

# ORTHOPTERA RECORDING SCHEME

## Newsletter No 14 - Summer 1989

Newsletter editor: E C M Haes

### 1 NEWS FROM THE BIOLOGICAL RECORDS CENTRE

#### **National Recording Scheme to continue until 1990**

The 'Harley Book' has already generated many additional records from readers, and we hope that this year and next will see many new recruits to the Scheme. 1989 seems to have broken the run of poor summers, and this should also boost the final drive before a definitive Atlas.

Before then, it is very desirable to fill the remaining major gaps in coverage, and also to clarify the apparent range extensions of such species as Chorthippus albomarginatus (see Newsletter No 13) and Conocephalus discolor. The warm start to this Summer bodes well for success.

Equally important for the Atlas, several counties have not been surveyed since the 1960s. The most promising areas for resurvey are probably Suffolk (vcs 25 & 26), Norfolk (vcs 27 & 28), Kirkcudbright (vc 73), Wigtown (vc 74), Ayr (vc 75) and Kintyre (vc 101). It would also be desirable to have up-to-date records for the relatively Orthoptera-rich Hebridean islands of Rhum and Eigg, and for Arran.

Although the summer of 1988 was cool and wet for much of the country, especially in Scotland, the survey of Orthopteroids has continued to progress well. We are very grateful to everyone who has continued to send in records despite the discouraging weather.

#### Scheme Organiser's new address

Chris Haes is now settled in his new home in Cornwall, and enjoying the marvellous habitats of the Lizard. His new address is:

6 Hatch's Hill  
Angarrack  
HAYLE  
Cornwall  
TR27 5HY

#### The Environmental Information Centre

As some of you will have noticed from a change in note-paper and compliment slips, the Biological Records Centre is now a part of ITE's Environmental Information Centre. This brings together other environmental data-bases and remote sensing technology (satellite imagery, aerial photography etc.). This should enable far more by way of analysis and interpretation of species distributions, and broader-based monitoring of land-use and climatic change.

# ORTHOPTERA RECORDING SCHEME

## CORRECTIONS AND ADDITIONS TO NEWSLETTER NO. 14

October 1989

### Scheme Organizer's new address:

6 Hatch's Hill  
Angarrack  
HAYLE  
Cornwall  
TR27 5HY

(not Hatch's End as given in the newsletter).

### Vice county additions

Metrioptera brachyptera : vc 1 W Cornwall post-1960  
Omocestus viridulus : vc 78 Peebles post-1960  
vc 80 Roxburgh post-1960  
Chorthippus brunneus : vc 97 W Inverness : this record is  
pre-1960  
Forficula auricularia : vc 78 Peebles

### County and district surveys

John Paul's new publication is a book, entitled "Grasshoppers and Crickets of Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire". It has just been published, at £5 + p & p, by Pisces Publications, Brasenose Farm, Eastern By-pass, Oxford.

British Museum (Natural History) : postcode should read **SW7** 5BD.

Final text page should begin:

Myrmeleotettix maculatus (Mottled Grasshopper). Particularly needed: records for any colonies on industrial sites.

### Orthopterists' Meeting 1989

This annual gathering, which brings together professional biologists as well as keen amateur Orthopterists, takes place this year on Wednesday 22 November, in north London. Details are enclosed, : if you wish to attend, please return the booking form and your cheque to David Robinson at the Open University.

Brian Eversham - Co-ordinator of Invertebrate Recording, BRC

ITE Monks Wood Experimental Station  
Abbots Ripton  
Huntingdon  
Cambs

Tel: 04873 381 229

## 2. 'HARLEY BOOK' DISTRIBUTION UPDATES

For those who possess "Grasshoppers and Allied Insects of Great Britain and Ireland", the following additions may be added to the charts and vice-county maps

### Additional Off-shore Islands

Calf of Man (vc71) : Chorthippus brunneus, Myrmeleotettix maculatus  
Irish Murray (vc H28) : Forficula auricularia

