

Spider Recording Scheme News

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Scheme Organiser & News Editor: Richard Gallon; rgallon47@gmail.com

SRS website: <http://srs.britishspiders.org.uk>

CUK: fah

Editorial

by Richard Gallon

Following the plea for records in the last SRS News several recorders have kindly submitted substantial batches of records. I guess many were busy over the Christmas break digitising records ready for submission. Matt Prince has kindly assisted with updating the SRS website maps. This update has been significant, with plenty of new rarity records. It clearly shows how recently introduced species like *Mermessus trilobatus* have consolidated their distribution in southern Britain. Native species like *Theridiosoma gemmosum* and *Mangora acalypha* are also inching north.

I'd like to thank everybody who has submitted their record updates recently, and to encourage further submissions. You can send records via MapMate or by Excel spreadsheet. We are gradually getting SRS Area Organisers set up to verify iRecord spider data too.

23a Roumania Crescent, LLANDUDNO, North Wales, LL30 1UP; e-mail: srs@britishspiders.org.uk

The Identification of Members of the *Eratigena atrica* group of Large house spiders – *E. atrica*, *E. duellica* and *E. saeva* (Agelenidae)

by Geoff Oxford

In a previous version of these identification notes (Oxford, 2008), only *Eratigena saeva* and *E. duellica** were included because, at the time, *Eratigena atrica* was thought to be only very occasionally imported from continental Europe or Ireland and without establishing self-sustaining populations. Subsequently, an extensive population was discovered in and around Newcastle upon Tyne; another probably exists in the Perth/Dundee area of eastern Scotland (Oxford & Smith, 2014). The text below has therefore been updated to cover all three species in the *Eratigena atrica* group and describe additional diagnostic characters.

Background

Over much of Wales and central and southern England, *E. saeva* and *E. duellica* occupy different geographical areas and are readily separable. The difficulty comes in the

* The *Tegenaria atrica* group, comprising three Large house spider species (Merrett, 1980), has undergone nomenclature changes over the past decade. Bolzern, Burckhardt & Hänggi (2013) argued that: (a), its members fall into a newly erected genus, *Eratigena*; (b), the specific name *duellica* has priority over *gigantea*; (c), the three traditional, constituent species, *E. saeva*, *E. duellica* and *E. atrica* are one, albeit variable, species, *E. atrica*. The change of genus is fully supported, and *duellica* for *gigantea* arguably so. However, the concatenation of the three species into one defies the current evidence (Oxford & Bolzern, 2018).



Figure 1. GIS-interpolated map of England and Wales showing areas where *E. saeva* (purple) and *E. duellica* (pink) are expected to occur. Areas of overlap are indicated in orange. Modified from Croucher *et al.* (2007), which should be consulted for methodology.

regions where the species distributions overlap because here they can hybridise, although this is likely to be a rare event (Oxford & Croucher, 2014). First-generation hybrids readily inter-cross and backcross to both parental species producing a graded series of intermediates (Oxford, 2019). The map in Figure 1, modified from Croucher *et al.* (2007), shows interpolated distributions of the two species and their major zones of overlap, from which spiders with intermediate morphologies might be expected. However, it is important to recognize that even in apparently 'pure species' areas hybrids and morphologically good examples of the other species can sometimes be found as a result of human transportation. Scotland is missing from the map because of a paucity of records at the time, but both species are now known to occur almost anywhere there, with little or no geographical pattern. There is no evidence that *Eratigena atrica* hybridises with the other two species (Oxford & Smith, 2014).

Diagnostic features - males

Figure 2 shows lateral views of the pedipalps, oriented with the ventral side uppermost and so that the embolus (E) is just visible (Merrett, 1980). Drawn specimens of *E. saeva* and *E. duellica* are from geographical areas well away from potential hybrid zones.

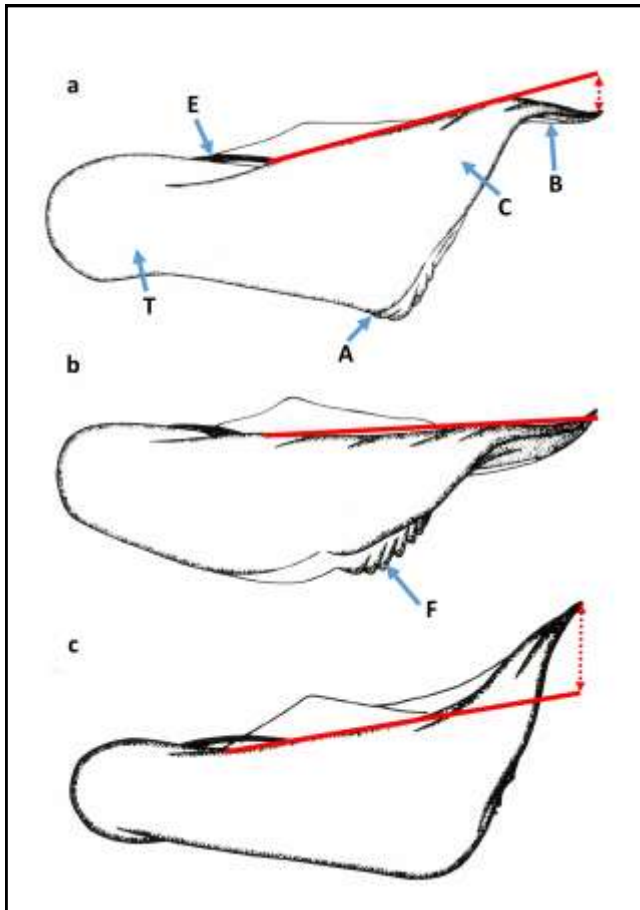


Figure 2. Male palps oriented ventral side uppermost: (a) *Eratigena saeva*, (b) *E. duellica*, (c) *E. atrica*. The imaginary line described in the text is in solid red and the Conductor Angle (CANG) in dotted red. A = tegulum/conductor angle, B = conductor 'beak', C = conductor, F = fluting, T = tegulum.

Eratigena saeva (Fig. 2a)

There is a distinct angle (A) where the lower (as shown here) edge of the tegulum (T) begins to bend up towards the conductor (C), and the tip of the latter is beak-like and narrow (B). If an extended line is drawn along the (usually straight) top edge of the tegulum + conductor (red in Fig 2), the beak of the conductor falls distinctly below this line (conductor angle, CANG). The line can be imagined or, more accurately, superimposing on the viewed palp by rotating the etchings of an eyepiece graticule.

Eratigena duellica (Fig. 2b)

The conductor curves seamlessly into the tegulum with no sharp lower angle, especially when the 'fluting' (F) is ignored. The beak is much stouter than in *E. saeva* and merges more gradually into the body of the tegulum + conductor. The beak of the conductor normally continues the extended line just described, with perhaps only the very tip above.

Hybrids

First generation hybrids and backcross progeny between *E. saeva* and *E. duellica* show intermediate and variable morphologies (Oxford, 2019), and cannot reliably be distinguished from the parental species.

Eratigena atrica (Fig. 2c)

The lower edge of the tegulum shows a distinct angle,

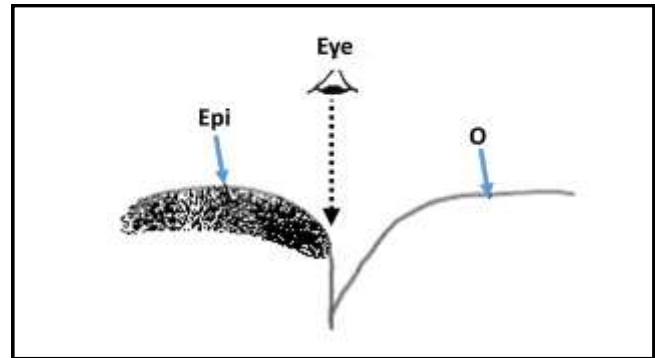


Figure 3. Schematic lateral view of the female ventral surface (ventral side uppermost) showing the epigyne area (Epi) and the opisthosoma (O), with the epigastric furrow in between. The dotted arrow indicates the correct viewing angle.

sometimes almost 90°, as in *E. saeva*, but continues as almost a straight line to the very tip of the conductor. The beak of the conductor protrudes well above the imaginary extended line, although the latter may be more difficult to project for this species, as the top edge of the tegulum + conductor is often concave.

