CENTIPEDES RECORDED AT THE BMIG DURHAM MEETING, WITH COMMENTS ON SPECIES RECORDED BY RICHARD BAGNALL

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INTRODUCTION
The particular interest of a meeting in the Durham area was that this was a region from which myriapods were collected by Richard Bagnall and from where he recorded several species new to Britain, notably in the Derwent Valley, in the early part of the 20th century.

The inclusion of the species Lithobius nigrifrons (= L.tenebrosus) on the British list dates from 1911 (Bagnall, 1912a, b, 1913a) when he reported on two mutilated specimens of a lithobiid from Gibside collected in 1906 which had been identified by Edv.Ellingsen of Kragerø, with some hesitation, as this species. He comments that “it is necessary to obtain more material”.

Reviewing field work for 1911 (Bagnall, 1912b), he gives a list of species from meetings in the Lower Derwent Valley, Harbottle, Haswell, Easington and Deneholm, the coast near Beadnell, Farne Islands and from Seaton Sluice and St.Mary’s Island. From this we have records of Lithobius forficatus, L.variegatus, L.tenebrosus (above), L.glabratus (= L.melanops), L.crassipes, Henicops fulvicornis (= Lamycetes emarginatus), Stigmatogaster subterraneus, Schendyla nemorensis, Scolioplanes crassipes (= Strigamia crassipes), S. acuminata, S.maritima, Geophilus carpophagus, G.proximus (= Ginsculptus in this sense), Gloncicornis (= G.flavus), Giruncorum. From the fact that the Geophilus carpophagus is reported from Blanchland and is “not uncommon on the moors” it is likely that this refers to Geasoni.

In a subsequent paper (Bagnall, 1912b) there is a report of what was thought to be a species new to Britain, Lithobius dubosqui, determined by Brolemann himself. In his 1918 checklist (Bagnall, 1918a) he describes this species as “= microps of British authors non Meinert”. It is as L.microps that we know the species today.

His account of the myriapods of the Derwent Valley (Bagnall, 1913a) adds to our species list Lithobius calcaratus, L.piceus britannicus, Cryptops hortensis (“Usually found in greenhouses”) and Mecistocephalus carniolensis (= Dicellophilus carniolensis) an exotic found in hot houses at Leazes Park, Newcastle. L.piceus subspecies britannicus, a “fairly large and distinct form (recognised in the field by its bright yellow tibiae)”was from Blanchland Moors, Buckshott Moor, Cowbers Fell. “Dr Brölemann, to whom I submitted specimens, considers it advisable to describe it as a form of piceus (a species not yet recorded as British) though it may ultimately prove to be a new species”.

In 1918 (Bagnall, 1918b) there is a comment that most, if not all, of the existing records of Lithobius borealis may be really referable to L.lapidicola; he refers to records of L.borealis from the mountains of Northumberland and Scotland but also reports on a specimen from Lancashire identified by Brölemann as being specifically L.borealis. We now know the species formerly referred to by British workers as L.lapidicola as L.borealis whilst L.lapidicola is more correctly applied to another species found in Britain in recent years.

The only subsequent Bagnall reference to species from the Northumberland / Durham area appears to be of Clinpodes linearis (Geophilus linearis) from Hexham and from coastal areas of Durham and Yorkshire (Bagnall, 1935).

RECENT RECORDS
The present author (Barber, 1981, 1984) reported on centipedes from Northumberland and Durham, finding most of Bagnall’s species in the two counties except for Dicellophilus, the two terrestrial Strigamia species, Geophilus linearis, Cryptops hortensis, Lithobius piceus britannicus and L.tenebrosus. He confirmed Lithobius borealis and added L.macilentus , the latter from north Northumberland. Lithobius macilentus was not recognised as British until
TABLE 1
Records of Centipedes from the Durham Meeting
(all records are from 1-2.04.05)

Locations:
Hareh. = Harehope Quarry, Derwent G. = Derwent Gorge / Windybank Wood,

Collectors:

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Cryptops hortensis
Dielcephalus carniolensis *
Geophilus easoni
Geophilus flavus x
Geophilus insulatus x x x x x x x x
Geophilus linearis
Geophilus truncorum x x x x x
Lamycetes emarginatus
Lithobius borealis
Lithobius calcaratus x
Lithobius cassipes x x x x x
Lithobius forficatus x x x x x x x x x
Lithobius macilentus x x x
Lithobius melanops x x x
Lithobius microps x x x x x x x x
Lithobius piceus
Lithobius tenebrosus
Lithobius variegatus x x x x
Schendyla nemenensis x
Stigmatogaster subterraneus x x x
Strigamia acuminata
Strigamia cassipes
Strigamia maritima x x

* inside buildings or greenhouse only
the mid twentieth century (Eason, 1953). The BMIG meeting at Ford Castle recorded 12 species from a variety of coastal and inland sites, including *Cryptops hortensis* (Barber, 2001).

In April 2005 at the BMIG field meeting some of Bagnall’s localities (including Gibside, Derwent Valley, Blackhall Rocks) and other sites were visited and a number of centipede species were recorded. Amongst these were all those listed by Bagnall (above) with the exceptions of *Lithobius piceus britannicus*, *L.borealis*, *L.tenebrosus*, *Lamyctes emarginatus*, *Cryptops hortensis*, *Strigamia crassipes*, *S.accuminata*, *Geophilus linearis* and *Dicelophillus carniolensis*. There were also 3 records of *L.macilentus*. Table 1 summarises these records whilst Table 2 compares records from Bagnall’s various reports, those of the present author (Barber,1981,1983), the Ford Castle meeting (Barber,2001) and the present one.

The picture that emerges is of *Geophilus insculptus* and *Geophilus flavus* (along with the smaller *Geophilus truncorum*) as the common geophilomorphs, *Lithobius forficatus*, not surprisingly, as a common large lithobiomorph and *L.crassipes* and *L.microps* as the commonest smaller lithobiomorphs with widespread records of *L.melanops*.

Of interest is the fact that there was only one record of *G.easoni* and that from a coastal site; it is often regarded as a moorland animal and of the relatively small number of records of *Lithobius variegatus*, all from the 10km grid squares NZ 03, 04 and 15. It had not been found at all at the Ford Castle meeting and comments have been made elsewhere (Barber, 1984) about its patchy distribution in this area.

*Dicellophillus* was not found but only one small greenhouse at the University was sampled; other mecistocephalids have been reported from hothouses at Kew and in Cornwall. The status of *Lithobius tenebrosus* remains unclear; basing a record on two damaged specimens identified with such a level of uncertainty makes it difficult to sustain on our list although it was subsequently reported from Cornwall by Turk (1944), the specimens no longer being available. However a single specimen, confirmed by E.H.Eason, was collected at Aberystwyth in 1988 (Keay,1989) so it is not completely impossible that it might have been found in this area or alternatively these may have been damaged examples of another somewhat similar species such as *L.melanops*.
Lithobius piceus britannicus remains enigmatic. The only two larger lithobiids with typically more than 2+2 forcipular coxosternite teeth that have been found in the area are Lithobius forficatus and L. variegatus, both of which are distinguished from L. piceus by such features as the spine 15VaC and a double claw on the 15th legs of the latter. What species Brölemann actually examined is difficult to say; he was not likely to be very familiar with L. variegatus which has only been found in France in recent years and, although with its colouration it might, perhaps, be thought of as having yellowish markings on the legs is really rather different from the L. piceus piceus of S.E. England. In any case, Bagnall would have been familiar with L. variegatus and, presumably, be unlikely to confuse it with another species. Unless specimens can be located, the mystery must remain.

There are several further species that might, perhaps, be expected to be found in due course including Geophilus electricus (which is known from Peebles), Geophilus carpophagus (s.s.), Cryptops parisii (found in Edinburgh), one or other of the other two Strigamia species and possibly other maritime types such as Geophilus fucorum and Hydroschendyla submarina.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
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REFERENCES


Bagnall, R.S (1913b) Lithobius duboscqui, Brölemann, a centipede new to the British fauna. Zoologist August 1913.


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