### Vice-county additions

The following are all post 1960 records except where stated

Tachycines asynamorus : vc 56 Nottingham  
Meconema thalassinum : vc 57 Derby  
Metrioptera brachyptera : vc 1 W Cornwall; vc 4 Devon; vc 52 Anglesey  
M. roeselii : vc 24 Bucks; vc 47 Montgomery  
Acheta domesticus : vc 55 Leicester; vc 66 Durham; vc67  
S Northumberland  
Nemobius sylvestris : vc 9 Dorset  
Gryllotalpa gryllotalpa : vc 15 E Kent, pre-1960  
Tetrix subulata : vc 28 W Norfolk; vc 32 Northampton  
Stethophyma grossum : vc H18 Offally  
Stenobothrus lineatus : vc 29 Cambridge  
Omocestus viridulus : vc 78 Peebles; vc 80 Roxburgh  
Chorthippus brunneus : vc 89 E Perth; vc 96 E Inverness;  
vc 97, pre-1960, W Inverness (referred to in  
text, but omitted from vc map and chart);  
vc 108 W Sutherland;  
vc H40 Londonderry  
Gomphocerippus rufus : vc 5 S Somerset; vc 7 N Wiltshire  
Blatta orientalis : vc 44 Carmarthen  
Supella longipalpa : vc 39 Stafford  
Ectobius panzeri : vc 25 E Suffolk  
Euborellia annulipes : vc 13 W Sussex, pre-1960  
Labia minor : vc 14 E Sussex, vc 63 S W Yorks  
Forficula auricularia : vc 78 Peebles; vc H1 S Kerry (omitted from map)

### Vice-county Deletion

Ectobius lapponicus : vc 5 S Somerset

I am very grateful to Robert Cropper for questioning this record. On checking, it was found that a post-1960 Surrey record had (probably) through

misreading of long-hand data), been entered into the records from Somerset.

I would also like to take this opportunity to say thank you on behalf of myself, my co-author Judith Marshall, and the publisher, Harley Books for the many complimentary and helpful comments received.

### 3. DRAFT MAPS

Attached are updated maps for Chorthippus brunneus and C. parallelus. These clearly show the gaps in coverage, and the areas where only old (pre 1960) records are available.

It was originally intended to bring forward the date class for the open circles (○) to pre-1965 (publication of 'Ragge'). On reflection, it seemed better to retain the pre/post-1960 separation, for ease of comparison with earlier provisional maps. A new symbol (a small on the draft maps) could be used for an intermediate date class (1961-1974 on drafts) and a solid circle (●) for the most recent class (1975 onwards on the drafts, perhaps post-1980 in the Atlas). Comments from recorders would be welcome.

### 4. COUNTY AND DISTRICT SURVEYS

It is expected that complete surveys will be published for Essex (A J Wake) and Surrey (David Baldock and Roger Hawkins) before the appearance of the national Atlas. The former is on a 1km square and the latter a tetrad (2 x 2 km) basis. Later this Summer, an event on Orthoptera is being organised in Dorset by Richard Surry. And a new book, "Grasshoppers and Crickets of Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire" has just been published (at £5.00 + p.p.) by Pisces Publications, Brasenose Farm, Eastern By-pass, Oxford.

Detailed surveys of Orthopteroids are also being undertaken in: Cornwall (vcs 1 & 2); Dorset (vc 9); New Forest (vc 11, part); Kent (vcs 15 & 16); Surrey (vc 17: see above); Essex (vcs 18 & 19 : see above); Oxon & Bucks (vcs 22,23 & 24); Beds (vc 30); Glos (vcs 33 & 34); Glamorgan (vc 41); Dyfed (Carmarthen, Pembroke & Cardigan, vcs 44, 45 & 46); Warwick (vc 38); Gwynedd (Merioneth, Caernarvon & Anglesey, vcs 48, 49 & 52); Lancashire (vcs 59 & 69); Sheffield, Rotherham & Doncaster districts (vc 63, parts); Durham (vc 66); Cumbria (vcs 69 & 70); Ise of Man (vc 71); Perth (vcs 87, 88 & 89); Islay & Jura (vc 102, part); Highland Region (Ross, Sutherland and Caithness, vcs 105-109). I will be very pleased to put anyone in touch with recorders for these surveys, as well as with Othopteroid recorders in Ireland and the Channel Isles.

