

ORTHOPTERA RECORDING SCHEME

Newsletter No. 10 - Spring 1984

Atlas postponed for a year (and notes on sending records)

It had been intended to end the present recording scheme in 1984 and bring out the definitive Atlas of Orthoptera and related orders in 1985. So many important data have been received during 1982 and 1983 that it seems wise to allow an extra Summer for the survey. All records for the Atlas should therefore reach me by November 1985 at the latest.

Please give at least six, and where possible, eight figure grid references (not just basic four figure reference for a 10 km square) and a full date - day, month and year, not just the year - for each record. If a species has been recorded from a particular site for two or more years, then please submit a separate record for the species for each year. A note on habitat should always be given, as this can provide useful information should it be necessary to consider that particular site for conservation at any future time. Orthoptera seem to be good habitat-indicator species and their recorded presence may well provide decisive evidence for the conservation of a site.

Records needed

Earwigs (Dermaptera): Please continue to send records of the Common Earwig Forficula auricularia and any other species of Earwig from anywhere. Every 100 km square, except 61 (TR), still has many 10 km squares unrecorded, even for the Common Earwig. It is essential that many of these unrecorded areas be surveyed before November 1985.

Orthoptera: Despite excellent progress in the last two years there remain some 'strategic' areas which ought to be surveyed before a final Atlas is produced. Priority should be given to the following three 100 km squares - Ireland, 11 (R), Scotland, 26 (NS) and England, 42 (SP).

In the Irish square, the vicinity of the Shannon merits particular attention, especially for the Lesser Marsh Grasshopper Chorthippus albomarginatus and Slender Ground-Hopper Tetrix subulata. As there is much flat fen-type terrain it is also possible that Roesel's Bush-Cricket Metrioptera roeselii occurs, perhaps even with Short-winged Cone-head Conocephalus dorsalis. Only the north-western edge of the square has yet been examined for Orthoptera to date, so much may be anticipated. The square has so far yielded one site for Lesser Marsh Grasshopper, (39), widely separated sites for Mottled Grasshopper Myrmeleotettix maculatus, (19, 29 and 71), three sites for Common Green Grasshopper Omocestus viridulus, (28, 38 and 47) and three sites for Field Grasshopper Chorthippus brunneus, (29, 38 and 39). Slender Ground-Hopper has been found in 38 and 39 and Common Ground-Hopper Tetrix undulata in 06, 19, 38, 39 and 59. There is also an "ancient" record for Oak Bush-Cricket Meconema thalassinum.

In the Scottish square only the 'basic' five species; Meadow Chorthippus parallelus, Common Green Field and Mottled Grasshoppers, plus Common Ground-Hopper are likely to be found. So little of the square has been recorded for Orthoptera that the huge gaps in the maps of the common species really need to be filled in. If even these species are found to be absent it

would be of great interest ecologically. Thus it is important that this 100 km square receives reasonable coverage in 1984 and 1985. The only 10 km squares so far covered in the post 1960 period are 21, 30, 33, 40, 65, 80, 90 and 94, but further records from these would be welcomed.

In England, square 42 (SP), there is good coverage along the Cotswolds in the west and the Chilterns in the east, plus a good coverage in the north-west of the square around Coventry. However, much of the remainder is unrecorded, or only covered by casual isolated records. It is essential to survey the area between the Chilterns and Cotswolds. The few records so far received indicate that seven or eight species can be expected to occur over much of the square. These species are Dark Bush Cricket Pholidoptera griseoptera, Speckled Bush Cricket Leptophyes punctatissima, Oak Bush Cricket and Short-winged Cone-Head; Slender and Common Ground-Hoppers, and all the widespread Grasshoppers, including Lesser Marsh. This last species has recently been located in the Coventry area where a detailed check of Orthoptera is now being carried out as part of a Warwickshire survey.

Elsewhere in Britain it is most desirable that the following blocks of 10 km squares also be surveyed:

N. Devon and S. Wales In 21 (SS): 30, 31, 40, 41, 50, 51, 80, 78, 79, 88, 89, 98, 99.

Berks and N. Wilts In 41 (SU): 08, 09, 18, 27, 29, 37, 38, 39.

