
ORTHOPTERA RECORDING SCHEME FOR BRITAIN AND IRELAND



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HIGHLIGHTS

Whilst the year was, yet again, a warm one, it also proved to be one of the wettest and this, plus a distinct lack of sunshine, had a detrimental effect on populations and the amount of field work that could be done. This resulted in only about half as many records being submitted as compared with 1999. Despite this there were still a significant number of new 10k² records, 172 (including 20 post-1970 re-finds) of which were found in 2000 and a further 83 (including 22 post 1970 re-finds) reported retrospective finds. Some of these were of particular importance. There were new County records for **Grey Bush-cricket**, *Platyceis albopunctata*, in Suffolk (not only a new County record but some 80 kms north of any other post-1970 record on the east side of the UK), **Roesel's Bush-cricket**, *Metrioptera roeselii*, in Wiltshire, **Long-winged Conehead**, *Conocephalus discolor*, in Norfolk, (approx 90 kms north of any previous record), **Lesser Marsh Grasshopper**, *Chorthippus albomarginatus*, in Nottinghamshire and **Lesser Earwig**, *Labia minor*, in Montgomeryshire. There were also first Scottish Island records of **Common Green Grasshopper**, *Omocestus viridulus*, on Harris and **Mottled Grasshopper**, *Myrmeleotettix maculatus*, on Berneray. However, the most exciting news was confirmation of a new national record for Wales of **Scaly Cricket**, *Pseudomogoplistes vicentae*, at Marloes in Pembrokeshire, which now constitutes the most northerly sighting of this species in Europe. The re-find of the year was, undoubtedly, the rediscovery of **Slender Groundhopper**, *Tetrix subulata*, near Thorne Moors, Yorkshire, where it had not been seen for over 160 years!

I suppose that, all things considered, not bad results for such an unfavourable year, although it must be said that sightings in 2000 may actually reflect previous years successes and that this year could be less productive.

RARE SPECIES

Scaly Cricket, *Pseudmogoplistes vicentae*.

In the last Newsletter I mentioned that there were rumours of this species being found in Wales. Confirmation was duly received of its presence at Marloes, Pembrokeshire, a first for Wales, only the third mainland record for the UK and the most northerly in Europe. Credit for this significant discovery must go to sharp-eyed Beth Knight whose parents, Pam and Richard, both life-long naturalists, soon became aware of the probable importance. Further colonies have been found by David Charles on Guernsey in the Channel Islands and French Orthopterists have also discovered new colonies on the Brittany coast. As I have said previously, specific searches of pebble beaches, particularly around the high tide line and especially in the southern half of the UK, may well produce even more surprise discoveries of this elusive species.

Mole Cricket, *Gryllotalpa gryllotalpa*

Although I would be delighted if it were found to be otherwise, there is still considerable doubt that this species is any longer breeding anywhere in the UK. All the records of recent years have only been of single insects which could have originated from accidental importations, mainly via fruit and vegetables or garden plants. One supposed specimen of this species, found in a shop at Huntington on the outskirts of York, eventually proved to be the African version, *Gryllotalpa africana*. The only other report which was brought to my attention during the year was of a late instar found in a garden at South Woodham Ferrers, Essex in late July but there have been no further signs in that area since. However, the search continues!

SPECIES IN PROCESS OF RANGE EXPANSION

There were far less new records for **Roesel's Bush-cricket**, *Metrioptera roeselii*, during 2000 than in recent years with only eight new 10k² records being reported as opposed to twenty-eight in 1999. Just one of these involved a new County record, for Wiltshire, where P. Combridge found it in Salisbury (41/12), this representing a further spread westwards. On the northern edge of the range, Brian Redman got two further new square records in Lincolnshire at Brampton Wood (52/17) and Sempringham (53/13), which may have been previously overlooked colonies but could possibly represent a consolidation here prior to a further imminent push northwards.

It was a similar story with **Long-winged Conehead**, *Conocephalus discolor*, with only seven new 10k² records last year, against twenty-five in 1999. However, included was an exciting record from David Richmond of a good colony at Beeston Regis, near Sheringham in Norfolk (63/14). Not only was this a first County record, surprisingly in the very north of the County, but a new record for 100k² TG63 and an impressive 90 kms north of any previous known occurrence. This is by far the furthest recorded movement for the species in any one year, although it is probably present, undetected, between these points.