### 5. NEWS OF INDIVIDUAL SPECIES IN 1988-89.

Meconema thalassinum (Oak Bush-cricket). In a review of the 'Harley Book' for the Derbyshire Ent. Soc. journal, Roy Frost mentioned that this species was known from five sites in Derbyshire, thus filling an important gap in its recorded range.

Decticus verrucivorus (Wart-biter). Andy Cherrill's survey of this fascinating bush-cricket continues, and papers dealing with the NCC survey should be published in the coming year.

Metrioptera brachyptera (Bog Bush-cricket). David Boyce (via Adrian Fowles) has provided the first record for Anglesey, where the species is known to a number of entomologists working for NCC projects. Keith Alexander, of the National Trust Biological Survey, found the species in North Devon in 1988.

Gryllotalpa gryllotalpa (Mole-cricket). The find of an almost certainly wild mole-cricket in Dorset in September 1988 was reported (with photographs) in the local press. It seems likely that this protected and extremely rare animal still survives at a low density in this species-rich county.

Schistocerca gregaria (Desert Locust). The other (Orthoptera) highlight of 1988 was the very considerable invasion of desert locusts in Cornwall and Devon, with others in Somerset and South Hampshire, in late October and through November 1988. Over a hundred were recorded. All those found, although fully winged, were pink in colour and therefore not ready for breeding. However, one school in Devon bred progeny from collected specimens retained in culture. This would seem to be far the largest invasion of desert locusts to reach the British Isles, and like the swarm which reached the West Indies some weeks earlier, probably originated in Morocco. Any further information any reader can give would be welcome. Mrs J A Marshall (British Museum (Natural History), Cromwell Road, London SW7 5BD) is preparing a paper on the invasion.

Stethophyma grossum (Large Marsh Grasshopper). Dr John Paul found nymphs of S. grossum in a bog in Co. Offaly in June this year. Dr Martin Speight, of the Irish Forestry and Wildlife Service, has heard of a further three sites east of the Shannon. This is a very important extension of its known range. More details in the next Newsletter.

Locusta migratoria (Migratory Locust). On a house at Herne Bay in Kent, 10 November 1988. A specimen of L.m. form migratoria, believed to be the first example for vc 15.

Stenobothrus lineatus (Stripe winged Grasshopper). A very welcome new county record was the discovery of a chalk-grassland colony near Cherry Hinton, Cambridgeshire by J Farthing. His dates, 19 and 21 October 1988 are amongst the latest I have for this grasshopper.

Chorthippus brunneus (Field Grasshopper). Three important new vice-county records have been made recently in Highland Scotland. Bill Ely recorded the species at Nairn in 1982, while last Summer it was first found in East Perthshire by Steve Hewitt. In 1984 Neil Redgate located a sand-dune colony on the north coast of West Sutherland and found a second colony at a remote site in the far North West of the vice-county in 1985. See also under C.albomarginatus. Chorthippus parallelus (Meadow Grasshopper). It is hard to accept that the meadow grasshopper is absent from the Norfolk Broads and adjacent coast of East Norfolk. Please will anyone reading this, who proposes to take a holiday in the area, keep a look out for this unmistakable grasshopper. Negative as well as positive records welcome.

Chorthippus albomarginatus (Lesser Marsh Grasshopper). Brian Eversham has been awarded a grant by the Royal Irish Academy to evaluate the distribution of this grasshopper in Ireland later this Summer, in the process of which he will be covering the Shannon Estuary and the South-West. Dr Stuart Green, whose work on Chorthippus brunneus song has been presented at past Orthopterists' Meetings, will join him, and will study colour-morph frequencies in grasshoppers. Hopefully, they will be able to cover the most critical of all the gaps in our knowledge of Orthoptera distribution in these islands in the course of their survey.

