

# Larger Brachycera Recording Scheme

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## Contents

From the Scheme Organiser: <b>Athericidae and Stratiomyidae</b>	Simon Hayhow
Recent records of Scarcer Larger Brachycera in Berkshire	Jonty Denton, Peter Chandler and Graham Collins
<b>Therevidae</b> An inland record of <i>Acrosathe annulata</i> (Fabricius)	Ian Cross
<b>Stratiomyidae</b> Swarming in <i>Beris geniculata</i>	Tony White
<b>Therevidae (and Tipulidae)</b> A collaborative project between the Invertebrate Conservation Trust, English Nature, the Environment Agency and the Dipterists Forum on exposed riverine sediments.	Mike Williams

## **Request for contributions and records**

Simon Hayhow - Scheme Organiser

Please continue to send me:

- interesting records (see Dipterists Forum Bulletin No. 51)
- records of all common species
- articles for newsletter (e.g. notes on behaviour, input to local BAPs)

### **Recording Scheme organiser:**

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### **Recording cards are available from:**

Biological Records Centre  
Centre for Ecology & Hydrology  
(C.E.H.)  
Monks Wood  
Abbots Ripton  
Huntingdon  
Cambs. PE28 2LS  
Tel: 01487 773590  
e-mail: kart@ceh.ac.uk

Newsletter Production: Mike Hackston (mikeandvalhackston@ntlworld.com)

## Recent records of Scarcer Larger Brachycera in Berkshire

**Jonty S. Denton**, Kingsmead, Wield Road, Medstead, Hampshire, GU34 5NJ,  
**Peter J. Chandler**, 606b Berryfield Lane, Melksham, Wiltshire, SW12 6EZ and  
**Graham A. Collins**, 15 Hurst Way, South Croydon, Surrey, CR2 7AP.

### Stratiomyidae:

***Beris clavipes*** (Linnaeus), an adult male beside the Kennet & Avon Canal, Southcote, SU685709, 1.vi.2003 (GAC)

***Stratiomys singularior*** (Harris) Sheffield Bottom (SU6369). Adults and larvae in winter flooded fields adjacent to Kennet & Avon Canal relief channel. Adults were swept in numbers from common spike-rush *Eleocharis palustris* agg., vi-vii.2003. Scarce inland and rare in Berkshire.

***Odontomyia tigrina*** (Fabricius), ***Stratiomys potamida*** Meigen, and ***Vanoyia tenuicornis*** (Macquart) were also present along the margins of the relief channel.

### Athericidae:

***Atrichops crassipes*** (Meigen) (RDB3). Adults were swept from tree foliage and herbage alongside the Kennet & Avon Canal by JD and PC, on 17.vi and 22.vii.2003 respectively. The only modern records are from the River Rother in East Sussex, the Monnow in Hereford & Worcester, various Devon rivers, and the Kennet & Avon canal (Drake 1991, Stubbs & Drake 2001).

### References

Drake, C.M. 1991. Provisional Atlas of the larger Brachycera (Diptera) of Britain & Ireland. BRC, Huntingdon

Stubbs, A, & Drake, C.M. 2001. British Soldierflies and their allies. BENHS.

## An inland record of *Acrosathe annulata* (Fabricius)

Ian Cross, 16 Briantspuddle, near Dorchester, Dorset, DT2 7HS

On the 22nd June 2005 I came across two or three males of this species on an erosion scar near St Leonards, Dorset (SU 1202) - actually within Vice County 11. The scar was some two by three metres in extent and consisted of very loose sand on a hot south-west facing slope. The males were settling on the open sand in the full sun.

I'm familiar with this distinctive species, which can be seen in numbers on the extensive sand dunes of Studland Heath in Dorset, but was surprised to see it here, some 20 kilometres to the north-east and a good 11 kilometres inland. The presence of more than one in a confined area suggests a small breeding colony rather than a chance stray. Erosion scars of this size, and larger, are hardly an infrequent feature of the Dorset Heaths so I'm surprised not to have encountered *Acrosathe* more widely. It could be that it requires precise conditions not fully understood - perhaps a combination of sand subject to the full force of the sun, that is relatively deep and loose, yet isn't subject to regular disturbance. Conditions found at this site but perhaps not replicated that commonly across the Poole Basin.

## Swarming in *Beris geniculata*

Tony White, 25 Shelsley Drive, Northampton NN3 6ET, e-mail: diaea@yahoo.co.uk

On 21 June 2005 I was working my way along the side of a damp ditch near Bugbrooke, Northants (SP698574). The weather was hot, sunny and windless. As I approached a rather large Hawthorn bush my attention was drawn to a swarm of 40 to 50 flies 'dancing' in its shade. I passed my sweep net through the swarm and secured four individuals. They all proved to be males of *Beris geniculata* Curtis. The swarm was confined to a space of no more than one cubic metre.

The literature seems to contain few reports of swarming in this species. In his discussion of swarming in diptera, John Dobson (Dobson, 1997) considers other species within the genus (*B. chalybata* (Forster) and *B. morrisii* Dale) but no mention is made to *B. geniculata*. Writing in Newsletter 2 of the Larger Brachycera recording scheme Tony Irwin mentions swarming in *Beris* spp including *B. geniculata* but the source of this information is not clear; it appears to have been obtained as a result of recorders trawling their notebooks. Elsewhere however (Colyer & Hammond, 1951) reference is made (page 93) to Verrall's observation of swarming in this species and Tony Irwin's note may have been based on this.

The circumstances leading to swarming have been subject to much speculation. Most swarming in *Beris* spp seems to occur between May and July, with the weather conditions much as they were when I made my observation. There may be other factors however, for example, are swarms always over or near to water?

### References

Colyer, C.N. & Hammond, C.O. 1951. Flies of the British Isles, Frederick Warne and Co. Ltd.

Dobson, J. 1997. Observations of aerial swarming in thirteen species of Diptera, and a discussion of 'occasional' swarmers. *Dipterists Digest (Second Series)* 4: 9-17

## **A collaborative project between the Invertebrate Conservation Trust, English Nature, the Environment Agency and the Dipterists Forum on exposed riverine sediments.**

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Buglife - the Invertebrate Conservation Trust are working in partnership with English Nature, the Environment Agency and Dipterists' Forum to improve understanding of the importance of exposed riverine sediments (ERS) for Diptera.

In particular the study, which runs until summer 2006, will investigate the ecology and distribution of the BAP species *Clorismia rustica* and *Spiriverpa lunulata* (Therevidae) and the Tipulid *Rhabdomastix laeta*.

The project will investigate sites on rivers in England, Wales and Scotland, particularly those with extensive sandy sediments. Any information on known or potential sites for these species would be very welcome.

Surveys over the last ten years have greatly improved knowledge of the importance of ERS for Coleoptera; this project should go some way towards developing a similar understanding for another key group. Records from the Larger Brachycera Recording Scheme form the basis of the Therevidae maps reproduced below.

If you can assist in this survey work please contact myself or Matt Shardlow (Conservation Director), Buglife - The Invertebrate Conservation Trust, 170A Park Road, Peterborough, PE1 1UD (Website: [www.buglife.org.uk](http://www.buglife.org.uk)).

If you have further records to add to these maps from previous years please submit them through the Larger Brachycera Recording Scheme.

