1997) based on this record. However, having studied the Tardy collection, Good (2013) rejected the record, suggesting the origin of the specimen is suspect. The present record therefore confirms the presence of this distinctive dung beetle in Ireland. The commonest dung beetles at the site were *Volinus sticticus* (Panzer) and *Melinopterus sphaelatus* (Panzer), and also present in the horse dung were *Aphodius fimetarius* agg, *Agrilinus ater* (De Geer) as well as *Cercyon melanocephalus* (Linnaeus), *Cryptopleurum minutum* (Fabricius) (Hydrophilidae), *Onthophilus striatus* (Forster) (Histeridae), *Oxytelus laqueatus* (Marsham), *Platystethus arenarius* (Fourcroy), *Philonthus varians* (Paykull) and *Quedius cinctus* (Paykull) (Staphylinidae). *C. conspurcatus* is listed as Nationally Scarce in Great Britain by Lane and Mann (2016) who suggest it is a winter active beetle and as such likely to be under recorded. I have a number of records of *Volinus sticticus* (Panzer) (= *Aphodius equestris*) from inland sites in Counties Fermanagh, Roscommon and Sligo, occurring in horse, cow and fox dung.

### DERMESTIDAE

#### *Anthrenus verbasci* (Linnaeus, 1767)

**SLIGO:** Sligo (G690355), 4 March 2012, a singleton on a bedroom wall. Mercifully no further specimens located. There are remarkably few published Irish records of this notorious pest.

### PTINIDAE

#### *Trigonogenius globosus* (Solier, 1849)

**DUBLIN:** Smithfield (O1434), 1 October 2001, a singleton on the inside wall of an apartment.

Other Irish records for this alien spider beetle also relate to Dublin City (O'Connor, 1981; O'Mahony, 1924).

***Ochina ptinoides* (Marsham, 1802)**

**SLIGO:** Beanfield (G652312), 20 May 2020. Culleenamore (G610340), 30 June 2020, beaten from *Hedera* in both cases.

**CLERIDAE**

***Necrobia violacea* (Linnaeus, 1758)**

**SLIGO:** Hazelwood (G711361) 25 May 2020, a singleton on the rotting lower portion of a deer limb, dumped on a patch of waste ground bordering carr woodland.

**NITIDULIDAE**

***Omosita discoidea* (Fabricius, 1775)**

**LEITRIM:** Acres Lake (G967102), 23 April 2011, attending *Crataegus* blossoms in a hedgerow.

**SLIGO:** Cummeen (G648369), 6 June 2013, under sheep bones on the estuarine foreshore.

**CRYPTOPHAGIDAE**

***Antherophagus pallens* (Linnaeus, 1758)**

**SLIGO:** Mullaghmore (G707545) 11 July 2020, single specimen collected from the nest of the bumble bee *Bombus lucorum* which had been broken into, presumably by a predator. The specimen was identified using Duff (2020) who suggests that old records under this name may refer to *Antherophagus similis* Curtis.

**COCCINELLIDAE**

***Chilocorus bipustulatus* (Linnaeus, 1758)**

**SLIGO:** Cleaveragh (G713343), 6 June 2014, swept from *Myrica* in wetland bordering the River Garavogue.

***Adalia bipunctata* (Linnaeus, 1758)**

This ladybird may have been present in the west of Ireland for rather longer than the information contained in Cotton, Dunleavy and Govier (2015) would suggest, for I have a record of a specimen in a bus in Eyre Square, Galway City (M3025), 23 June 1996, which I secured on arrival in Sligo Town. Roy *et al.* (2012) map this beetle as being reasonably widespread along the south coast and in the north east. Although clearly on the increase, it remains quite scarce on the ground in southern counties (personal observation).

## TENEBRIONIDAE

### *Lagria hirta* (Linnaeus, 1758)

**SLIGO:** Cloonagh (G5846), 15 August 2020, scattered on coastal vegetation. Culleenamore (G610340), 30 June 2020, relatively frequent on vegetation in the sandy foreshore. Pollbreen (G420361), 18 July 2015, a singleton beaten from vegetation on a coastal roadside bank.

Until recently the only north-west record for this distinctive beetle was from the Lough Foyle district (Buckle, 1900), however these new records and that contained in Cawley (2014) suggest a more widespread occurrence in these parts. The species is, seemingly, on the increase in Great Britain (Duff, 2020). Possibly the same is happening in Ireland, away from its strongholds in the south and east.

## CERAMBYCIDAE

### *Leiopus nebulosus* (Linnaeus, 1758)

**SLIGO:** Cullentra Oak Wood (G7733), 9 September 1989, D. C. F. Cotton.

Irish records for this uncommon beetle are summarized by Alexander and Anderson (2012).

Five additional species of longhorn beetle have been recorded from County Sligo. *Grammoptera ruficornis* (Fabricius) is common on *Crataegus* blossoms early in the summer and likely to be present in most 10km squares. *Rhagium bifasciatum* Fabricius is also widespread, often found in rotting stumps, and not confined to woodlands. *Alosterna tabacicolor* (DeGeer) has been reported on a few occasions from Slish Wood, and could be under recorded. *Rutpela maculata* (Poda) and *Rhagium mordax* (DeGeer) are both scarce beetles, largely confined to good quality woodlands around Lough Gill and in Union Wood.