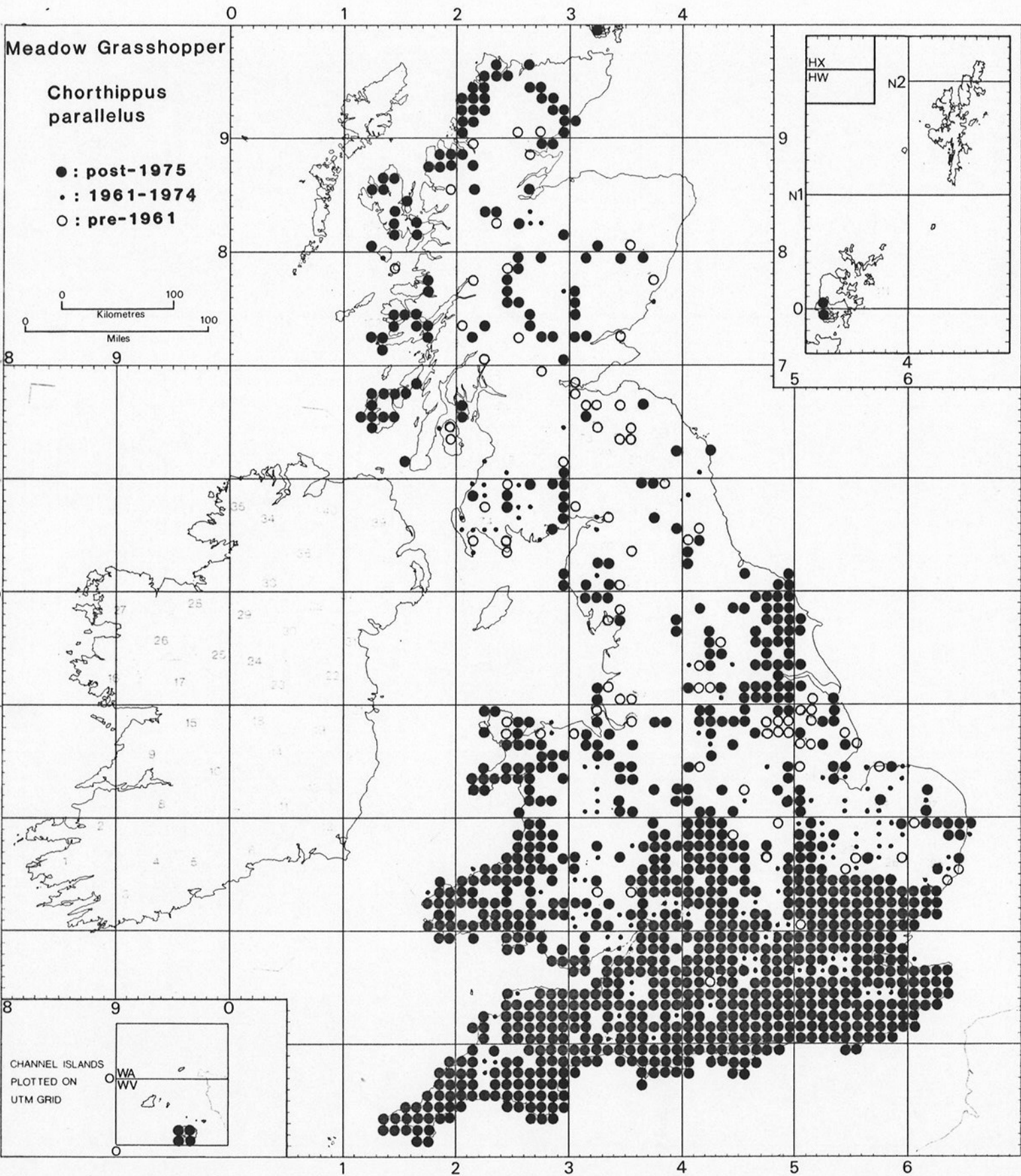
Myrmeleotettix maculatus (Mottled Grasshopper). Particularly needed: records for any colonies on industrial sites. The insect seems to be well established on such sites as derelict collieries in South Yorkshire.