Diagnostic features - females

Correct and consistent orientation of the female epigyne is critical for reliable identification. The specimen should be arranged so that the anterior, inner surface of the epigastric furrow is exactly vertical i.e. in line with the viewing angle (Fig. 3). Typical ventral views of epigynes are shown in Fig. 4, with dorsal views of cleared (clove oil) vulvae in Fig. 5.

Eratigena saeva (Fig. 4a)

When oriented as above, the openings to the spermathecae appear as full, dark circles and without a strongly sclerotised anterior arch. Measurements, or estimates, of the diameters of the spermathecal openings in two dimensions (RLW = receptacle opening long width; RSW = receptacle opening short width) produced a RSW/RLW ratio of >0.75 (Oxford, 2019). Internally, in cleared material, the spermathecae of *E. saeva* noticeably converge anteriorly before the ends splay outwards (Fig. 5a).

Eratigena duellica (Fig 4b)

The spermathecal openings are much more oblique and all that can be seen when viewed from the correct angle is a strongly sclerotised anterior arch. Indeed, the RSW measurement really records the thickness of this arch rather than the width of any opening. Values for RSW/RLW are <0.2 (Oxford, 2019). Internally, the spermathecae appear more parallel than in *E. saeva*, and without the anterior, outward bend (Fig. 5b).

Hybrids

Female first-generation hybrids between these two species have RSW/RLW ratios between 0.28 and 0.55, and are, therefore, potentially distinguishable from both parental species. Second-generation hybrids and backcross progeny are not (Oxford, 2019). Internally, hybrids have intermediate morphologies (Fig. 5c).

Eratigena atrica (Fig. 4c)

This species is similar to *E. saeva* in outward appearance with almost round spermathecal openings (RSW/RLW ratio >0.75), but the openings are closer together. This

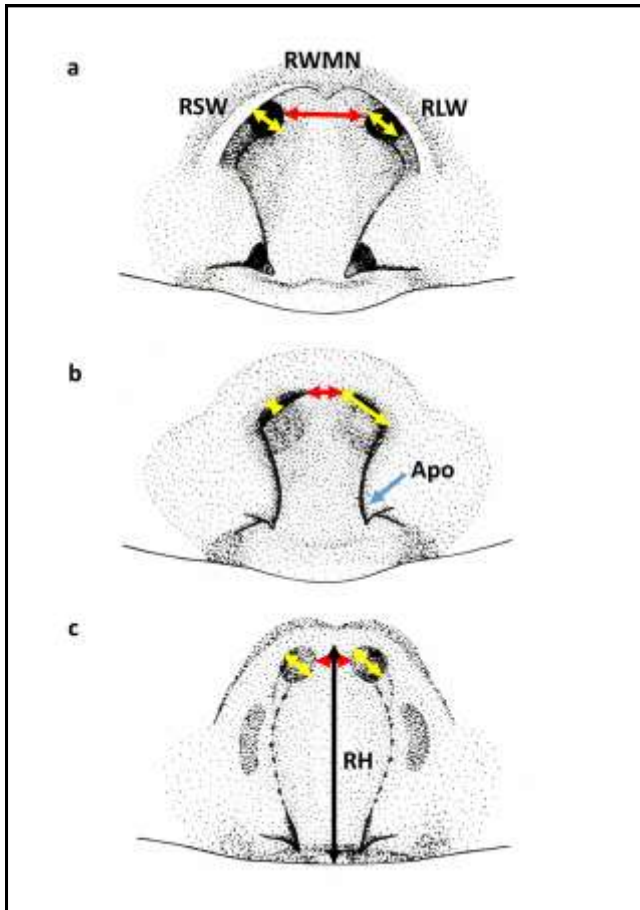


Figure 4. Female epigynes: (a) *Eratigena saeva*, (b) *E. duellica*, (c) *E. atrica*. Apo = apophysis, RH = top of receptacle to epigastric furrow, RSW = receptacle opening short width, RLW = receptacle opening long width, RWMN = minimum width between receptacles.

difference is quantified by measuring the minimum width between the receptacle openings (RWMN) and the distance between the top of receptacle openings to the epigastric furrow (RH). The ratio of RWMN/RH is about 0.05–0.25 in *E. atrica*, and about 0.25–0.6 in *E. saeva* (Oxford & Bolzern, 2018). Internally, the orientation of the spermathecae is initially parallel but then, about half way along, they narrow markedly and turn inwards before splaying outwards at the anterior end, like a goose's neck (Fig. 5d).

Roberts (1995) suggested that the shape of the apophyses (Fig. 4b) was of diagnostic value, but this character is extremely variable and difficult to quantify.

Acknowledgements

All line drawings of palps and epigynes are modified, with permission, from Merrett (1980).

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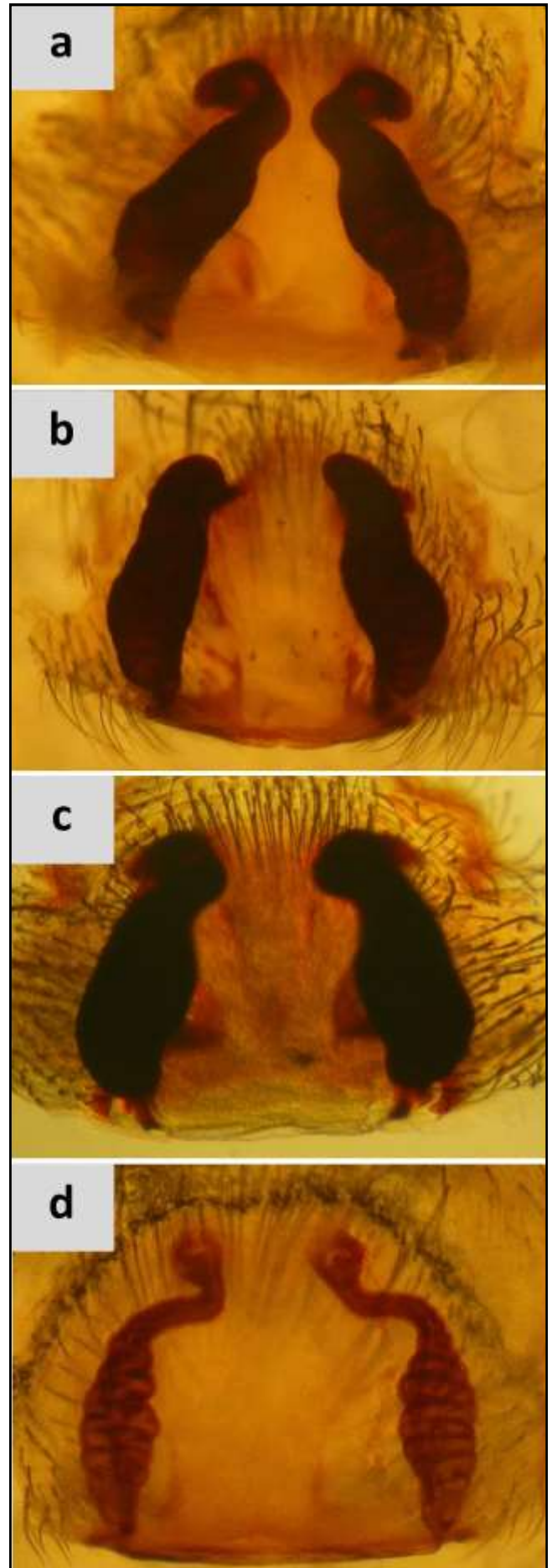


Figure 4. Female vulvae viewed dorsally after clearing in clove oil: (a) *Eratigena saeva*, (b) *E. duellica*, (c) hybrid between *E. saeva* and *E. duellica*, (d) *E. atrica*.