Against the general trend, one species, **Short-winged Conehead**, *Conocephalus dorsalis*, had an outstanding year with eighteen new 10k² records being reported, fifteen of which were found during last season, the highest number in any one year. Most notably, five of these came from Norfolk where David Richmond got new square records at Sparham (63/01), Lerwade (63/11), Postwick (63/20), Murdford (52/89) and Wood Dalling (63/02). N. Sherman also got it at Hemley in Suffolk (62/24). Greg Jones reported two in Wales, one found by himself at Aberthaw Leys (31/06) and the other by Rob Nottage at Llantrisant Common (31/08). Bryan Pinchen got a further dry grassland record on Salisbury Plain at

Tilsbury Down, Wiltshire (41/04) and in Dorset Michael Skelton discovered a vast colony at Ryewater, near Sherborne (31/61) and again at Lydlinch Common (31/71). Chris Haes found it in Cornwall on The Gannel, near Newquay (10/86) and, on a visit to Kent, at Samphire Hoe, (61/23). In Lincolnshire, Brian Redman discovered a colony at Wrangle (53/45) and, in Huntingdonshire, Brian Milne got it at Godmanchester (52/27). In addition, there were also three retrospective 1997 records, all from Wales, from Rob Nottage at Bonvilston (31/07), S. Warrington at Treoes Pond (21/97) and Kevin Dupé at Crymlyn Bog (21/69).

Further evidence of the slower range extension of **Lesser Marsh Grasshopper**, *Chorthippus albomarginatus*, came from Sandy Aitken, who found it at Holme Pierpoint G.P. (43/63), a first for Nottinghamshire and at the northern edge of its range.

I have said in previous newsletters that **Great Green Bush-cricket**, *Tettigonia viridissima*, is another contender for expansion and two new records give some support to this. Geoffrey Geiger found three adults in long grass adjacent to the Grand Union Canal at Horsenden Hill, near Wembley, Middlesex (51/18), a most unexpected find at one of the few London 'green' sites. The proximity of a waterway here may be significant because evidence from recent studies in Germany suggests that several species in the process of range expansion tend to move along river valleys or coastlines. A further record came via my daughter Karen, who (being well trained by her father!) found, on an August evening business visit to an isolated farm near Westbury-on-Severn, Gloucestershire, large numbers stridulating. This record was about 20 kms from any other known site and now constitutes the most northerly occurrence in the western half of the UK. Also worthy of mention is the Devon survey of this species which identified fifty-four sites during 2000, including three new 10k² (see County round-up).

I have also mentioned previously that **Grey Bush-cricket**, *Platycleis albopunctata*, is another species with potential for range expansion. This was supported by a 1996 record, which has just come to light, from Rob and Linda Nottage who found and photographed the species at Orford Ness, Suffolk (62/44). This was the first record of the species for the County and was c.80 kms north of any other post 1970 record on the east side of the UK. It is unfortunate that this record, which was reported at the time, had been "lost" by those concerned and it was only through some diligent research by Stuart Ling, the Suffolk recorder, that it was brought to light. Stuart has now confirmed that the species was still present at the site last year. A further new 10k² record of this species came from Greg Jones who got it at Pendine Burrows, Carmarthenshire (22/20). Interestingly, this was also a new 100k² record, although it is most likely it had been previously overlooked here, being well within the area in which it would be expected to occur.

COUNTY/REGIONAL ROUND-UP

ENGLAND

Cornwall (VCs 1/2)

The most significant record came from Chris Haes who got the first mainland record for West Cornwall (VC1) of **Short-winged Conehead**, *Conocephalus dorsalis*, on the Gannel, near Newquay (10/86). Chris also found another new 10k² record for **Long-winged Conehead**, *Conocephalus discolor*, at Polmarth Park, St. Austell (20/05). Despite the fact that **Speckled Bush-cricket**, *Leptophyes punctatissima*, is a common insect in southern England, this has never been so on the Isles of Scilly and it was first discovered on St. Mary's in 1991 when a singleton was found. It had not been seen since but, after a gap of nine years, in August last year, Steve Robbins came across five adults on the same Island confirming it as a breeding species there. The evidence suggests that the species presence is as a result of an accidental introduction, possibly on garden plants, within the last decade or so.

