

REPORT ON THE WOODLICE RECORDED DURING THE BMIG SPRING FIELD MEETING AT LUDLOW, 2007

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The BMIG spring field meeting was based at the Bishop Maskell Centre in Ludlow from 30th March to 1st April 2007. The area has a mixed geology with outcrops of limestone, such as seen at Wenlock Edge, to the acidic rocks of Long Mynd. A great variety of habitats were sampled. This varied from urban sites (such as Ludlow town centre), a good number of churchyards and a selection of rural habitats, including calcareous grassland, ancient woodland and acidic moorland.

During the course of the meeting woodlice were collected from 28 sites falling within 14 different 10km National Grid squares. These were mainly in Shropshire (vc 40), but a few in Herefordshire (vc 36) and Worcestershire (vc 37) were also visited. Records were submitted by Glyn Collis (GMC), Mike Davidson (MBD), Steve Gregory (SJG), Paul Lee (PL), Paul Richards (JPR), Richard Price (RP) and Mark Telfer (MGT). Details of the sites visited and by whom are shown in Table 1. Species recorded and the sites at which they were found are shown in Table 2.

In terms of woodlice the meeting proved very successful with a total of 16 species recorded, including important discoveries of *Armadillidium pictum* and *Trichoniscoides sarsi*, both of which will be discussed later. The four most frequently record species were the usual suspects. *Philoscia muscorum* was recorded at all 28 sites surveyed, reflecting its general abundance in southern England, while *Oniscus asellus*, *Porcellio scaber* and *Trichoniscus pusillus* agg. all proved common. *Armadillidium vulgare*, *Platyarthrus hoffmannseggii* (always associated with ant nests) and *Porcellio spinicornis* (typically on walls) were widely encountered, mainly in churchyards, but the first two also in calcareous grassland.

It is of note that three additional species of *Armadillidium* were recorded during the weekend, in each case associated with the more common *A. vulgare*. In Ludlow town *A. depressum* was found twice, first at the Bishop Maskell Centre and then at Ludlow Castle. At the former site it was first discovered under capping stones on a garden wall, but torchlight surveys that night also revealed specimens, associated with *Porcellio spinicornis*, walking on the outside of walls. A thriving population of *A. nasatum* was discovered in an old limestone quarry on Wenlock Edge. Specimens were readily found under stones scattered among sparsely vegetated ground on the quarry floor.

Perhaps of greatest significance was the discovery of a population of *A. pictum* at Downton Gorge NNR. A few specimens of this rare and elusive woodlouse were laboriously hand-sorted from among limestone debris at the base of a wooded limestone slope (Gregory, 2008). It is of note that *A. vulgare* was also present since the marked north-western range of *A. pictum* rarely overlaps with the south-eastern range of *A. vulgare*. Despite searches of apparently suitable habitat elsewhere at Downton Gorge further populations of *A. pictum* were not discovered.

Seven species of Trichoniscid were recorded, a very respectable haul. The most widely recorded was the ubiquitous *Trichoniscus pusillus* agg. found at 22 sites. Despite the collection of many specimens only Paul Lee managed to collect a male specimen and this proved to be *T. provisorius*. Also widely recorded were *T. pygmaeus* and *Androniscus dentiger*. The former entirely from churchyards, while the latter was found in a variety of synanthropic and semi-natural habitats.

Of particular note was Paul Richards' discovery (on April Fool's Day!) of *Trichoniscoides sarsi* among friable soil at the base of a wall at Ludlow Castle (see Fig. 1, below). The specimens, which thankfully included males, were associated with *Haplophthalmus mengii* seg. and *T. pygmaeus*, both typical inhabitants of friable soils. Previously, *T. sarsi* has proved to be widespread in Kent, Suffolk and Leicestershire, where a

few experienced recorders have been able to find this elusive species (Gregory, 2009). This record in Shropshire is an important discovery and lies equidistant between the known Leicestershire stronghold and the Irish records from Dublin city.