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Department of Biology, University of York, YORK, YO1 5DD;
e-mail: geoff.oxford@york.ac.uk

***Rugathodes sexpunctatus* and *Theridion hemerobium* in Kinross-shire (VC85)**

by Mike Davidson

These species are probably relatively recent arrivals in Britain and both are spreading fairly quickly.

Rugathodes sexpunctatus has been gradually expanding its range, north and east, since it was first discovered in Glasgow in 2010. More will be said about its spread in a future article. Kirkyard yews provide a suitable habitat for *R. sexpunctatus* and are usually accessible and much more easily monitored than larger conifers. The old kirkyard at Kirkgate, Kinross (NO128018), on the shore of Loch Leven NNR, has a number of yew trees and is open to aerial plankton arriving from its known sites to the south and west.

These kirkyard yews had been sampled a number of times before, without finding *R. sexpunctatus*, but on 21st June 2022 six females (none with egg-sacs) were beaten from the yews. This is the first record for VC85. Thirteen other species were collected including a female *Theridion*, which was assumed to be *T. varians*. Under the microscope this was clearly not correct and my identification of *Theridion hemerobium* was later verified by Peter Harvey. This is not only the first record for VC85 but the first Scottish occurrence of *T. hemerobium*. Usually associated with water margins, this species was first recognised in Britain in 1982 (Petworth, West Sussex). Given its steady northward spread it would seem unlikely that it has been overlooked and I doubt that it would be confused with *T. pictum*, as sometimes suggested. According to the SRS dataset the most northerly record was from Castle Howard Garden Centre (SE713698) near York (coll. G. Oxford, 2019). This is about 280 km as the spider balloons or 350 km in a campervan as it migrates north to the carpark at Loch Leven!

In an attempt to find further specimens of *T. hemerobium*, on 23rd June I visited the nearby bridge over the Queich Burn (NO121016), but although it produced a number of female *Theridion*, from the bridge supports, these all proved to be *T. varians*. Sweeping/beating of vegetation along the shore, adjacent to the kirkyard and on

an old pier at Kirkgate, produced a further three female *T. hemerobium*. Hopefully male specimens will be found this year and perhaps other populations will turn up in north Britain.

E-mail: mike.davidson55@btinternet.com

***Leviellus stroemi* (Thorell, 1870) (Araneae: Araneidae) in Cheshire**

by Gary Hedges & Tony Hunter

Leviellus stroemi is a Nationally Rare and Near Threatened orb-weaver exclusively associated with the deep fissures of very old trees. In 2017, its GB threat status was downgraded from Vulnerable due to possible under-recording (Harvey *et al.*, 2017). The spider's UK distribution is mainly southern England, extending into South Wales and Northamptonshire, with an outlier population in The Black Wood, Rannoch where it hasn't been recorded since 1968, and possibly one other Scottish site.

Between 9th–20th May 2022, a single adult male *Leviellus stroemi* was captured in a vane trap set during a Tanyptera Trust survey of saproxylic invertebrates. The trap was placed within a trunk cavity on an 8.7 m girth, open-grown, deeply-fissured ancient Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*) at 7–8 ft above the ground at Combermere Park, a strictly private, 450 hectare estate in South Cheshire (SJ5844, VC58) (Fig. 1).

A further adult male was captured in the same trap between 10th June – 1st July. The trap was operational from 9th May to 7th October, having been originally set on 5th April but subsequently destroyed in high winds. Eleven other vane traps were installed on large veteran trees across the estate (8 Oak, 1 Sweet Chestnut, 1 Common Lime, 1 Narrow-leaved Willow) from April to October, but no additional *L. stroemi* were captured.

On 7th October a live adult female was found on a separate veteran oak by TH and sent for full genomic DNA sequencing as part of the Darwin Tree of Life project. The spider was investigating a struggling common earwig (*Forficula auricularia*) caught in a web strung across a longitudinal fissure, around 4 feet from the ground (Fig. 2).

This is the first known invertebrate survey focusing on the trees in the park, which comprise a few hundred veterans, mainly oak, including a few which are truly ancient. The history of the site dates back to 1130s when Combermere Abbey was founded. It is believed to have contained many mature trees by the 1790s.

These are the first UK records since 2013, the spider having only been recorded three times since the turn of the century. They prove the presence of *L. stroemi* in Northern England, as predicted by White (1994), and demonstrate that the spider could be more widespread in the UK as suggested by Hambler (1987). There is no obvious reason to suggest the Combermere *L. stroemi* population is small or under threat. Male specimens were confirmed by Richard Gallon, and will be held in perpetuity in World Museum, Liverpool collections.

Thanks are due to Richard Gallon for providing context by sharing the British records from the SRS.

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Figure 1. 'The Lady of the Mere'. An ancient *Quercus robur* with vane trap that captured two adult male *Leviellus stroemi*.



Figure 2. The veteran Oak (left) with fissured bark where a web was spun across (middle), and tubed adult female *Leviellus stroemi* extracted from the web showing distinctive markings on cephalothorax (right).

A review of the scarce and threatened spiders (Araneae) of Great Britain: Species Status No. 22. NRW Evidence Report No: 11, 101pp, Natural Resources Wales, Bangor.

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World Museum, William Brown Street, LIVERPOOL; e-mail: Gary.Hedges@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk

(TQ184731) on 26th July 2022 and appears to be first for Surrey.

31 Thorn Lane, FOUR MARKS, Hampshire, GU34 5BX.

***Synema globosum* (Fabricius) (Thomisidae) in Surrey**

by Jonty Denton

An adult male *Synema globosum* was swept from ragwort flowers on Petersham Slope in Richmond Park

Two Spiders New for Glamorgan

by Jonty Denton

Adult females of *Nigma puella* (Simon) (Dictynidae) were swept from south facing woodland edges south of Junction 34 of the M4 (ST0579) in Glamorgan on the 5th May 2022. This appears to be the most westerly record of this rapidly spreading species and the first for VC41. Both sexes of the distinctive linyphiid *Trematocephalus cristatus* (Wider) were found nearby on the 12th May

2022, apparently the first for Wales of another species on the move!

31 Thorn Lane, FOUR MARKS, Hampshire, GU34 5BX.

Some Accidental Imports Reported by Members of the British Spider Identification Facebook Group

by Tone Killick

The British Spider Identification Group (BSIG) on Facebook was created by Jenni Lousie Cox back in 2014 and is by far the largest group on that platform specifically dealing with the identification and behaviour of British spiders. With over 52,000 members, it is no surprise that in any given year since the group was created, many images of accidentally imported spiders are posted by members for identification and/or rehoming. The vast majority of these non-native spiders' entry into the UK was through the importation of plants or produce. I should add that as a consequence of the many posts shared of non-native spiders, if you happen upon a person in your local supermarket spending inordinate amounts of time in the banana section, it's likely to be one of our members! Due to a request from area organiser Richard Wilson and curator of the Non-native British Arachnid list on the Spider Recording Scheme website, this note will record a few of the accidental imports that have blessed our shores.