Devon (VCs3/4)

A special survey of **Great Green Bush-cricket**, *Tettigonia viridissima*, resulted in 54 site records, three of which were in new 10k², i.e. Marwood N.R. (21/53), East Down Fields (21/64) and Gridford (20/88). Other new square records came from Greg Jones, who found **Dusky Cockroach**, *Ectobius lapponicus*, at Woodbury Common (30/68) and Stuart Read who got a post 1970 re-find of **Cepero's Groundhopper**, *Textrix ceperoi*, at Axmouth (30/28).

Somerset (VCs 5/6)

Only one new 10k² record last year, from Robert Cropper, who found **Lesser Earwig**, *Labia minor*, at Exford (21/83).

Wiltshire (VCs 7/8)

Once again, like many other southern Counties, new records were sparse in 2000. The highlight was, no doubt, the first County record for **Roesel's Bush-cricket**, *Metrioptera roeselii*, found by Pete Combridge at Salisbury (41/12). Bryan Pinchen found **Short-winged Conehead**, *Conocephalus dorsalis*, in dry grassland habitat at Tilshead Down (41/04). New sites for **Wood Cricket**, *Nemobius sylvestris*, rarely materialise, but Piers Mobsby found a previously unknown colony at Landford Bog (41/21).

Dorset (VC9)

Michael Skelton had unexpected finds of **Short-winged Conehead**, *Conocephalus dorsalis*, at Ryewater, near Sherborne (31/61) where he found it in vast numbers, far outnumbering **Long-winged Conehead**, *Conocephalus discolor*, which was also present. He also discovered the same species (i.e. Short-winged Conehead) at Lydlinch Common (31/71). Both were new 10k² records.

Isle of Wight (VC10)

The only significant report received was a 1999 record of **Lesne's Earwig**, *Forficula lesnei*, at Ventnor (40/57), which was the third for this species on the Island.

Hampshire (VCs 11/12)

Only one new 10k² record for 2000, which was from Kim Taylor for **Long-winged Conehead**, *Conocephalus discolor*, near Warnborough (41/75). It is very unusual to get new records for **Bog Bush-cricket**, *Metrioptera brachyptera*, but a retrospective record for this species at Newton Common (41/46) has just surfaced from John Paul who found it in 1994. Michael Skelton also reports the continued survival of the inland colony of **Grey Bush-cricket**, *Platycleis albopunctata*, at Ringwood (41/10).

Sussex (VCs 13/14)

A series of records from John Paul covering a period of several years included new 10k² records for **Great Green Bush-cricket**, *Tettigonia viridissima*, and **Woodland Grasshopper**, *Omocestus rufipes*, at Upper Beeding (51/11). Additionally, there were two new square records for **Lesne's Earwig**, *Forficula lesnei*, at Beeding Hill (51/21) and Pulborough (51/01).

Kent (VCs 15/16)

Eric Philp got a new 10k² record for **Roesel's Bush-cricket**, *Metrioptera roeselii*, at Dover (61/34). Last year also saw four new square records for **Long-winged Conehead**, *Conocephalus discolor*; one from Ashley Best, near Wanshurst Green (51/74), another from M. Jennings at Shorne Marshes (51/67) and the remainder from Chris Haes at Samphire Hoe (61/23) and Foxhill Down (61/34). Chris also got new records for **Short-winged Conehead**, *Conocephalus dorsalis*, at Samphire Hoe (61/23) and **Common Grasshopper**, *Tetrix undulata*, at Foxhill Down. R. Moyse found **Cepero's Groundhopper**, *Tetrix ceperoi*, at Pegwell Bay (61/36) which was also new. Two very interesting discoveries were made at Denge Wood (61/15), by B. Woodhams, of **Stripe-winged Grasshopper**, *Stenobothrus lineatus*, and **Woodland Grasshopper**, *Omocestus rufipes*.

Surrey (VC17)

No significant new records reported.

Essex (Vcs18/19)

Two new 10k² sightings of **Roesel's Bush-cricket**, *Metrioptera roeselii*, near Braintree (52/72) and Great Saling (52/62), plus one for **Lesser Marsh Grasshopper**, *Chorthippus albomarginatus*, also at the latter site, were the only significant records during 2000.

Middlesex (VC21)

Geoff Geiger provided two new 10k² records, the most notable being **Great Green Bush-cricket**, *Tettigonia viridissima*, at Horsenden Hill, near Wembley (51/18) - see my previous comments. He also got a new square record for **Long-winged Conehead**, *Conocephalus discolor*, at Osterley Park (51/07). For the second time in the last decade, I have had a **Dusky Cockroach**, *Ectobius lapponicus*, turn up on my patio window at Potters Bar (52/20) (on 19 June 2000). The nearest known colony is about 8 kms to the south but this second occurrence suggests that there must be another very close to my residence. Suitable habitat is limited but the nearby cemetery and/or railway embankment and its environs must be possibilities.

