

ARMADILLIDIUM PICTUM Brandt IN YORKSHIRE

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INTRODUCTION

Armadillidium pictum was discovered on a wooded slope at Catrigg Force, Stainforth (34 832 761) in 1917 by F. Rhodes of the Yorkshire Naturalists' Union (YNU). The specimens form part of the Larwood Collection housed at the British Museum (Natural History). Rhodes, in fact, gave the location as Catrick Force, Ribbleshead, an error which caused confusion in the years to come - in fact the only Catrick in Yorkshire is the military complex of that name in the N.E. of the county, a non-limestone area in which no respectable A. pictum would dare to be found!

REDISCOVERY OF A. PICTUM AT CATRIGG FORCE

P.T. Harding, S.L. Sutton and others were determined that some effort should be made to try and re-find the Yorkshire A. pictum and the initiative was taken by the YNU when a joint meeting of their 'Other Arthropods' and Conchological sections was mounted at Catrigg Force on 11th May 1985. Low and behold, there was A. pictum in quantity in more or less the same place as described by Rhodes almost 70 years previously. Specimens were collected, their identity confirmed and deposited in Leeds City Museum.

A SECOND SITE FOR A. PICTUM in YORKSHIRE

The 'Other Arthropods' section of the YNU had been keeping an eye out for A. pictum for a number of years without success. However, on 3rd September 1988 when on another joint meeting with the Conchological Section, a single male A. pictum (confirmed D.T. Richardson) was picked up by A. Norris from under stones at the base of a limestone outcrop on upland limestone grassland with hawthorn scrub at Skythorns near Grassington (34 973 645). Further extensive searching proved unfruitful. This is only the second site for A. pictum in Yorkshire (Fig. 1).

However, a mystery still remains. Rhodes (1916) reported A. pictum as being taken by R. Sanderson at Ling Gill, Horton-in-Ribblesdale (34 800 785) on 1st November 1915. Unfortunately, no voucher specimens exist so it has not been possible to validate this record. Visits to Ling Gill in recent years have failed to find A. pictum but it's a wild place so perhaps we may be lucky one day.

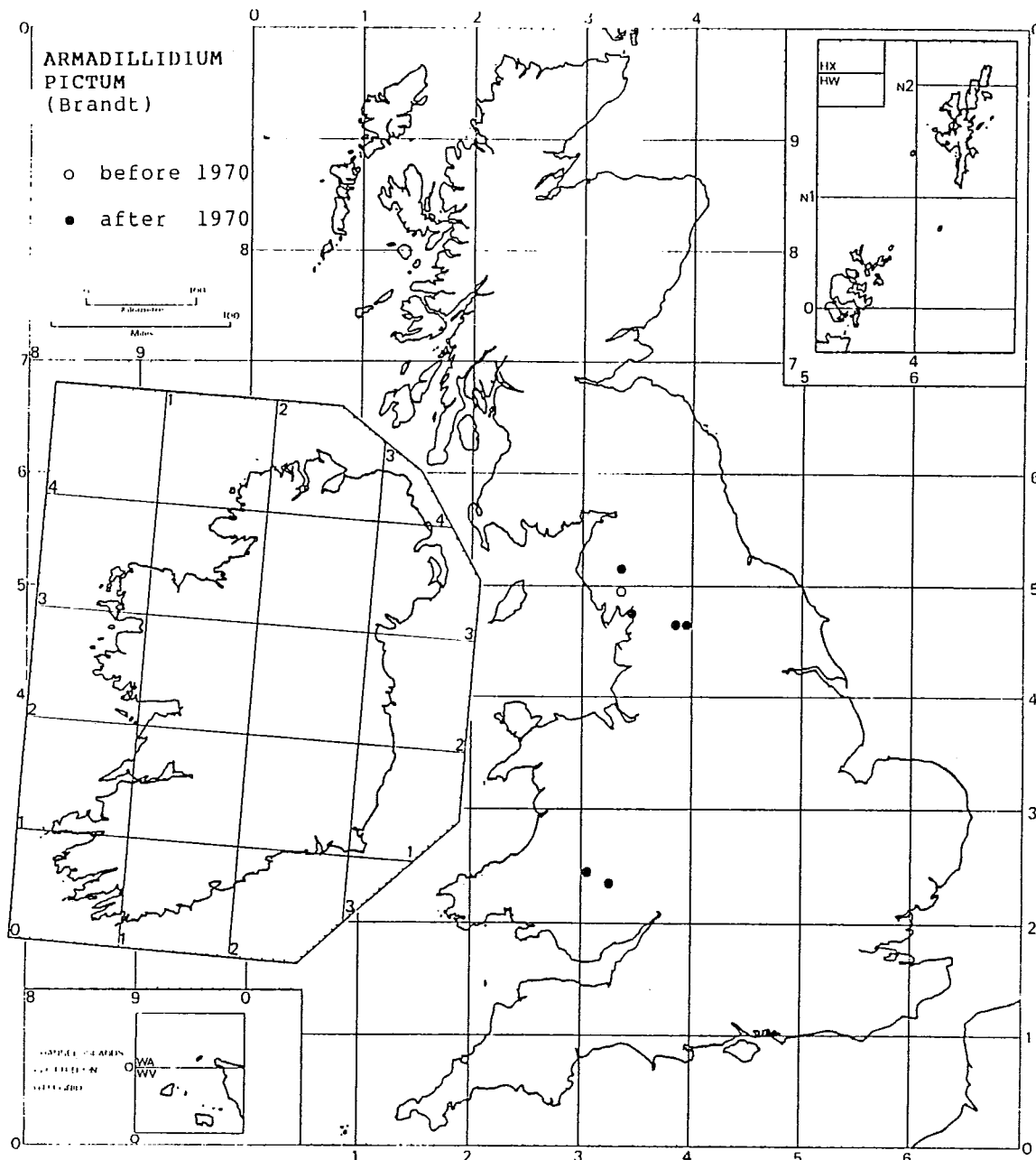


Fig. 1 : Armadillidium pictum. Recorded occurrence in Britain in 10 km squares up to April 1989.

REFERENCE

RHODES, F. (1916). The terrestrial Isopoda (woodlice) of Yorkshire. Naturalist, 99-102, 121-123.