Icius hamatus (C. L. Koch, 1846)

On 21st November 2020, an image of a salticid was posted by Megan Jenner who found the spider at her place of work, a garden centre in West Drayton (Fig. 1). The spider was originally sent to BAS member and BSIG admin Esmond Brown, who subsequently sent it to me. I received the spider on 5th December 2020 and it was clear to me that I was looking at a subadult male *Icius* species (Fig. 2). Specimens of *Icius* have been posted many times by the group but have never been genitally determined so this was a good opportunity to buck that trend. On 5th February 2021 the specimen reached maturity (Fig. 3) and after waiting several days I secured the spider in a spi-pot so that I could capture a few images of the palps (Fig. 4). From my rather dark images it appeared to me that the spider was *Icius hamatus*. On 20th February 2021 I



Figure 1. Original photo posted on BSIG.
© Megan Jenner.



Figure 2. Subadult male *Icius hamatus*.
© Tone Killick.



Figure 3. Adult male *Icius hamatus*. © Tone Killick.



Figure 4. Palp image of live secured spider *Icius hamatus*, ventral view © Tone Killick.



Figure 5. Palps images of *Icius hamatus*.
© Alan Cann.

contacted Alan Cann, AO for VC55 and asked if he would take some palp shots of the spider, which he kindly agreed to do. I received the images several days later which confirmed beyond any doubt that the spider was indeed *I. hamatus* (Fig. 5). This is the first formally published record of *I. hamatus* in the UK, but not the first time the species has been definitively identified in Britain. In 2010, Martin Honey, who was then Curator of the Department of Entomology at The Natural History Museum, found a spider on his car door that was confirmed as *I. hamatus* (Peter Harvey pers. comm. 25/02/2021).

According to the World Spider Catalog (WSC), *I. hamatus* distribution ranges across the Atlantic Islands, North Africa, Southern Europe, Turkey and China with the species being introduced to Central Europe.

***Mermessus denticulatus* (Banks, 1898)**

On 4th June 2021, Beckie Painton posted an image on the group of an unidentified adult male linyphiid (Fig. 6) that she had found together with a female (Fig. 7) on *Lobelia cardinalis*. The plant was purchased from a garden centre in Southampton and the plant's place of origin was Denmark. I received the spiders several days later and was a bit flummoxed as to their identification until I was pointed to the *Mermessus* genus by Bulgarian arachnologist Simeon Indzhov. Using the Millidge key (Millidge, 1987), the spiders were confirmed as *Mermessus denticulatus*, a non-native species that ranges from Canada to Peru and the Caribbean. The spider has also been introduced to North Africa, Turkey and Europe through the importation of ornamental plants. This seems to be the same vector for *M. denticulatus* being found in the UK. Further specimens have been found by another group member, Gen Popovici, at her place of work, a garden centre in Harmondsworth, Hillingdon. A male on 21st October 2021 (Fig. 8), a female on 27th July 2022 (Fig. 9) and on 12th October 2022, a female with egg-sac (Fig. 10). When I received the specimens from Beckie Painton in 2021 I believed this may have been the first time that *M. denticulatus* had been found in the UK. I searched the BAS library for any literature on the species but this turned up nothing. I then did a search on Twitter and low and behold, there was a post by BAS member and then AO of Devon confirming *M. denticulatus* on 28th March 2019. I contacted Matt by e-mail and he told me how he found the species. Matt's meeting with this adventive was, in of all places, the men's toilets at his work place in Swindon (Prince, M. 2019 unpublished).



Figure 6. Original photo posted on BSIG.
© Beckie Painton.



Figure 7. Female *Mermessus denticulatus*.
© Tone Killick



Figure 8. Male *Mermessus denticulatus* palps. ©
Gen Popovici.



Figure 9. Female *Mermessus denticulatus*.
© Gen Popovici.



Figure 10. *Mermessus denticulatus* with egg-sac
(arrowed). © Gen Popovici.



Figure 11. Original photo posted on BSIG.
© Courtney Dawn Hargreaves.



Figure 12. Adult female *Phintella vittata*.
© Courtney Dawn Hargreaves.

Matt believes the likely vector for the spider was one of the numerous ornamental plants found in his work.

Phintella vittata (C. L. Koch, 1846)

On 4th August 2022, Courtney Dawn Hargreaves from Bolton posted an image of an egg-sac that contained first instar salticid spiderlings that she had found on a Mangosteen (Fig. 11). The fruit had been ordered online. Dawn described the adult female spider that subsequently exited the leaves of the fruit as “super-fast and metallic green” and did eventually capture a photo of the specimen (Fig. 12). From Dawn’s image, the general consensus was that the spider was *Phintella vittata*, a species with a distribution according to the WSC as India, Nepal, from China to the Philippines. I noted that the *Phintella* genus appears to be species-rich so contacted South East Asian arachnologist Joseph K. H. Koh and after sending him images of the spider, he replied instantly that the spider was indeed *P. vittata*. After searching the BAS library, it seems that this is likely to be the first published record for *P. vittata* in Britain. The spider was collected and rehomed by Lorraine Isherwood, one of our group admins and shortly after, produced another egg-sac that also proved viable.

Cupiennius coccineus F. O. Pickard-Cambridge, 1901

On 16th January 2022, Rose Parkin posted several images on the group of a spider that she had found on bananas purchased from Aldi in Congleton, Cheshire (Figs. 13 & 14). The origin of the bananas was Costa Rica. The



Figure 13. Original photo posted on BSIG.
© Rose Parkin.

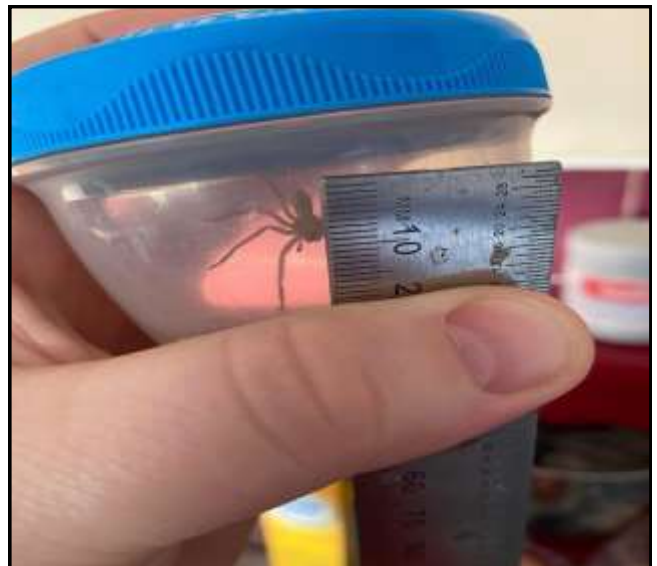


Figure 14. Original photo posted on BSIG.
© Rose Parkin.



Figure 15. Subadult *Cupiennius coccineus*.
© Lorraine Isherwood.

juvenile spider was quickly identified as *Cupiennius* species, commonly known as Bromeliad spiders. Once again, the ever-reliable Lorraine Isherwood collected the spider and over the following year reared it to maturity (Figs. 15 & 16). The spider was then identified by North American arachnologist Frank Somma as a female *Cupiennius coccineus*. Identification was made on the



Figure 16. Adult *Cupiennius coccineus*.
© Lorraine Isherwood.

colouration pattern rather than epigyne morphology. These colourations allow for determination of the larger species of *Cupiennius* even as a subadult (Barth & Cordes, 2008). Rose Parkin's specimen matched perfectly with *C. coccineus* based on light brown ventral sternum/coxae, lack of dark markings on the ventral opisthosoma and the amazing carmine colouration of the ventral femora from which the spider's specific name originates. From my searches in the BAS library this appears to be the first formally published record of *C. coccineus* in the UK, which naturally ranges from Costa Rica to Colombia.

Acknowledgements

My thanks to Megan Jenner, Alan Cann, Beckie Painton, Gen Popovici, Rose Parkin and Lorraine Isherwood for the use of your photos. Also thanks to Matt Prince for allowing me to peruse your unpublished article on the UK's first *Mermessus denticulatus* find. Many thanks to Richard Wilson for planting the seed in my head for this article, it helped wonderfully with my procrastination.