Berkshire (VC22)

Interesting retrospective records were received from John Paul including a new post 1970 10k² record for **Bog Bush-cricket**, *Metrioptera brachyptera*, at Padworth Common (41/66) in 1994 and **Stripe-winged Grasshopper**, *Stenobothrus lineatus*, at Lough Down (41/50), an entirely new 10k² sighting made way back in 1988.

Suffolk (VCs25/26)

This was one of the few Counties for which there was a comparatively long series of important new records, mainly thanks to Stuart Ling. Firstly, as mentioned previously, Stuart confirmed the presence of **Grey Bush-cricket**, *Platycleis albopunctata*, at Orford Ness (62/44). There were two new 10k² records **Roesel's Bush-cricket**, *Metrioptera roeselii*, at Newton Green (52/94) and Barham Pits (62/15) plus three for **Stripe-winged Grasshopper**, *Stenobothrus lineatus*, at Rushmere Heath (62/14 and 62/24) and Tunstall Forest (62/35), the latter being found by N. Sherman who also got a new 10k² record for **Short-winged Conehead**, *Conocephalus dorsalis*, at Hemley (62/24). Stuart Read also got a new post 1970 record of **Roesel's Bush-cricket**, *Metrioptera roeselii*, at Little Cornard (52/83).

Norfolk (Vcs27/28)

Another County for which there were a decent number of good records. David Richmond, using his bat detector, got a remarkable number of new 10k² records for **Short-winged Conehead**, *Conocephalus dorsalis*, at Sparham (63/01), Lerwade (63/11), Postwick (63/20), Murdford (52/89) and Wood Dalling (63/02). Equally important was the previously mentioned record of **Long-winged Conehead**, *Conocephalus discolor*, at Beeston Regis, a new 100k² record and a first for Norfolk amazingly c 90 kms NNW of any previous sighting. The bat detector also enabled David to get four more new square records for **Speckled Bush-cricket**, *Leptophyes punctatissima*, at Haddiscoe (62/49), Belton (63/50), North Creake (53/83) and Fritton (63/40), the latter site also producing a new record for **Mottled Grasshopper**, *Myrmeleotettix maculatus*.

Cambridgeshire (VC29) and Northamptonshire (VC32)

These two Counties have been linked because of the comparatively close vicinity of the only two records of note received, both by Peter Kirby, of **Cepero's Groundhopper**, *Tetrix ceperoi*, at Northey Park (VC29)(52/29) and Dogsthorpe Star Brickpit (VC32)(53/20) found in 1996 and 1997 respectively. See further comments under item on page 9.

Gloucestershire (VCs 33/34)

I have already mentioned the discovery of a new colony of **Great Green Bush-cricket**, *Tettigonia viridissima*, near Westbury-on-Severn (32/71). There was also a new 10k² record for **Lesser Marsh Grasshopper**, *Chorthippus albomarginatus*, near Lassington (32/70).

Warwickshire (VC37)

On a short foray into the County in June, I got a new 10k² record for **Lesne's Earwig**, *Forficula lesnei*, at Evesham County Park (42/04), which was the second for Warwicks. At the same locality, I found **Slender Groundhopper**, *Tetrix subulata*, also a new square record. Gary Farmer also advised me of two further new 10k² sightings of this species at Upper Bittel Reservoir (42/07) and Knapp & Papermill N.R. (32/75), which came via G. Green and John Meiklejohn respectively. G. Green also found **Lesser Marsh Grasshopper**, *Chorthippus albomarginatus*, at Lower Bittel Reservoir (42/07), yet another new square record.

Staffordshire (VC39)

David Williams produced the only new 10k² record which was of **Field Grasshopper**, *Chorthippus brunneus*, at Loynton Moss N.R., near Woodseaves (33/72). Andy Jukes, who has been monitoring the **Bog Bush-cricket**, *Metrioptera brachyptera*, at Highgate Common (32/89), reports that it had a very good year in 2000 and for the first time in recent years it has spread over a larger area. He also found **Speckled Bush-cricket**, *Leptophyes punctatissima*, at the same time, which now constitutes the most northerly inland record on the western side of England.