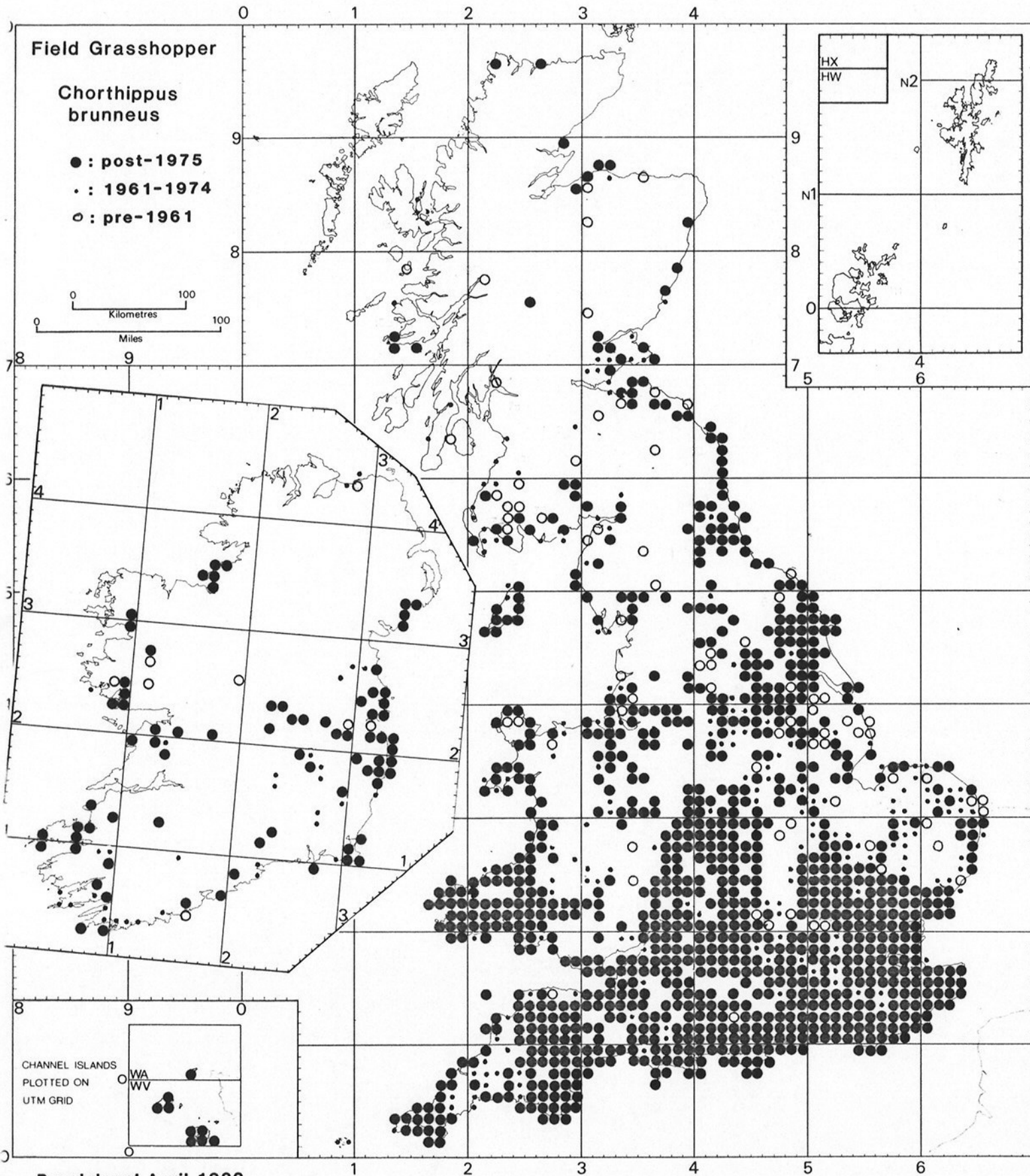
Supella longipalpa (Brown-banded Cockroach). Dr John Paul has found this species in a hospital in Walsall, Staffs. Full details will be published in Ent. mon. Mag.

Ectobius panzeri (Lesser Cockroach). An important vice-county update of a pre-1960 record was the discovery by Adrian Fowles of this unobtrusive cockroach on the Suffolk coast at Thorpness last September.

Scheme organiser and Newsletter editor: E C M Haes  
6 Hatch's Hill  
Angarrack  
HAYLE  
Cornwall  
TR27 5HY

Requests for blank cards to: Biological Records Centre  
Monks Wood Experimental Station  
Abbots Ripton  
Huntingdon  
Cambs PE17 2LS





Provisional April 1989