Cheshire In 33 (ST): 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59.

Peebleshire, Selkirkshire, Roxboroughshire In 36 (NT): 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 50, 51, 52, 53, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64.

Banffshire In 38 (NJ): 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66.

Major Scottish Islands: The following larger islands are also unrecorded in the post-1960 period and records from any would be very helpful: Arran, Bute, Coll and Lewis.

Amendments to records

The following amendments, mainly to the maps in the 1979 Provisional Atlas may be of interest.

- MAP 5 Pholidoptera griseoptera Delete records from Guernsey, Sark and Alderney. Add 35/311015 Tilber Thwaite 26.7.1978 J. Bowers, the most northerly situation in England. I am also awaiting full details of its reported discovery in south-east Ireland.
- MAP 10 Conocephalus dorsalis Add 23/5081 Cors Goch N. Reserve 14/7/1983 M. Read via M.J. Morgan, a new site in Anglesey. (The insect was stridulating at midnight!).
- MAP 15 Gryllotalpa gryllotalpa Delete 41/31 but insert 41/41.
- MAP 16 Tetrix ceperoi Specimens for Sheppey area N. Kent coast, confirmed by E.G. Philp. Full details awaited.

MAP 26 Chorthippus albomarginatus Was in fact first recorded near Exeter by W.A. Ely, 20/959878, 3/8/1979. The data was posted to me but must have gone astray; I hope this note puts the record straight. Delete record from the north of Ireland 24/84.

Smooth Stick-insect Clitarchus hookeri This New Zealand Phasmid is now known to be established in the Falmouth area and elsewhere in West Cornwall.

Prickly Stick-insect Acanthoxyla prasina This species was also located in West Cornwall in the 1960s. I am grateful to Mrs Stella Turk for the data and for arranging for a live, bred specimen plus eggs from Falmouth, to be taken to David Ragge for final confirmation. It is still present in a garden at St Mawes.

New Surveys

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking the Organisers for launching recent Orthoptera surveys in Cornwall, Dorset, Southend-on-sea, Wiltshire and Warwickshire. Full details and due acknowledgements of these, together with the other, longer-established county surveys will be given in the final Atlas. The Organisers deserve all the support they can be given. Please let me know if I can put you in touch with a county Organiser for an Orthoptera survey.

Distribution Atlas

Orthopteroids in Warwickshire

By Pam Copson, Keeper of Natural History, Warwick Museum, Market Place, Warwick. This computer-produced booklet packs a great many data onto very few pages. An excellent feature is the way the 10 km² maps are marked with numbers instead of conventional dots, the numbers indicating the decade in which the latest record was made; thus 4, 1940s, 8, 1980s. Especially interesting are the recent records for Lesser Marsh Grasshopper, Slender Ground-Hopper and the wide distribution of the Oak Bush-Cricket. Congratulations to the compiler and all concerned.

Localities

4. The Gower Peninsula

The remarkably rich natural history has been admirably covered by Mary Gillham, 'The Natural History of Gower South Wales', D Brown & Sons 1977. An astonishing variety of habitat is packed into an area covered by five 10 km squares. There are hot south-facing sea cliffs, sand dunes, oak woodland, freshwater and salt marshes and heathland. The area enjoys a very mild climate.

No less than fourteen kinds of Orthoptera are recorded: seven Bush-Crickets, Oak, Great green, Dark, Grey, Bog, Short-winged Cone-head and Speckled; two Ground-Hoppers, Common and Cepero's, and five Grasshoppers, Common Green, Mottled, Lesser Marsh, Field and Meadow. Lesser marsh was only confirmed in 1980 and it is just possible the warm limestone grasslands could support Stripe-winged and Rufous Grasshoppers and the wetlands Slender Ground-Hopper. They would be

worth a search, as would Lesser Cockroach (Ectobius panzeri). Tawny
Cockroach (E. pallidus) is certainly present here in its only known Welsh
locality.

E C M Haes

45 Grove End
Worthing
West Sussex
BN15 9DQ