Shropshire (VC40)

David Williams continues to get some valuable new records for this, hitherto, under-recorded County. His new 10k² records included **Dark Bush-cricket**, *Pholidoptera griseoaptera*, near Cressage (33/50) and near Alveley (32/78); **Speckled Bush-cricket**, *Leptophyes punctatissima*, also near Alveley; **Common Grasshopper**, *Tetrix undulata*, at Haughmond Hill, near Shrewsbury (33/51); **Common Green**

Grasshopper, *Omocestus viridulus*, near Wem (33/42) and **Field Grasshopper**, *Chorthippus brunneus*, at Severn Park, Bridgenorth (32/79).

Lincolnshire (VCs 53/54)

Brian Redman got a creditable number of new 10k² records including **Meadow Grasshopper**, *Chorthippus parallelus*, at North Thoresby (53/29) and Sempringham (53/13); **Dark Bush-cricket**, *Pholidoptera griseoptera*, at Dogdyke (53/25); **Speckled Bush-cricket**, *Leptophyes punctatissima*, at Kirkstead (53/16) and Hawthornhill (53/25) and **Slender Groundhopper**, *Tetrix subulata*, at Cochlude Wood (53/17) plus a remarkable eight entirely new square records for **Common Earwig**, *Forficula auricularia*. Alan Lazenby reported a retrospective 1998 find of **Lesser Earwig**, *Labia minor*, at Blankney Fen (53/16). However, the most significant records were for those detailed earlier, i.e. **Short-winged Conehead**, *Conocephalus dorsalis*, at Wrangle (53/45) and **Roesel's Bush-cricket**, *Metrioptera roeselii*, at Sempringham (53/13).

Nottinghamshire (VC56)

The most significant record was a notable County first of **Lesser Marsh Grasshopper**, *Chorthippus albomarginatus*, at Holme Pierrpont G.P. (43/63) from Sandy Aitken. Roy Frost also got a new 10k² record for **Slender Groundhopper**, *Tetrix subulata*, at Rampton (43/87).

Derbyshire (VC57)

One new 10k² record reported by Roy Frost who found **Common Green Grasshopper**, *Omocestus viridulus*, at Spinkhill (43/47).

South-West Yorkshire (VC63)

Martin Limbert found a specimen of **Slender Groundhopper**, *Tetrix subulata*, at the extremity of its range on the edge of Thorne Moors (44/71), the first record of the species in the area since 1837!

West Lancaster (VC60)

Jennifer Newton was relieved to find that **Bog Bush-cricket**, *Metrioptera brachyptera*, had survived in reasonable numbers following a devastating fire on Winmarleigh Moss (34/44) early last year.

Westmorland (VC69)

It was, apparently, an excellent year for **Bog Bush-cricket**, *Metrioptera brachyptera*, at Meathop Moss (34/48) where Jennifer Newton found large numbers on the open moss. It is important to acknowledge the valuable conservation work at this site being carried out by the Cumbria Wildlife Trust to preserve a suitable habitat for this species.

Channel Islands (VC113)

Charles David got two new sites for **Scaly Cricket**, *Pseudomogoplistes vicentae*, on Guernsey. Greg Jones had a productive visit to Jersey in July getting new 10k² records for **Great Green Bush-cricket**, *Tettigonia viridissima*, at Les Quennevais and **Meadow Grasshopper**, *Chorthippus parallelus*, and **House Cricket**, *Acheta domesticus*, at Gouray.

