

# LEICESTERSHIRE ENTOMOLOGICAL SOCIETY

13

September 1994

## New season, new day and new venue!

Another season of indoor meetings draws rapidly nearer as the nights start to close in. Several of the points raised in last year's survey have been taken on board during the formulation of the programme and as a consequence it is hoped that there will be greater attendance at the meetings.

The first change has been the move to meetings on a Thursday evening - the overwhelming choice of the membership. It is up to you to now support this change - after all it was your choice!

### *New venue - Holly Hayes*

The second major change has been of venue. Whereas all past meetings have been held at Leicester Museum, the move of the Ecology Unit to Holly Hayes, Birstall has resulted in an alternative venue being available. Holly Hayes is a lovely setting - a large house in its own grounds with ample safe parking just off the outer ring road at Birstall. Many parts of the house have extensive wood panelling and wooden fire surrounds and the whole place is ideal for natural history meetings. It has that sort of ambience!

The Ecology Unit has recently moved to Holly

Hayes and they are already enjoying the fruits of the location with regular sightings of tawny owls and sparrowhawks and up to four regular foxes! The ground floor of the house is where meetings can be held and a kitchen is very handily placed! There is also the advantage, at least at the moment, of less restriction on the length of meetings. This, hopefully, will allow members to be able to discuss matters of entomological importance in great comfort and in a more relaxed way.

### *More local interest*

The last major change is the greater input now being expected from LES members. You wanted to have less in the way of invited speakers and more of local interest. If you are asked to partake in any of the meetings please do at least give us five minutes!

*contd p2*

## New season contd

Your participation at all meetings is, of course, always welcome particularly if you have exhibits!

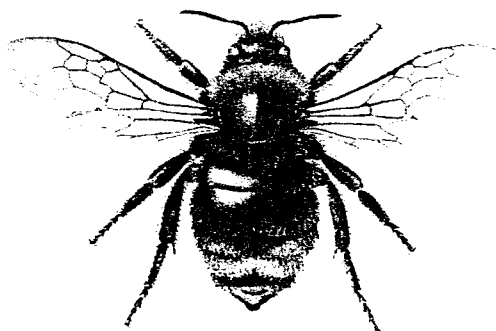
Access to Holly Hayes is easy but in case you get lost we have included a map for your guidance with this Newsletter.

Please let us know what you think of the new venue and the rejigged programme. It is the only way that the Committee can give you, the members, what you wish for!

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## Bees in Knighton

Queens of both *Bombus terrestris* and *Bombus pratorum* were seen in the Frankum's Knighton garden during March along with the other bumblebee *Bombus lapidarius*. Also seen was the cuckoo bee *Psithyrus vestalis* and queens of the wasp *Vespula vulgaris*.



*Psithyrus vestalis* ♀

Flowering lungwort was being regularly patrolled by *Anthophorus* species with both male and female bees being seen. Also seen in March were little golden bees (species not yet identified) in brickwork whilst there were plenty of honeybees on the heather.

Maggie Frankum

## Book review

*A review of the Scarce and Threatened Pyralid Moths of Great Britain* by MS Parsons (JNCC Publications 11: 98pp - Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough 1993 ISBN-1-873701-51-9. £8.60)

Species of Pyralidae were not included in the Insect Red Data Book of 1987 and this present publication aims to remedy this omission. However, whilst proposing additions to the RDB, the author emphasises that the book itself is not a RDB.

The *Review* is A4 with the text presented in datasheet format. A total of 57 species are reviewed with copious information being provided. The Identification heading generally does little more than refer to Goater (*British Pyralid Moths*), the remaining headings provide plenty of useful and fairly detailed information thus complementing Goater well. The distribution of species is based on a Watsonian vice-county basis with post-1970 records being separately listed. Only four pre-1970 records for Leicestershire are cited, probably all from the Victoria County Histories.

This book is a welcome addition to the small number of publications relating to this family of moths and should prove a valuable source of information to microlepidopterists and those involved in habitat management in particular.

Adrian Russe

## Next copy date:

## January 15th 1995

## Cloud Wood 14.v.94

The first visit that the Leicestershire Entomological Society made to Cloud Wood was in August 1991. Since then the site has been given to the county Trust by the local quarry company (Breedon plc) and now forms an important addition to their Reserves list.

This SSSI ancient woodland site was coppiced until early this century and clear-felled at the time of World War II. Since then it has been allowed to regenerate naturally and future management expects to include some restoration of coppicing whilst leaving other areas to develop as high forest.