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E-mail: tillick@hotmail.com

Ozyptila sanctuaria New to Yorkshire

by Jim Pewtress

Whilst having a short wait at Willerby Business Park, Hull I did few minutes vac sampling on some waste stony ground with scattered vegetation. On checking the catch a few days later there were two small male Thomisidae that I didn't recognise. Checking the male palps in 'Roberts' they seemed to only fit *Ozyptila sanctuaria*. The location is a long way north of sites in Herefordshire and Worcestershire and there are records from around the coast of North and South Wales with an outlier at Sellafield, Cumbria in 1992. I sent photographs of the specimen and palp to Richard Wilson, county recorder, who confirmed the identification and one of the specimens was sent to him for his collection.

Many thanks to Richard Wilson for confirming the record.

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E-mail: jimpewtress@gmail.com

New Spiders to Cornwall, VCs 1 & 2, for the Spider Recording Scheme in 2021

by Tylan Berry

Araneus triguttatus – A single male was beaten from an Oak at the Breney Common Nature Reserve towards the beginning of the year. Two females have since been found – one at Redlake Meadows Nature Reserve, beaten from Gorse, and one at Cardinham Woods, beaten from Spruce.



Figure 1. Adult male *Araneus triguttatus*. © T. Berry.

Larinioides scolopetarius – A substantial population was discovered at Porth Reservoir where the spiders had made webs around a bird hide at the edge of the water (Fig. 2). They are also present in good numbers along fences and walls at the dam end of the reservoir. Despite the apparent isolation of this population, it would be very surprising if this is the only location for the species in Cornwall.

Cicurina cicur – This was discovered by pitfall trap where



Figure 2. *Larinioides sclopetarius*. © T. Berry.



Figure 3. Male *Araeoncus crassiceps*. © T. Berry.



Figure 4. *Araeoncus crassiceps* web. © T. Berry.



Figure 5. Manor Common – a typical mire habitat on Bodmin Moor which holds high abundances of many scarce wetland species, including: *Araeoncus crassiceps*, *Bathyphantes setiger*, *Erigonella ignobilis*, *Hypselistes jacksoni*, *Satlatlas britteni* and *Pirata piscatorius*. © T. Berry.

a single male was caught in December at the Breney Common Nature Reserve. It is quite remarkable that the species hasn't been located here previously as the site has been well surveyed, though no further specimens have been found by pitfall trapping or any other search method.

Agyneta cauta – Two male specimens were found in *Sphagnum* at a mire near Minions on Bodmin Moor. A single female has since been collected at the same location.

Agyneta innotabilis – A male was found on the fissured trunk of a mature Ash at Porth Reservoir, and then another subsequently on the bark of a mature Oak at Lanhydrock House. Vacuum sampling mossy tree trunks has also produced specimens from Oaks at Lethyep Gardens and woodland along the Carnon River.

Araeoncus crassiceps – A handful of female spiders were collected at Lowerton Moor Nature Reserve, where they occurred in small webs above the surface of water in boggy pools. Further specimens have been found in similar situations at a good number of mire sites on Bodmin Moor, including as Crowdy Marsh, King Arthur's Downs and Manor Common (Figs. 3–5).

Mermessus trilobatus – A single specimen was collected by vacuum sampling on the cliffs near Rame Head in October (J. McGill), and a return visit to the area produced further specimens at the Penlee Battery Nature Reserve. It has since been seen further west at Lethyep Gardens and, amazingly, in good numbers at Lowland Point on the Lizard Peninsula. The find at the latter site is quite incredible given that it has not been seen anywhere else on the south coast of Cornwall, despite intensive survey effort.

Microlinyphia impigra – This species has been found in large numbers at scattered boggy grassland sites on the Goss Moor NNR. Even though there would appear to be plenty of suitable habitat for the species at other sites across the Mid Cornwall Moors SAC, it hasn't yet been found outside of the boundary of the Goss Moor reserve.

Tapinocyba praecox – A handful of male specimens were collected by pitfall trap at Goss Moor NNR and the Breney Common and Red Moor Nature Reserves. A single female was also located recently by vacuum sampling on the cliffs at Porth Island.

Walckenaeria kochi – Single females were found in *Sphagnum* at Crowdy Marsh in April, and at Roughtor Marsh in November (Fig. 6). Repeat visits have failed to locate any further spiders at these locations, and surveys of similar habitats across Bodmin Moor have failed to produce any additional sites for the species.

Philodromus albidus – Three females were beaten from a single Gorse bush at the edge of a clearing in the Cabilla Wood Nature Reserve in June (Fig. 7). No further specimens have been seen in the county since the find.

Crustulina guttata – Large numbers of this species have been found spread across the Rame Peninsula, in the southeast of Cornwall, where the spiders inhabit dry cliff-top grassland and undercliff.

Lasaeola tristis – A lone male was found by vacuum sampling heathland at the Goonhilly Downs NNR in June. It hasn't been found at any heathland sites further afield in



Figure 6. *Walckenaeria kochi*. © T. Berry.



Figure 7. *Philodromus albidus*. © T. Berry.

Cornwall, though it would be surprising if it is not more widespread. Hopefully future visits will establish its presence at other heathland reserves on the Lizard Peninsula.

Zodarion fuscum – A single specimen of this species was spotted running on a warm, sunlit path in woodland at Respryn Bridge near Lanhydrock House. It is likely that the main population is attached to railway ballast on the main line that is approximately five metres from the path, and this individual was taking advantage of the recent tree felling that had opened up the area to the sun.

E-mail: tylan_berry@msn.com

Recent Records of *Dipoena melanogaster* (C. L. Koch) (Theridiidae) and *Hybocoptus corrugis* (O. P. Cambridge) (Linyphiidae) in South Hampshire (VC11) (Modern Dorset)

by Jonty Denton

A male *Hybocoptus corrugis* was beaten from gorse at Matchams (SU1200) on 1st April 2021, the first in VC11 since 1976 where A. E. Cooper took it at Hengistbury

Head (also now in modern Dorset). The same site yielded two females of the distinctively marked *Dipoena melanogaster* from low heather in disturbed heathland on 14th June 2021, seemingly the first for Hampshire since 1855.

31 Thorn Lane, FOUR MARKS, Hampshire, GU34 5BX.

Larinioides patagiatus Clerck (Araneidae) in Kent

by Christopher Drake* & Jonty Denton^o

CD swept a single female (identified by JD) from rank vegetation on the verge of a railway line south of Upstreet in East Kent (TR228672) on 20th June 2022. The line passes close to the Great Stour and the adjacent expanse of the Stodmarsh complex. Remarkably, this appears to be the first record for VC15 and Kent.

* c/o Ecosupport, Daedalus Park Daedalus Drive, LEE-ON-THE-SOLENT, PO13 9FX.

^o 31 Thorn Lane, FOUR MARKS, Hampshire, GU34 5BX.

Tegenaria hasperi – a New British Record

by Alice Bennett-West

Over the past year, on a rainy day, I sometimes go to Cadbury Garden Centre in North Somerset and spend some time amongst the indoor plants in the hope I might find some unusual spiders. I have previously found *Uloborus plumipes*, *Pandava laminata*, *Coleosoma floridanum*, *Ostearius melanopygius*, *Mermessus denticulatus*, *Cryptachaea blattea*, *Nesticella mogera*, a beautiful *Philaeus chrysops* and even a possible *Zosis geniculata* there.

On 8th April this year, I found a small spider that was obviously an Agelenidae, but I wasn't sure which species it was and I wondered whether it was a young *Tegenaria parietina* due to its annulated legs (Fig. 1). It was very small, only 1.5 mm, so I collected it and brought it home to raise and see if I could get it to species level when it reached maturity. I initially gave it springtails and, as it grew, fed it *Drosophila* (Fig. 2).