WALES

I have already mentioned the discovery of **Scaly Cricket**, *Pseudmogoplistes vicentae*, at Marloes, Pembrokeshire - a new species for Wales. Much research by Greg Jones, County Recorder for Glamorgan (VC41) produced a host of retrospective records for that County dating from 1979 plus historical data going back to 1909 (following examination of literature and the collection at the National Museum of Wales, Cardiff). This involved an additional 21 new 10k² records plus 4 post 1970s and 11 pre 1970s, the most notable being **Cepero's Groundhopper**, *Tetrix ceperoi*, at Baglan (21/79) in 1979 and **Lesne's Earwig**, *Forficula lesnei*, at Leckwith Woods (31/17) in 1995. Additionally, Greg himself, with the help of others, particularly Rob Nottage and Mark Pavitt, produce a further 21 new square records (including 2 post 1970s) dating from 1997 to 2000, these including an impressive five for **Short-winged Conehead**, *Conocephalus dorsalis*, at Aberthaw Leys (31/06), Bonvilston (31/07), Troes Pond (21/97), Llantrisant Common (31/08) and Crymlyn Bog (21/69), one for **Cepero's Groundhopper**, *Tetrix ceperoi*, at Merthyr-Mawr Warren (21/87) and three for **Lesne's Earwig**, *Forficula lesnei*, at Lavernock Point (31/16), Kenfig Burrows NNR (21/78) and Aberthaw Leys (31/06). Outside of Glamorgan, Greg had a significant find of **Grey Bush-cricket**, *Platycleis albopunctata*, at Pendine Burrows, which was not only a new 10k² but new for 100k² SN! - although it must be said that, being well within its normal range, it had probably been overlooked previously. Thanks to Greg, Glamorgan is now, by far, the best studied County in Wales for Orthoptera. It is to be hoped his enthusiasm will spread to other Welsh Counties, from which records are few. Encouragingly, Steve Williams who, in Monmouthshire (VC35), found new 10k² records for **Speckled Bush-cricket**, *Leptophyes punctatissima*, at Llantarnam (31/29) and **Slender Groundhopper**, *Tetrix subulata*, at Cwmbran (31/29), has volunteered to be the recorder for that County and I am still getting records from John Steer for Pembrokeshire (VC45) and Ian Smith & Co for Montgomeryshire (VC47). Volunteer recorders, prepared to do some surveying themselves and/or organise it for others, for those Counties not at present covered, would be most welcome.

SCOTLAND

A series of retrospective records for north-east Scotland from Tom Finnemore covering a period between 1991 and 1995 saw several new 10k² records for the more common species. On a visit to the Outer Hebrides in August, David Richmond got the first ever record of **Common Green Grasshopper**, *Omocestus viridulus*, on Harris, and the first **Mottled Grasshopper**, *Myrmeleotettix maculatus*, for Berneray. Jennifer Newton reports the continued presence of **Bog Bush-cricket**, *Metrioptera brachyptera*, at Aucheninnes (Cloak) Moss, Kirkcudbrightshire (VC73) now the species most northerly known site in Great Britain. Disappointingly, David's and Jennifer's contributions contained the only records for Scotland relating to sightings in 2000. As with Wales, any volunteer recorders would be very welcome.

IRELAND

No records received.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

Early/Late Dates

Very few earliest or latest dates were submitted for 2000. **Cepero's Groundhopper**, *Tetrix ceperoi*, was the first to appear, found by John Paul at Luccombe Chine, Isle of Wight, on 26 February. Appalling April weather precluded any early appearance dates of the Tettigoniidae and the first I found were first instar nymphs of **Dark Bush-cricket**, *Pholidoptera griseoptera*, and **Roesel's Bush-cricket**, *Metrioptera*

roeselii, on 23 April. The few 'late date' records received were from Geoffrey Geiger, who got **Roesel's Bush-cricket**, *Metrioptera roeselii*, and **Long-winged Conehead**, *Conocephalus discolor*, both in Middlesex (VC21), on 15 October. David Richmond who had Norfolk sightings of **Speckled Bush-cricket**, *Leptophyes punctatissima*, on 24 November and **Field Grasshopper**, *Chorthippus brunneus*, on 27 November. The latter species was also found by Greg Jones in Glamorgan on 20 November and John Paul in Sussex on 2 December.

Earwig remains in bird pellet

In response to the note from Bryan Pinchen in the last Newsletter (NL26), the following communication was received from Peter Kirby:-

"In 1995 I used pitfall traps to survey parts of Chesil Beach. During the period 27 August to 25 September traps set in relatively fine and partly vegetated shingle on the landward side of the beach caught a lot of earwigs. So many, indeed, that had they been anything other than *Forficula auricularia* (no disrespect intended to this fine and very successful insect) I might well have felt a pang of guilt. At the most productive trapping station, four traps, each seven centimetres in diameter, caught, over this period of a month, 3,852 earwigs. I suspect they might have caught more, but, with the assistance of 3,372 sandhoppers *Orchestia gammarella* and a few loose pebbles, they filled the traps to within half an inch of their brims, and to above the level of the trapping fluid. Any earwigs arriving after this point was reached would presumably have walked over the top of the corpses without ill effect. Indeed, short of suicide it's not easy to see how the last few hundred to be captured managed to die at all. Much of the beach had nothing like this density of earwigs - ten traps amongst large unvegetated pebbles on the seaward face of the beach caught, during the same period, a total of thirteen. However, it does seem that any predator willing to eat earwigs, and active at the same time as them, could, by picking the right bit of beach, probably make quite a good living just by sitting still and waiting for prey to wander within reach. Though Bryan Pinchen rejected his first suspicion of Little Owl as the earwig-eater on his Hampshire beach in favour of debris-flipping Turnstones, the evidence of large-scale surface activity by earwigs on Chesil Beach leads one to suspect that a nocturnal predator such as Little Owl, with a known tendency to take large quantities of crispy and unpleasant-looking food, might in practice be more likely to reap the benefits of earwig abundance."

