

BRITISH ISOPOD STUDY GROUP



Newsletter 40

Autumn 1997

Edited by David Bilton

The Woodlouse Ligidium hypnorum in Leicestershire

Ligidium hypnorum was discovered new to the county by A.J. Rundle in 1981 from around the lake and in an adjacent ditch in the grounds of Gumley Hall (SP681901). In May 1993 D.A. Lott and myself confirmed the continuing presence of this species at this site, when several specimens were collected from the marshy area at the inflow to the lake. This population of *Ligidium* is on the north-western edge of the species' range in Leicestershire, the nearest known populations being over fifty kilometres to the south or east. In 1985 Paul Harding had suggested that the species was likely to be far more widespread in the midlands than suggested by existing records, something which has been confirmed by recent work. In November 1996 three specimens of *L. hypnorum* were found along the River Welland at Welham (SP766925), beneath flood debris and drift wood in what had been a nettle bed. The specimens were in the company of *Trichoniscoides albidus* at this site.

This find has led to several visits to the Leicestershire side of the Welland, *L. hypnorum* turning up at two of these in tall herb/grass covered embankments in low numbers. In December 1996 the species was found at Medbourne (SP792917) and in January 1997 at Brighthurst (SP845911). Specimens were obtained only after at least half an hour's searching at each site, with many sites producing no *Ligidium* at all. The River Welland has also produced several recent records of *Trachilepus rathekei* from a reed bed and sheep-grazed grassland. These were at Thorpe-by-Water (SP89-59-) and west of Tixover (SK963006), but the species has not so far been taken at the same site as *Ligidium*. All three of the species mentioned above must be as widespread on the Northamptonshire side of the Welland as they are in Leicestershire.

Jon Daws.

BISG/BMG Field Meeting in Kirkcudbrightshire

This year's field meeting was based at the Lochinvar Hotel in St. John's Town of Dalry. Over a dozen participants were in residence (I forget the actual number!), but the hardcore Isopodologists were conspicuously thin on the ground. Inspiration for the weekend's fieldwork was provided by Jim McCleary, a local natural historian, who gave an informative and interesting talk about the various habitats found within the county.

A mixture of coastal and inland habitats were surveyed. In total eleven species were recorded, which is about par for this part of Scotland. There were no spectacular finds. Perhaps it is just too far north for all those goodies found on the West Cumbrian coast - or perhaps we just didn't look hard enough? None-the-less we now have a better understanding of the distribution of woodlice in an otherwise under-recorded area. The records, contributed by Keith Alexander, Steve Gregory, Paul Lee and Douglas Richardson, are summarised at 10km level in the table overleaf:

Vice-county:	75	75	75	73	73	73	73	73	73	73	73
10km Grid:	26/	26/	26/	25/	25/	25/	25/	25/	25/	25/	25/
Species	30	40	50	58	59	67	68	74	84	85	95
<i>Androniscus dentiger</i>	+		+				+				
<i>Armadillidium pulchellum</i>								+		+	
<i>Cylisticus convexus</i>								+			
<i>Haplophthalmus mengei</i>	+							+			
<i>Ligia oceanica</i>								+	+	+	
<i>Oniscus asellus</i>	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
<i>Philoscia muscorum</i>	+			+		+	+	+	+	+	+
<i>Porcellio scaber</i>	+			+		+	+	+	+	+	+
<i>Trichoniscoides saeroeensis</i>									+	+	
<i>Trichoniscus pusillus</i>	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
<i>Trichoniscus pygmaeus</i>	+		+				+				

The most interesting species were found on the coast, which is often the case with woodlice. *Armadillidium pulchellum* was numerous at several coastal sites, both in short turf grassland and, perhaps unexpectedly, amongst bracken litter on vegetated cliffs. Turning stones in coastal shingle and salt marsh revealed good numbers of *Trichoniscoides saeroeensis* at two sites. *Cylisticus convexus* and *Haplophthalmus mengei* were also found on the coast. Despite much searching *Armadillidium vulgare* and *Platyarthrus hoffmannseggii*, both at the northern limit of their range in Britain, were not recorded.

Our thanks go to Paul Harding for organising a successful meeting and to Dick Jones for deputising in Paul's absence for the weekend. Our gratitude also extends to Jim McCleary for sharing his local knowledge with us and for targeting various hit squads to prime areas.

Steve Gregory

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BISG/BMG Field Meeting in Kirkcudbrightshire; 3rd to 5th April 1997 - Woodlouse records

10km Grid: 26/	30	40	50	25/	58	59	59	67	67	68	68	68	74	74	74	84	85	95	95
Species Site No:	1	2	3	-	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
<i>Androniscus dentiger</i>	+		+										+						
<i>Armadillidium pulchellum</i>														+	+			+	
<i>Cylisticus convexus</i>															+				
<i>Haplophthalmus mengei</i>	+														+				
<i>Ligia oceanica</i>															+		+	+	
<i>Oniscus asellus</i>	+	+	+		+	+		+	+	+	+	+			+	+	+	+	+
<i>Philoscia muscorum</i>	+				+			+	+		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
<i>Porcellio scaber</i>	+				+			+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
<i>Trichoniscoides saeroeensis</i>																	+	+	
<i>Trichoniscus pusillus</i>	+	+	+		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
<i>Trichoniscus pygmaeus</i>	+		+										+						

Records contributed by Keith Alexander, Steve Gregory, Paul Lee and Douglas Richardson

Key to Sites:

- 1: Auchalton Meadows N.R. 26/335 037, vc 75
- 2: Mossdale picnic site, 26/494 040, vc 75
- 3: Glen Muck roadside, 26/513 020, vc 75
- 4: Long Wood, Garroch Glen, 25/59- 82-, vc 73
- 5: nr. Drumjohn, road verge, 25/524 976, vc 73
- 6: nr. Bardennoch, road verge, 25/578 915, vc 73
- 7: Glen Lee gorge, 25/61- 79-, vc 73
- 8: Brough Wood, 25/62- 76-, vc 73
- 9: Dundeugh Castle, 25/600 380, vc 73

- 10: Glen Lee Park, 25/61- 80-, vc 73
- 11: Lochinvar Hotel, Dalry, 25/619 810, vc 73
- 12: Rob's Craig, Mullock Bay, MOD, 25/70- 43-, vc 73
- 13: Rob's Craig, east of Dunrod Burn, MOD, 25/710 444, vc 73
- 14: Silver Hill, Dunrod Burn, MOD, 25/711 452, vc 73
- 15: Rascarrel Bay, 25/80- 48-, vc 73
- 16: Castle Hill Point, Barclay Hill, 25/85- 52-, vc 73
- 17: Needles Eye N.R., nr Southwick, 25/91- 56-, vc 73
- 18: Mershead RSPB reserve, 25/91- 55-, vc 73