TABLE 1: Sites sampled for woodlice at the 2007 BMIG Ludlow Field Meeting

Site code	Location	10km Square	OS Grid Reference	VC	Date	Recorders
1	Pembridge Churchyard	SO 35	SO390580	36	31/03/2007	GMC
2	Titley Churchyard	SO 36	SO331602	36	31/03/2007	GMC
3	Bedstone Churchyard	SO 37	SO368758	40	30/03/2007	GMC
4	Brampton Bryan Cemetry	SO 37	SO371723	36	30/03/2007	GMC, RP
5	Mynd Scrubs, near Bucknell	SO 37	SO353752	40	30/03/2007	GMC, RP
6	Monkland Churchyard	SO 45	SO460576	36	31/03/2007	GMC, RP
7	Kingsland Churchyard	SO 46	SO446613	36	31/03/2007	GMC, RP
8	Bromfield Churchyard	SO 47	SO482769	40	30/03/2007	GMC, SJG, JPR, MGT
9	Downton Gorge NNR	SO 47	SO442742	36	30/03/2007	GMC, MBD, SJG, PL, RP, JPR, MGT
10	Ludlow Castle, Mill Gate	SO 57	SO510742	40	01/04/2007	JPR
11	Caynham Churchyard	SO 57	SO553733	40	30/03/2007	PL, MGT
12	Knowle Wood	SO 57	SO59-73-	40	30/03/2007	PL, MGT
13	Bishop Mascall Centre, Ludlow	SO 57	SO51-74-	40	31/03/2007	SJG, MGT
14	Tugford Churchyard	SO 58	SO557871	40	30/03/2007	SJG, JPR
15	Easthope wood NT, Nr Presthope	SO 59	SO572967	40	31/03/2007	JPR
16	Hughley Churchyard	SO 59	SO564979	40	31/03/2007	SJG, JPR
17	Wenlock Edge near Presthop, Quarry	SO 59	SO578970	40	31/03/2007	SJG
18	Hanley Dingle	SO 66	SO682660	37	31/03/2007	PL
19	Hanley William Churchyard	SO 66	SO673660	37	31/03/2007	PL
20	Stoke Bliss Churchyard	SO 66	SO651629	37	31/03/2007	PL
21	Cleobury North Churchyard	SO 68	SO623870	40	30/03/2007	SJG, JPR
22	Brown Clee Picnic Area	SO 68	SO608871	40	30/03/2007	SJG
23	Harley Bank	SO 69	SO61-99-	40	31/03/2007	JPR
24	Much Wenlock, Wenlock Edge, NT car park	SO 69	SO612998	40	31/03/2007	JPR
25	Wenlock Edge, west of Much Wenlock, calcareous grassland	SO 69	SO604997	40	31/03/2007	SJG
26	Berrington Churchyard	SJ 50	SJ530069	40	31/03/2007	SJG, JPR
27	Much Wenlock Churchyard	SJ 60	SJ624000	40	31/03/2007	SJG
28	Wenlock Edge, west of Much Wenlock, deciduous woodland	SJ 60	SJ606001	40	31/03/2007	SJG

REFERENCES

- Gregory, S.J. (2009) *Woodlice and Waterlice (Isopoda: Oniscidea & Asellota) in Britain and Ireland*. Centre for Ecology & Hydrology/Field Studies Council.
- Gregory, S.J. (2008). *Armadillidium pictum* Brandt, 1833 (Isopoda, Oniscidea) in Downton Gorge NNR, Herefordshire. *Bull. Brit. Myriapod & Isopod Grp*, **23**: 13-14.

TABLE 2: Woodlice species recorded by site – BMIG Ludlow Field Meeting 2007
 Site details and recorders are presented in Table 1

	Site code:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	No. sites per 10km square:	
	Vice county:	36	36	40	36	40	36	36	40	36	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	37	37	37	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	
	10km square:	SO 35	SO 36	SO 37	SO 37	SO 37	SO 45	SO 46	SO 47	SO 47	SO 57	SO 57	SO 57	SO 57	SO 58	SO 59	SO 59	SO 59	SO 66	SO 66	SO 66	SO 68	SO 68	SO 69	SO 69	SO 69	SO 50	SO 60	SO 60	species	
<i>Androniscus deniger</i>			X						X													X								5	
<i>Haplophthalmus danicus</i>																			X											1	
<i>Haplophthalmus mengii seg.</i>											X		X																	2	
<i>Trichoniscoides sarsi seg.</i>											X																			1	
<i>Trichoniscus provisorius</i>																			X											1	
<i>Trichoniscus pusillus agg.</i>		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X				X	X	X	22	
<i>Trichoniscus pygmaeus</i>					X					X	X		X	X	X							X								9	
<i>Philoscia muscorum</i>		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	28	
<i>Platyarthrus hoffmannseggii</i>					X			X						X				X									X	X		7	
<i>Oniscus asellus</i>		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X			X				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	25	
<i>Arnadillidium depressum</i>											X			X																2	
<i>Arnadillidium nasatum</i>																	X													1	
<i>Arnadillidium pictum</i>										X																				1	
<i>Arnadillidium vulgare</i>		X			X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X									X	X		13	
<i>Porcellio scaber</i>		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	25
<i>Porcellio spinicornis</i>					X				X				X	X	X							X					X	X		7	
No. species per site:		5	5	4	8	4	6	6	7	7	7	5	4	8	8	2	4	7	5	3	3	7	4	3	3	7	7	7	4		