Figure 3 from 18th May shows that it was now quite obviously a subadult male, yet still only 4–5 mm! This really confused me, it obviously wasn't *T. parietina* at this size. A friend, Simeon Indzhov, suggested it could be



Figure 1. First photo of the unknown agelenid, later confirmed as *Tegenaria hasperi*.



Figure 2. Feeding, the spider is now 3–4 mm.



Figure 3. Subadult male *Tegenaria hasperi*.



Figure 4. Freshly moulted adult male *Tegenaria hasperi*.

Tegenaria hasperi, but we would need to wait until it was mature to find out.

Then, when I checked on 31st May, it had moulted and was now mature, an adult at only 5–6 mm (Fig. 4).

I had a go at examining it under my microscope using foam in a petri dish so as not to hurt it; it definitely looked promising for *T. hasperi*, but I couldn't quite get the correct viewing angle on the live spider to categorically confirm its identification. It died at the beginning of September, so I preserved it and on 25th September I finally got round to having a proper look; with four kids starting back at school it's not easy to do "me" things like studying spiders! I am still only learning how to examine



Figure 5. *Tegenaria hasperi* palp images down the microscope.

specimens under a microscope (self-taught, with tips from others), but I managed to get a few photos that seemed to confirm *T. hasperi* (Fig. 5).

I emailed my local Area Organiser, Francis Farr-Cox, who also agreed it seemed to be *Tegenaria hasperi*, but he thought Geoff Oxford ought to look at it for a further opinion. Geoff confirmed the identification and was particularly interested to see it. I was very happy, only three *T. hasperi* have been found in the UK before in 2014 by Peter Harvey, all of them together on a green roof at the Olympic Park in London, most likely also accidental imports. This is a wonderful record for Somerset and it was a pleasure to be able to raise it and confirm the species.

E-mail: alicebw@btinternet.com

***Sibianor laeae* Logunov 2001 (Araneae, Salticidae) Confirmed From Yorkshire**

by Richard Wilson

Introduction

In mid-June 2018, Richard Burkmar undertook a survey on Holcroft Moss, a relict lowland raised bog within a complex of similar sites located between Liverpool and Manchester in north-west England. The June visit was followed up with a second in late July 2018 with Richard Gallon. The surveys eventually revealed a remarkable assemblage of jumping-spiders (Salticidae) including *Talavera aequipes*, *Heliophanus dampfi* and what was originally determined as *Sibianor aurocinctus*. However, following closer examination, the specimens of *S. aurocinctus* were redetermined as a new species for Britain, *S. laeae*, of which the distinctive red patella ('knee') is a discernible character in the field. The context of this survey, plus additional discoveries based on material held at the World Museum, Liverpool are discussed in detail in their paper (Burkmar & Gallon, 2019).

Having read this paper, I recalled that during my Masters at the University of Leeds, I had recorded *S. aurocinctus* (as *Bianor aurocinctus*) in June 2000 and



Figure 1. *Sibianor lae* (Thorne Moors) June 1990. Image courtesy of York Museums Trust :: <https://yorkmuseumstrust.org.uk/> :: CC BY-SA 4.0

reported its discovery (Wilson, 2000). With the specimens recorded at Holcroft Moss, I began to wonder if my record of *S. aurocinctus* was actually *S. lae*, so I contacted Helen Kirk of the Thorne and Hatfield Moors Conservation Forum (THMCF) to arrange some site visits, which were duly organised for the 2021 survey season.

Thorne Moors and Hatfield Moors SSSIs

Thorne, Crowle and Goole Moors ('Thorne Moors'), and Hatfield Moors are both designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and together form the Humberhead Peatlands National Nature Reserve (NNR), an extensive but modified complex of lowland raised mire and heathland north-east of Doncaster, mostly in South Yorkshire, with parts extending into the East Riding and north Lincolnshire. However, for biological recording

purposes, it falls entirely within vice-county 63: South-west Yorkshire. An extensive literature describes the habitats, environment, fauna and flora of the NNR and these are available via the Forum's website: <https://thmcf.org/publications/>. Of particular relevance for this article is the *Inventory of the Invertebrates of Thorne and Hatfield Moors* (Skidmore, 2006) which compiles details on the surveys, ecology and species recorded at both Moors up to 2006.

The inventory lists 250 species of spider across both Moors, of which 214 are reportedly known from Thorne Moors. The SRS dataset holds two records for '*S. aurocinctus*' from Thorne Moors. The earliest is from June 1990, collected by David Heaver and the data simply states 'Thorne Moors'; and the hectad: SE71. The second is from a David C. Lee, from 11th June 1994, this time from the monad SE7515. Interestingly and significantly, Skidmore (2006) only refers to the 1990 record of *S. aurocinctus* at Thorne Moors (misspelt as *aureocinctus*).

Thus, both Moors have recorded this jumping spider... or at least, that was what the literature implied in spring 2021.

Sibianor lae in Britain

Since the spider's discovery at Holcroft Moss, Bob Merritt (2020) has reported it from Dergoals Moss, near Glenluce (VC 74: Wigtownshire), Dumfries and Galloway, southern Scotland in August 2020; and Gallon (2021) recorded it from Meathop Moss (VC 69: Westmorland) south-west of Kendal in Cumbria in June 2021.

As mentioned above, there are two other records of *S. aurocinctus* from Thorne Moors, dating back to June 1990 and June 1994. No additional information is available for the 1994 record, but the 1990 specimen has been retained and held at York Museum. Photographs supplied by Sarah

Table 1. Noteworthy spider species recorded from the 2021 survey.

Species	Grid Reference	No. of previous VC 63 hectads	Comments
<i>Agyneta affinis</i> (Linyphiidae)	SE72631557	4	A single female was collected on the 21st July 2021 from the Southern Canals area. This is a rare species in VC 63 with six previous records. The only modern records are from Potteric Carr (Black Carr Field) when males were collected in pitfall traps by the author in April and May 2009. There are older records from Hatfield Moor with a no better resolution than the hectad SE50 (August 1976); a location near or in the settlement of Barnby Dun, north of Doncaster (August 1978); Bretton Hall (in 1980); and Deffer Wood, Cawthorne from 1920. In Britain and mainland Europe, it seems to favour open habitats, typically grasslands, but also bogs, fens and wet meadows.
<i>Bathyphantes nigrinus</i> (Linyphiidae)	SE72611552 SE73161555	28	Two females were collected, on separate dates in June and July 2021 from the mire vegetation. A widespread species associated with damp woodland or wetter open habitats.
<i>Tetragnatha nigrata</i> (Tetragnathidae)	SE72631557	4	A single male was collected from vegetation on the 21st July 2021. Yorkshire is at the northern edge of this species' range in Britain with only one record north of the Humber. The first Yorkshire record was from Potteric Carr in July 2002; four other records exist, including a female collected by Helen Kirk on 2nd July 2007 near Sandtoft, Doncaster. This is a species typically associated with wetland edges where it builds its orb-web amongst shrubs or the field layer.
<i>Sibianor lae</i> (Salticidae)	SE73091556 SE73161555	1	Two males and a female were collected on 28th June; and a second male on 21st July 2021, representing the second confirmed VC 63 and Yorkshire records.
<i>Talavera aequipes</i> (Salticidae)	SE72611552	2	A single female of this small jumping spider was taken on 21st July 2021, representing the second modern record for the VC. The spider is scarce in Yorkshire, with a cluster of records associated with the North York Moors and the coast in VC 62: North-east Yorkshire. The author has also recorded it from a brownfield site in the same hectad supporting Open Mosaic Habitat but in VC 54: North Lincolnshire. It is a species associated with warm, sunny locations in heathlands, short turf and stony banks. The specimen was collected from one of the baulks adjacent to Cottage Dike within the Southern Canals section.