Difficulty of finding Cepero's Groundhopper, *Tetrix ceperoi*, at inland sites

The following extract from a letter from Peter Kirby will be of interest to those who have the opportunity to search disused clay or gravel pits for *Tetrix* species:-

"I've got two more records of *Tetrix ceperoi* from the Peterborough area: Northey Park, Cambs., TL235987, 11 September 1996; Dogsthorpe Star Brickpit, Northants., TF211025, 21 September 1997. In both sites, the *Tetrix* were in similar habitat to that at Kings Dyke Pit, where they turned up before, on partly vegetated wet clay with localised shallow flooding/small pools. Dogsthorpe Star Pit is a disused clay pit; the area at Northey Park was at the margin of a disused gravel working, but was nonetheless on clayish ground. I have one or two more sites in mind where *ceperoi* ought also logically to be present, but though I've made brief sorties to a couple of them, I've yet to find the animal. I suspect, though, that it's rather easy to miss: in both the above sites, undulata and subulata were both present, and subulata lived not only in the same areas as *ceperoi*, but also in larger numbers. I caught only a single individual of *ceperoi* at each site. At Dogsthorpe I would estimate that I examined fifty or more long *Tetrix* before finding one that looked like (and was later confirmed to be) *ceperoi*."

Editor's comment:

Peter's observations on the small proportion of *ceperoi* in *Tetrix* populations clearly illustrates the problems there are in finding this species at inland sites. It also shows that it may well be present anywhere, so it is advisable to examine specimens closely and not necessarily assume *subulata*.

Kestrels feeding on Orthoptera

The following is a transcript of a note received from Peter Sutton:-

"I was walking my usual route along a track flanked by Hawthorn trees when I saw a young Kestrel alight in a tree not 20 yards away. It was fully fledged, but its plumage had not yet become the rich reds and browns of the adult bird. The fields were literally buzzing with Roesel's bush crickets, Long-winged Coneheads, Field, Common Green, Meadow and Stripe-winged grasshoppers, and all number of other insects. Anyway, I decided to take a closer look at the Kestrel, which was intently looking at the long grass below (most of which had turned to yellow straw). It dropped out of the Hawthorn tree into the grass, and appeared to have missed its catch. It then returned to the tree to begin staring at the grass again. Again it opened its wings and floated down fairly slowly into the grass. I saw its head go down and it appeared to come up with nothing, and with a single beat of its wings, it returned the 12 or so feet back up into the tree. I was still standing under the tree not 10 feet from where it had alighted. It stared at the grass again, and after another minute or so, flopped down into the grass right in front of me. This time I got a good view as it dropped its head, and I saw it gulp. The Kestrel was catching Roesel's bush crickets! I remember some time ago, when I first went to the Castle Hill Wartbiter site in the late eighties, that the warden/ranger told me that Kestrels were quite a serious predator of Wartbiters and their nymphs. I can remember thinking at the time that if I had so much difficulty finding them, these perfectly camouflaged insects that disappeared into the grass at the slightest disturbance, how on earth could a Kestrel hope to see, let alone catch one? But here was a Kestrel doing very well on adult Roesel's bush crickets at a rate of one every couple of minutes."

Editor's comment:

Hopefully, the substantial increase in the larger orthoptera over recent years will eventually lead to the return of such species as Red-backed Shrike!

Potential long-term survival of accidental introductions

Two examples of the long-term survival of species which have been introduced, in circumstances which are unclear, came to my notice during 2000. The first involved **Great Green Bush-cricket**, *Tettigonia viridissima*, which was, apparently, released in small numbers at a site in Hertfordshire in 1998. It had not been seen again until last year when about a dozen or so adults were re-found, raising the possibility of a colony having now been established. The second, and more impressive example, involved **Wood Cricket**, *Nemobius sylvestris*, which was 'accidentally' introduced (from France) in small numbers into a garden in West Sussex in 1986. This resulted in the development of a viable colony which has appeared every two years since (the species has a two-year cycle) even spreading to adjacent woodland at one stage. However, because of the decline in the suitability of the habitat, numbers have been considerably reduced in recent years now making its future survival here questionable.