Recent management has widened the overgrown rides and glades have been cut at the ride junctions. The underlying geology is mainly Keuper marl and boulder clay although no part of the woodland is on dolomitised Carboniferous Limestone (as found in the adjacent quarry). However, the rides have been built up at some time with limestone chippings.

The ground flora is very species-rich and without any effort at all well over thirty different kinds of flowering plants were seen. The most notable included yellow archangel, early purple orchid, Solomon's seal, sweet woodruff, wild strawberry and golden saxifrage.

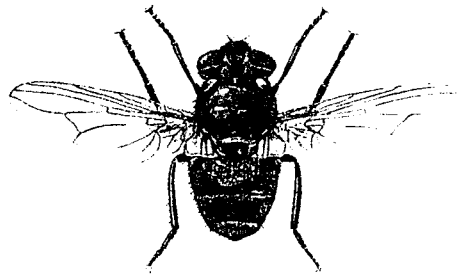
### *Lepidoptera*

A bright sunny day brought of lots of insects on the wing to take advantage of the floral display and also catering for the many interests of the LES members present.

Graham Finch pointed out a cloud of longhorn moths, with impossibly long antennae, displaying in the sunshine around the tree foliage. Three other moths found were the grey birch, herald and clouded silver. Plans to further record moths later by light trapping were foiled by the weather.



Five species of butterfly patrolled the rides - green-veined white, large white, speckled wood, peacock and orange tip. The eggs of the latter were found on lady's smock. There were also many caterpillars in the foliage but no means of identifying them.



*Mesembrina meridiana*

### *Diptera*

The hum of hoverflies was ever present and those not flying were basking in local hot spots. The black and yellow wasp-like stripes of *Syrphus ribesii* and *Helophilus pendulus* were conspicuous as was the black face stripe of a large *Eristalis tenax*. *Leucozona leucorum*, the shining bronze *Epistrophe eligans* and the cowpat specialist *Rhingia campestris* were fairly easy to spot as well.

However, these were Neil's speciality and he managed to record 29 species. This, for him, equals the highest number of species recorded in one day on any site in Leicestershire. Including the *Eristalis tenax*, the hoverfly list for Cloud Wood was a total of 30 species.

Neil also saw a *Beris* spp and *Mesembrina meridiana*, a member of the Muscidae group of Diptera, together with the large red damselfly *Pyrhosoma nymphula*.

contd p4

# Cloud Wood contd

## CLOUD WOOD HOVERFLIES (Neil Frankum)

<i>Baccha</i> species	<i>Sphaerophoria</i> species ♀	<i>Eristalis pertinax</i>
<i>Melanostoma scalare</i> ♀	<i>Syrphus ribesii</i> ♀	<i>Helophilus pendulus</i>
<i>Platycheirus albimanus</i> ♂	<i>Syrphus vitripennis</i> ♀	<i>Myathropa florea</i>
<i>Platycheirus manicatus</i> ♂ ♀	<i>Cheilosia illustrata</i> ♂	<i>Pipiza noctiluca</i> ♀
<i>Platycheirus scutatus</i> ♀	<i>Cheilosia variabilis</i> ♂	<i>Pipiza/Heringia</i> species ♀
<i>Platycheirus tarsalis</i> ♀	<i>Cheilosia vernalis</i> ♂ ♀	<i>Syritta pipiens</i>
<i>Dasysyrphus tricinctus</i> ♂ ♀	<i>Rhingia campestris</i>	<i>Neoascia podagrica</i> ♂ ♀
<i>Dasysyrphus venustus</i>	<i>Eristalis arbustorum</i>	<i>Xylota segnis</i>
<i>Epistrophe eligans</i>	<i>Eristalis horticola</i>	<i>Criorhina berberina</i>
<i>Leucozona lucorum</i>	<i>Eristalis nemorum</i>	

Bumblebees were active along the rides when they had warmed up in the sunshine. Several buzzed by too fast for identification but there was *Bombus pascuorum* and a cuckoo bee *Psithyrus vestalis*, easily mimicking *Bombus terrestris*. A hornet was spotted resting on a leaf in one of the glades.

### Spiders and galls

Jon Daws spent the day searching out the spiders and recorded 22 species. He also found two species of harvestmen (*Rilaena triangularis*, *Megabunus diadema*), a pill millipede, three species of woodlouse and the centipede *Lithobius variegatus*. Comment from Jon - "There was nothing rare!"