Figure 2. *Sibirionor larae* (Caldarvan) May 1984.
© National Museums Scotland.

King (Curator of Natural Science) (Fig. 1) clearly indicate that this is a male *S. larae* collected by David Heaver on the 20th June 1990 (accession number YORYM: 2017.1.1).

There is also a record of *S. aurocinctus* dating to May 1984 from Caldarvan, south of Loch Lomond, near Balloch (VC 99: Dunbartonshire). As part of the record's data, it mentions 'REF: Royal Scottish Museum', now National Museums Scotland (NMS). I contacted the Museum's entomology curators, Ashleigh Whiffin and Milo Phillips, to ascertain if they could locate the specimen in the collection. I am pleased to report that in January 2023, Milo confirmed that the specimen was held in the collection (Unique Identifier: NMS-10019108) and the individual was collected by Mark R. Shaw on the 23rd May 1984 and identified as *Bianor aenescens* (det. S. I. Baldwin) now in synonymy with *Sibirionor aurocinctus*. Additional details on the obverse side of the label are 'SALTICIDAE 3108040, Reg. No. 1984.038'. On the label's reverse is the note 'First Scottish Record checked 8/13 / PM' [PM is assumed to be the initials of Peter Merrett]. On receipt of the image, sent to me and Richard Gallon, we both immediately agreed that this is in fact *Sibirionor larae*, representing the first confirmed record for Scotland (Fig. 2) and so *S. aurocinctus* can be deleted from the Scottish list (Lavery, 2019) as there are no other records to my knowledge of *Sibirionor/Bianor* in the country.

Methods and Results (2021 Survey)

The surveys in 2021 focussed on two areas within Thorne Moors SSSI: Unit 11 (New Moor East), centred on SE738164; and Unit 15 (Dutch Canals), centred on SE722151.

The primary focus was to establish the presence of *Sibirionor* and confirm the species' identity; thus active methods were used, to gain as much detail on the habitat that the spider, if recorded, was associated with. Therefore, focus was on vacuum sampling, which in this instance, involved the use of a commercially available modified garden blow-vac (G-Vac). The model used was one powered by a two-stroke petrol (unleaded) engine (McCulloch (part of the Husqvarna Group) Model No. GB322VX). A purpose-made collecting bag was attached to the nozzle using duct-tape such that material (leaf-litter, detritus and specimens) is sucked in but retained. On completion, the material collected was tipped into a kitchen sieve over a white tray and vigorously shaken, allowing the smaller fraction to pass through and be sorted. Smaller specimens can then be collected using a

pooter and transferred to collecting vials for subsequent determination. The coarser fraction was then similarly sorted with larger specimens collected in the same way.

At each location, a timed vacuum sample was taken of approximately three minutes. Locations were selected by eye, based on the habitat description given in Burkmar & Gallon (2019) and were either wetter *Sphagnum* dominated mire or drier heathland on the baulks.

Survey work occurred on three dates: 28th June, 21st July and 8th September 2021 in dry weather and amicable temperatures, though the July visit warmed up considerably, starting at 20°C and rising to 32°C by the middle of the day.

Summary of survey effort

A total of 12 spider samples was collected from the locations, comprising 182 mature individuals (57 males; 125 females), and two sub-adult specimens of one species (*Rhysodromus histrio*), yielding 50 species.

The spider surveys undertaken during 2021 achieved their primary objective in that a *Sibirionor* was collected in the first sample. Based on the obvious red patellae ('knees'), it was immediately apparent that this was *Sibirionor larae*, subsequently confirmed under the microscope. Two specimens were collected from two different locations; a male and a female in June 2021 (Figs. 3–4); and a further male was collected from a similar spot in July 2021.

In addition to *S. larae*, a further four spiders were recorded new to Thorne Moors SSSI; details of which are also included in Table 1.

Summary

Survey work at Thorne Moors quickly revealed the presence of *S. larae* from a discrete area of the Moors known as the Southern Canals, which is considered to represent the least disturbed block of lowland raised bog on the wider SSSI (Helen Kirk, personal communication). This confirmed the ongoing presence of this species in Yorkshire, and further advanced the hypothesis that *S. larae* occurs in northern Britain on wet habitats, whilst *aurocinctus* is a southern species associated with drier heathland.



Figure 3. *Sibirionor larae* (June 2021) Thorne Moors.
© Martin Warne.



Figure 4. *Sibianor larae* (June 2021) Thorne Moors.
© Martin Warne.

Further Work

Survey work has continued within the Humberhead Peatlands NNR, sampling locations within Hatfield Moors, Thorne Moors and Crowle Moors in 2022. At the time of writing (January 2023), the material collected has yet to be identified, but no confirmed observations of *S. larae* were made in the field. This is moderately concerning because a large fire, confirmed as arson, occurred in April 2022, precisely in the location where *S. larae* was recorded in 2021.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Helen Kirk (on behalf of the THMCF) for identifying the Cottage Dike area of the Southern Canals as a likely location for *S. larae*, liaising with THMCF to fund the survey work, and accompanying me on site visits in 2021 and 2022, including the much-welcomed provision of barnbrack for sustenance whilst on site. Thanks also to Natural England for giving permission to survey at both Hatfield and Thorne Moors, including the use of pitfall traps; Sarah King (York Museum Trust) for checking their collection and locating the 1990 specimen; and Ashleigh Whiffin and Milo Phillips (NMS) for searching National Museum Scotland's collection for the Dunbartonshire specimen.

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29 Primley Park Lane, Alwoodley, LEEDS, LS17 7JE; e-mail: riwspider@yahoo.co.uk

Further Details of the British Arachnological Society Weekend in June 2023: Kielder Forest, Northumberland

by Richard Wilson

Details of the British Arachnological Society's weekend meeting is conveyed in the main Newsletter. As Area Organiser for both of Northumberland's vice-counties, I thought it would be useful to provide a brief overview of the county's spider and harvestmen faunas.

The most recent review was published in the Spider Recording Scheme (SRS) Newsletter in Spring 2015 and provided a brief history of spider recording in the county, including species-richness maps (Wilson, 2015). By the end of 2014, the SRS had recorded 326 species in VC 67 (South Northumberland) and 266 for VC68 (North Northumberland).

In the eight complete years since then, an additional 389 records have been submitted to the SRS, the substantial majority from VC 67 with only 53 records from VC 68. Just under 260 records, representing 89 species were from my own field work in the Kielder Mires, in the vicinity of Calvert Kielder, which was completed in spring and summer 2015. By the end of 2022, 351 species had been recorded from both VCs of which 330 are known from VC 67 and 271 from VC 68.

Northumberland is a poorly recorded area of north-east England (as is the adjacent vice-county: County Durham – VC 66) and this weekend offers members the opportunity to visit locations which have barely been sampled by an arachnologist's pooter. Figure 1 presents the tetrad species-richness map for VCs 66, 67 and 68 and it is immediately apparent that almost all locations have had very limited recording effort given that, of the 484 tetrads with records,

