

Oonops domesticus at The Newalls

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On November 22nd 2014 I noticed a tiny pinkish spider on my kitchen worktop, and was able to identify it as *Oonops domesticus*, one of only two species in the family Oonopidae which occur in Britain. A couple of weeks later another one turned up on my living room table. Both species are nocturnal, but these two were active in daytime. In Britain, *O. domesticus* is found predominantly in buildings, while *O. pulcher* is an outdoor species.

O. domesticus is about 2mm long. Colour varies: pink, orange, pinkish brown, yellowish to red. The compact group of six oval eyes is distinctive, with the two central ones being bigger than the others. There is a delicate pattern of fine black lines on the cephalothorax, and the abdomen is hairy. The two species are separable on the number of ventral spines on the tibia of the first leg, 5 for *O. domesticus* and 4 for *O. pulcher*. These spines can be difficult to see, but their insertion points show up well (Photo 1), so I could confirm *domesticus* and be sure they were not outdoor spiders that had come indoors on my clothing.

O. domesticus progresses by a slow walk alternating with a quick dash, a habit which unfortunately resulted in squashed spiders before I could get a clear photograph, but a third one turned up in my bath on January 15th, and I am grateful to John Bingham for the image below (Photo 2).



Photo 1. *Oonops domesticus* front leg tibia Susan Limbrey



Photo 2. *Oonops domesticus* from The Newalls

John Bingham