Eighteen species of plant gall were found by myself along the rides:

Field maple - three species

Sycamore - two species

Hazel - one species

Blackthorn - one species

Oak - six species

Bramble - one species

Willow - three species

Dog's mercury - one species

Dog's mercury - one species

### SPIDERS (Jon Daws)

*Diplocephalus picinus* ♂ ♀

*Lepthyphantes zimmermanni* ♂ ♀

*Clubiona lutescens* ♂ ♀

*Neriene clathrata* ♂ ♀

*Linyphia hortensis* ♂ ♀

*Pisaura mirabilis* ♂

*Pardosa amentata* ♀

*Neriene montana* ♂ ♀

*Meta mense* ♂ ♀

*Gongylidium rufipes* ♂ ♀

*Robertus lividus* ♀

*Dictyna arundinacea* ♂ ♀

*Bathypantes nigrinus* ♀

*Neriene peltata* ♀

*Pardosa pullata* ♂

*Lepthyphantes tenuis* ♂

*Amaurobius fenestralis* ♀

*Diplostyla concolor* ♀

*Monocephalus fuscipes* ♂

*Diplocephalus latifrons* ♀

*Segestria senoculata* ♀

*Bathypantes gracilis* ♂

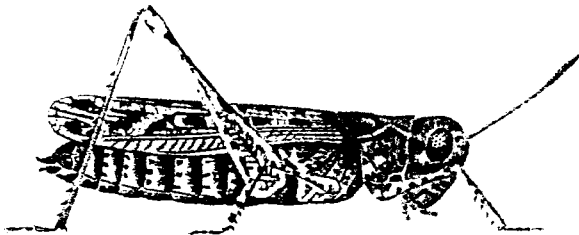
Maggie Frankum

## Grasshopper records wanted!

Is the mottled grasshopper, *Myrmeleotettix maculatus*, only found on Charnwood Forest in Leicestershire or has it been missed elsewhere? As far as I know, it was first recorded in the county in 1956 on Sliding Stone rocks at Woodhouse Eaves (now a golf course) and then in Swithland Woods in the 1960's. The next records are in the 1980's when it was found in Bradgate, Swithland Wood spoil heaps, High Sharpley, Charnwood Lodge, around Hill Hole quarry at Markfield, Buck Hill, the Brand quarries, Ives Head and on rocks near Blackbrook Reservoir.

It likes stoney or rocky areas with sparse vegetation - quarries and spoil heaps, rocky hill tops, heaths and sandy areas. It is a small grasshopper, less than 19mm long (males less than 15mm) when mature. It varies greatly in colour and can be purple, fawn, brown, black and green - or a mixture of these! The wings are never green and the colouration is often mottled usually matching the background well.

The male has distinctive clubbed antennae and a quiet buzzing "song". Any records would be very welcome - I am willing to identify any Orthoptera specimens.



Spurred on by Jean Harvey's notes on bush crickets in Newsletter 12, in the Charnwood area we have not recorded the dark bush cricket (*Pholidoptera griseoptera*). However, we have had a few records of the speckled (*Leptophyes puntatissima*) and oak (*Meconema thalassinum*) bush crickets. The latter is quite common - not just on oak and birch, but in gardens on blackcurrants and apple trees and hawthorn hedges too. We sometimes get them attracted to lighted windows in late summer and to moth recorders' sugar!

Helen Ikin

## New Book

Ann Tate, well-known Leicestershire naturalist and member of the LES, has a new book just about ready to come out. Entitled "*Naturalist Summers: pages from a field studies journal*", the book is endorsed by the Field Studies Council and is nicely timed for their 50th anniversary - and it comes complete with an exuberant foreword by David Bellamy!

Chapters which may be of particular interest to the LES are "Insects of a cow-dung community" (Peter Skidmore), "Dragonflies and damsels" (Ted Benton, author of *The Dragonflies of Essex*) and "Leaf litter animals" (June Chatfield).

The text (65,000 words) is liberally illustrated with 60 photographs and 50 line drawings) is published by Blandford Press/Cassell at £15.95.

## Loughborough Meadows

In the last issue of the Newsletter I referred to a possible record of the Northern Deep-brown Dart (*Aporophyla lueneburgensis* from Loughborough Meadows on 11.ix.93. The specimen was referred to Bernard Skinner for identification and he concluded that its external features were more characteristic of the Deep-brown dart (*Aporophyla lutulenta*). However, the debate concerning whether or not these are separate species is still outstanding.