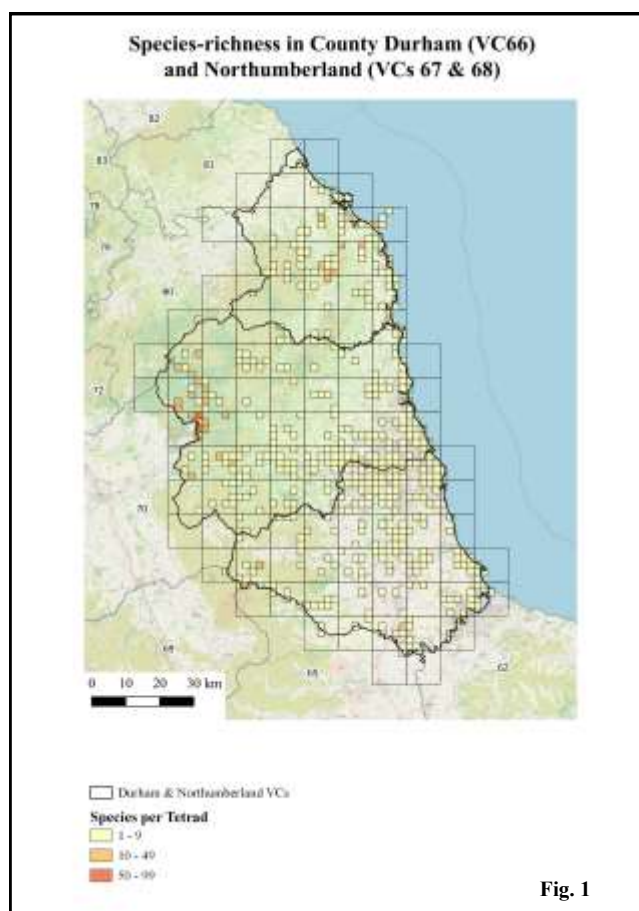


Fig. 1

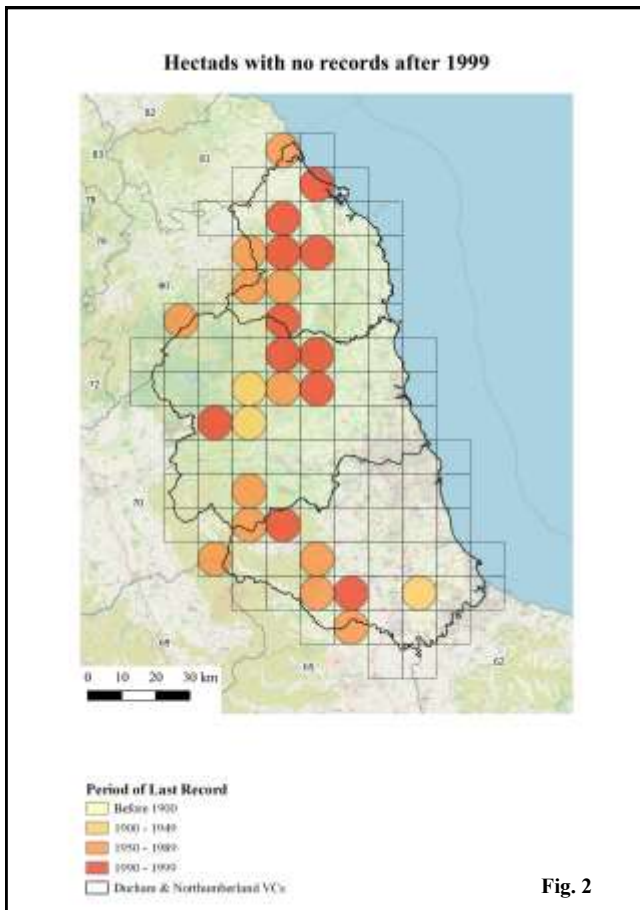


Fig. 2

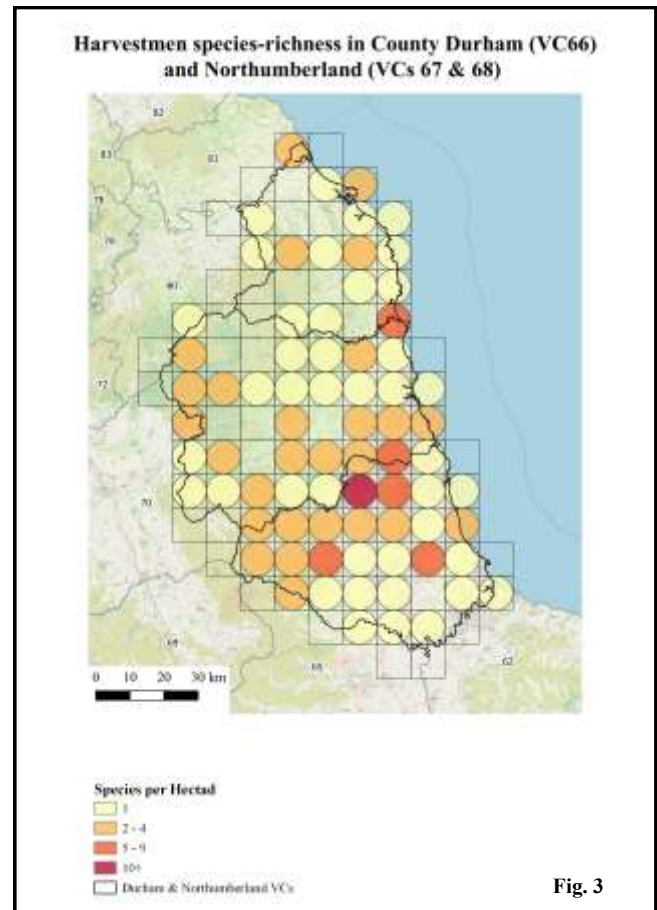


Fig. 3

448 (93%) have recorded fewer than 10 species. Readers will observe that there is a single cluster of tetrads in the west of VC 67 where species-richness exceeds 10 species, and the only two which exceed 50 species per hectad. This is the location of the field meeting, coinciding with the Kielder Mires south and west of the eponymous reservoir.

Figure 2 presents the hectads which have had no recent records, i.e. none since 2000. There is potential to sample the hectads on the way to (or from) Kielder via the A68, north and west of Colt Crag Reservoir such as hectads NY87 (Wark), NY88 (Bellingham) and NY98 (Sweethope Moss) for visitors heading to Kielder from the south. Scottish members heading south could travel via Coldstream (NT83) and make inroads in to recording effort in VC 68.

No previous review of Northumberland’s harvestmen has been reported. Twenty species are known from Northumberland; 19 from VC 67 and 18 from VC 68. Figure 3 illustrates their species-richness.

The weekend itself offer the opportunity to record in some of England’s most remote landscapes. Details of sites will be provided in advance, or on the weekend pending permissions, but it is hoped that the Northumberland Wildlife Trust’s Whitelee Moor (<https://www.nwt.org.uk/nature-reserves/whitelee-moor>) reserve (centred on NT700040), accessed from Carter Bar on the A68, will be an option.

29 Primley Park Lane, Alwoodley, LEEDS, LS17 7JE; e-mail: riwspider@yahoo.co.uk

DNA Barcoding Confirms *Heliophanus dampfi* New to Denbighshire

by Richard Gallon

Heliophanus dampfi was discovered at Whixall Moss only comparatively recently when Rich Burkmar and I vacuum sampled the site on 25th August 2018. However, specimens were only found on the English section of this extensive raised bog which straddles the Shropshire/Denbighshire border. Naturally I was keen to confirm the species from the Welsh sections of this site.

In August 2022 James McGill and I revisited the site, primarily to find *Minicia marginella* on the Welsh section of the bog (which we did). During this survey I also collected some immature *Heliophanus* which I suspected were *H. dampfi* (Table 1). These identifications were later kindly confirmed by Gary Hedges and John Wilson (World Museum, Liverpool) using DNA barcoding.

Table 1. Immature *Heliophanus dampfi* records confirmed by DNA barcoding.

Site	Grid reference	Date	Vice-county	Country
Bettisfield Moss	SJ47633529	21/08/2022	50	Wales
Bettisfield Moss	SJ48063523	21/08/2022	40	England
Bettisfield Moss	SJ47813517	21/08/2022	50	Wales
Fenn's Moss	SJ48163551	22/08/2022	50	Wales

In Wales *H. dampfi* was only previously known from one site (Cors Fochno), so barcoding has confirmed two further Welsh sites for this Nationally Rare spider.

23a Roumania Crescent, LLANDUDNO, North Wales, LL30 1UP; e-mail: rgallon47@gmail.com