This illustrates the potential, particularly in a warming climate, for new species to become established perhaps more readily than was, hitherto, realised.

Survival of southern European species in UK

Yet another piece of evidence to suggest the possibility of a successful establishment of more southerly species in the UK in the warming climate came from my experience with a specimen, which turned out to be **Southern Sickle-bearing Bush-cricket**, *Phaneroptera nana*, brought home from southern France in mid-September as a second instar nymph for rearing and photographing at its various stages. It reached adulthood in mid-October whereupon it was released into one of the large hanging baskets in my garden. To my surprise it survived outside, only ever moving within a circumference of about 30cm within the same basket, until 12 November, having endured a light frost about a week earlier.

Range expansions in Germany

An interesting presentation by Axel Hochkirch on the range expansion of some species in Lower Saxony, given at the Orthopterist's meeting last year, was a reminder that this is not only a British phenomenon. As is the case here, both **Roesel's Bush-cricket**, *Metrioptera roeselii*, and **Long-winged Conehead**, *Conocephalus discolor*, are spreading, mainly westwards along the river valleys. Other species involved include **Sickle-bearing Bush-cricket**, *Phaneroptera falcata*, **Large Gold Grasshopper**, *Chrysochraon dispar*, and **Blue-winged Grasshopper**, *Oedepoda caerulescens*. Although not a general trend, in the Bremen area only, even the flightless **Dark Bush-cricket**, *Pholidoptera griseoaptera*, is showing a marked population increase as is **Large Marsh Grasshopper**, *Stethophyma grossum*. Conversely, some species appear to be in decline, including **Common Groundhopper**, *Tetrix undulata*, **Common Green Grasshopper**, *Omocestus viridulus*, **Meadow Grasshopper**, *Chorthippus parallelus*, and the **Steppe Grasshopper**, *Chorthippus dorsatus*.

PAPERS AND PUBLICATIONS

1. **Synopsis des Orthopteres de France.** ISSN 1274-3143. B. Defaut (1999).

Includes latest information on distribution, ecology, etc., of French Orthoptera including Mantids and Phasmids. (In French).

2. **La Determination des Orthopteres de France.** ISBN 2-9514415-0-9. B. Defaut (1999).

The most recently published key of the French Orthoptera including Mantids and Phasmids. (In French).

3. **A Further Note on the Discovery of Roesel's Bush-cricket, *Metrioptera roeselii*, in Yorkshire.** Martin Limbert (2000); *Naturalist* 125: 69.

Offprints available on receipt of SAE from Martin Limbert, Museum & Art Gallery, Chequer Road, Doncaster, DN1 2AE.

4. **The Rufous Grasshopper, *Gomphocerippus rufus*, in Devon.** Dr. Peter Sutton and Deborah Cooper; *Bulletin of the Devon Invertebrate Forum* No. 5 (March 2000): 3-6.

5. **Braunton Burrows Revisited: Orthoptera.** Dr. Peter Sutton; *Bulletin of the Devon Invertebrate Forum* No. 6 (December 2000): 4-5.
6. **Orthoptera of Suffolk.** S.J. Ling (2000); *Trans-Suffolk Nat. Hist. Soc.* 36: 53-60.
7. **Orthoptera in North Lancashire.** Dr. Jennifer Newton; *Journal of the Lancashire and Cheshire Entomological Society.* 121-123: 12-23.
8. **Danmarks Dyreliv, Vol. 9: De Danske Groeshopper.** O.F. Nielsen. (2000). pp. 192, 137 Col. Photos, 70 line drawings.

Deals comprehensively with all 32 species of grasshopper known in Denmark including recognition, habitats, biology, behaviour and distribution. Includes compact disc with 49 recordings of all Danish species. (In Danish).

9. **Fauna Helvetica: Orthoptera - Identification.** ISBN 2-88414-016-6. Armin Coray and Philippe Thorens (2001). pp. 235, 91 text figures.

A comprehensive identification guide to the Orthoptera of Switzerland. Describes 125 species/sub-species. (In French, German and Italian).

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