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THE OCCURRENCE OF *CRASPEDOSOMA RAWLINSII* LEACH (DIPLOPODA) IN EAST ANGLIA.

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Craspedosoma rawlinsii is a comparatively large and distinctive species which has been recorded at widely scattered localities throughout Britain and Ireland. It was recorded in the atlas (British Myriapod Group 1988) from only 35 10km squares and was ranked 27th in order of frequency: since then, 22 new localities have been added and two removed (one was a species of Anthogona (Gregory et al. in press and the other probably Nanogona polydesmoides (F.A.Turk pers. comm.).

Recent notes by Morgan (1988,1989) highlighted the close association of this species, in Dyfed, with woodlands, especially wet areas such as flushes. Blower (1985) also noted an association with woods, watercourses and areas of natural drainage. In this note we examine the occurrence of *C.rawlinsii* in East Anglia (Cambridgeshire, Essex, Norfolk and Suffolk) to assess whether there are similar associations. There are only 15 known localities for *C.rawlinsii* in East Anglia, and these fall into major habitat types: woodland and fen/carr.

WOODLAND SITES

The woodland sites, Swanton Novers NNR, Barney Wood NR, Staverton Thicks and Thompson Water, are all mixed deciduous woods on light, generally free-draining, acid to neutral soils. Specimens were collected in dead wood (above ground), in leaf litter and in pitfall traps. At three of these sites the species was recorded in April and one in November. A fifth woodland site is a popular plantation at Lynford which is on the regularly flooded banks of the little Ouse River. At this site it was recorded in March, April and October, in dead wood and leaf litter.

FEN/CARR SITES

The Lynford site has some features in common with the carr sites at Woodwalton Fen, Blackborough Fen and the Woodbastwick area of the Bure Marshes NNR which are alder or willow carr on peat soils. At Blackborough and Woodbastwick, specimens were collected in dead alder wood in late March and in mid October respectively. At Woodwalton they were extracted, using heat, from leaf litter in February.

A survey of East Anglia fens, by the then Nature Conservancy Council in 1988 to 1990, resulted in further records from Woodbastwick and from seven additional localities (Table 1). All these records are from pitfall trap catches. They show markedly different seasonal occurrences to the woodland and earlier fen/carr records, with almost all being from summer and early autumn (Table 1).

Table 1: Localities and months/years of occurrence of *C.rawlinsii* from the NCC survey of East Anglian fens

Buxton Heath	9/1989				
Catfield Fen	12/1988	8/1989	8/1990		
Chippenham Fen	6/1990	7/1990			
Strumpshaw Fen	6/1989	6/1990			
Sutton Fen	8/1990				
Upton Fen	6/1990	8/1990			
Wangford Carr	6/1988	9/1988			
Woodbastwick	6/1989	7/1989	8/1989	6/1990	8/1990

DISCUSSION

Although there is clearly an association with tree cover (woodland and carr) in East Anglia, the sites differ markedly to those recorded by Morgan (1988,1989). The woodland sites become very dry in a normal summer although in deep litter humidity would be retained in the litter or in the soil beneath. *C.rawlinsii* is well adapted to burrowing in the light soils of these woods. Blower (1985) noted that most records were from the winter months (when soil/litter humidity would be at its highest) and this point is supported by the woodland and some of the fen/carr records from East Anglia. However, the most recent records from pitfall traps in fens show that most of these records (presumably of surface active specimens) are from June to September. Although these summer occurrences are undeniable, the specimens from the NCC surveys examined by one of us (REJ) were almost exclusively from the summer months, so that any possible winter occurrences were not sampled.

Why *C.rawlinsii* is apparently so uncommon in East Anglia remains unexplained. Ancient woodlands on acid to neutral soils, such as those listed above, are scattered but widespread, particularly in East Suffolk, in the Brecklands and in some river valleys. This apparent scarcity may be totally artificial because few suitable sites have been surveyed under the most favourable conditions.

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