## CHRYSOMELIDAE

### *Oomorpha concolor* (Sturm, 1807)

**SLIGO:** Dooney Rock (G7232), 27 May 2020, swept from *Allium ursinum* in open deciduous woodland.

### *Longitarsus rubiginosus* (Foudras, 1860)

**SLIGO:** Sligo Town (G690354), 28 September 2020, males and gravid females present in numbers on *Calystegia sepium* in a town garden.

The species is listed as Irish by Anderson, Nash and O'Connor (1997), seemingly based on a County Galway find contained in Chaster (1903). Flea beetles are frequent on bindweed in these parts and this beetle could well be greatly under recorded.

## CURCULIONIDAE

### *Miarus campanulae* (Linnaeus, 1767)

**SLIGO:** Lower Rosses (G631419), 31 May 2020, frequent on oxeye daisy *Leucanthemum vulgare* flowers at the edge of the sand dunes. Previous searches for this weevil had been unsuccessful; however in retrospect my timing was wrong as I was searching when the larval food plant harebell *Campanula rotundifolia* was in flower. This plant is widespread if somewhat local in these parts and there must be considerable scope for finding new sites for *Miarus* early in the season.

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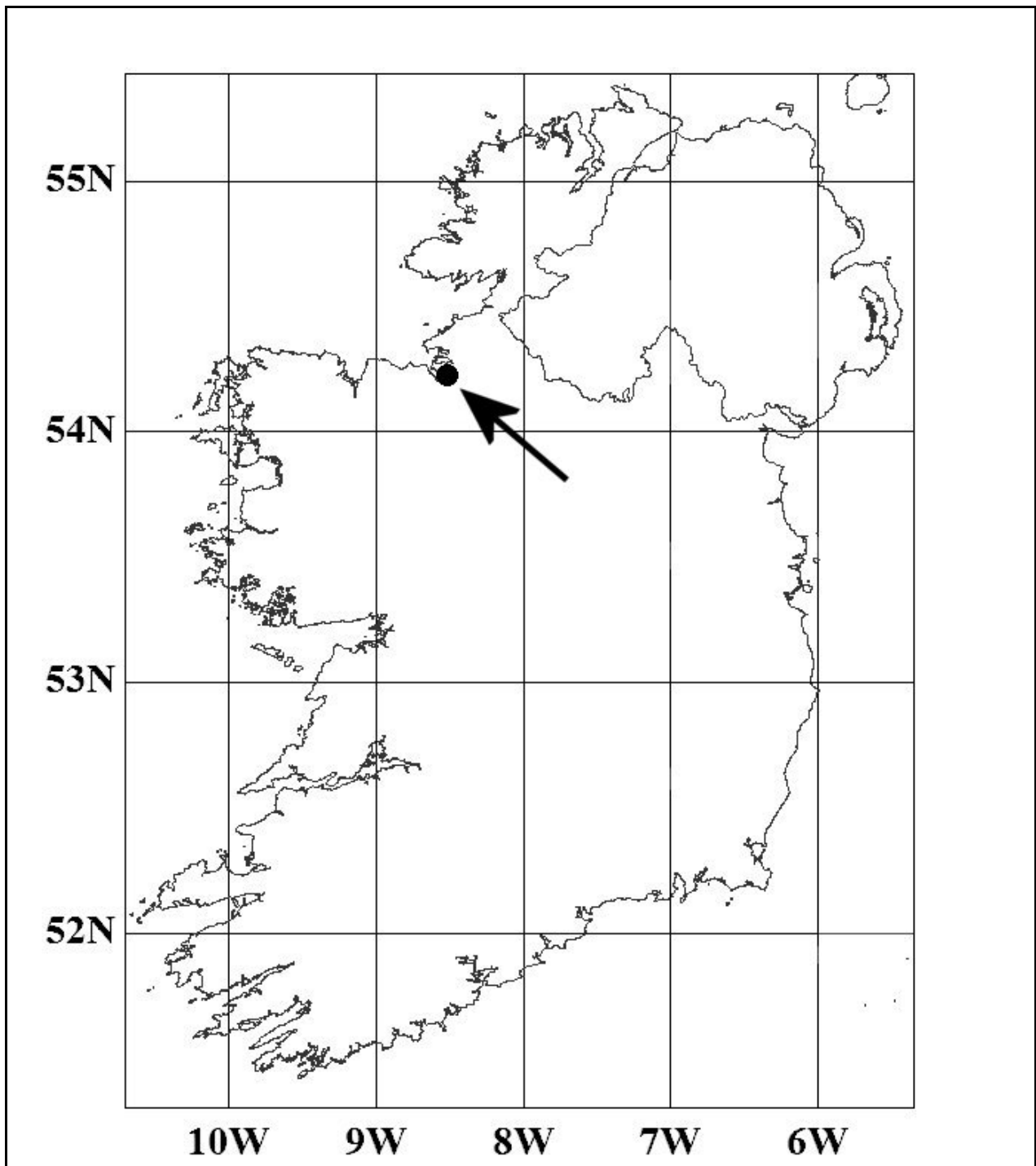


FIGURE 1. The Sligo record of *Chilothorax conspurcatus* (Linnaeus, 1758).