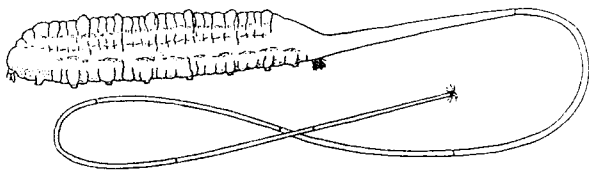
Adrian Russell

## Holly Hayes Wood 16.iv.94

The morning had started off wet but by 10.30 the rain had dropped to a drizzle and eventually fizzled out. The first field meeting of the year was attended by the Frankum family and myself.

Holly Hayes, near Whitwick, is a piece of ancient woodland (open to the public) bordered on three sides by housing and roads, with a couple of unmanaged grasslands on its eastern boundary. This open oak/ash woodland has several areas where silver birch and heathy grassland are found, as well as a pond and marshy areas along the stream. We walked around the wood in a clockwise direction noting that wood sorrell had just come into flower and listened to a great-spotted woodpecker.

As we wandered through the wood we turned over the many logs that were lying around. This revealed the pill millipede (*Glomerus marginata*), the terrestrial flatworm (*Microplana terrestris*), four species of woodlice and twelve species of spider. Amongst the latter were two I had not seen before, *Entelecara erythropus* and *Thyreosthenius parasiticus*.



Neil Frankum also collected chrysalids of several hoverflies from under the logs and showed us a rat-tailed maggot living in a shallow, water-filled hollow in a tree. Many galls were also in evidence with six species on oak, big bud (*Eriophyes rudis*) on birch, rolled leaf edges caused by *Eriophyes goniothorax typicus* on hawthorn and the ever present leaf miner, *Phytomyza ilicis*, on holly. At the end of an enjoyable three hours, hunger finally drove us back toward the vehicles. A good view of a calling nuthatch and a single primrose as we re-crossed the stream are my final memories of a morning well spent.

Jon Daws

## Rare hoverfly at Great Merrible

Whilst on a visit to the Great Merrible LRTNC nature reserve on 28.v.94 a female *Brachyopa scutellaris* was seen at hawthorn flowers in dappled shade along a narrow ride. This species has a grey thorax and an orange abdomen and could have been easily mistaken for a small muscid fly. The larvae live in sap runs and have been recorded from a wide variety of trees. Indeed, if you know what you are looking for, it is easier to find the larvae than the adults.

According to Jenny Owen's 1979 checklist, this species is only known in the county from a single undated specimen in the Museum collection and I have seen no further records. On a national scale *Brachyopa scutellaris* is considered to be local but it is still the most widely recorded member of the genus.

Neil Frankum

## And a county first at Beacon Hill

On 27.vii.93, whilst on holiday back in Leicestershire, I went for a walk at Beacon Hill. As I was watching the insects on a bramble patch near the pond next to the main path, I noticed a hoverfly that looked different. There was a much greater contrast between the black and yellow markings of its abdomen than the usual syrphid species. Its thorax was also distinctly black compared with the green black of the syrphids. On closer inspection it proved to be a female *Didea fasciata*.

This is a nationally notable hoverfly that is most often recorded from ancient deciduous forest areas of southern England. It is the first time that I have seen this species in Leicestershire and I know of no other records of it for the county.

Neil Frankum

## Hairy dragonfly in Leicestershire

[From an article by RA Frost in *The Bulletin of the Amateur Entomologists' Society* (1994) vol 53 page 76]

On 31.v.93 whilst walking at Terrace Hills near Belvoir Castle, a large dragonfly was seen hawking. Fortunately the dragonfly settled on long grass allowing close up photography which later allowed identification of the species as the hairy dragonfly, *Brachytron pratense*. On referral to Helen Ikin, it seemed that this might have been the first county record of this member of the Odonata but it later transpired that one had been seen sixteen days earlier further south in the county making this particular observation probably the second county record.

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## Poplar hawks in Leicestershire

Recently published articles (*Ent Rec* 106, 41-45 and 126) appear to have questioned the generally accepted view that the poplar hawk moth (*Laothoe populi*) is bivoltine in Britain. These articles are based upon records from Kent and Cornwall. I have looked at the last ten years' records from my garden light in Leicester and these indicate that this species appears between May and August. Distinct peaks in occurrence in late May and late July are apparent. However, I would be very interested to receive data from anyone else regularly operating a light trap in the county so that a more effective local analysis can be made.

*Adrian Russell*

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## Brown argus?

A brown argus was probably taken at Ketton Quarry on 21.iv.94 (final confirmation is awaited) during a day excursion by Harry Ball, Lenny Holton, Glenn McPhail and Jon Daws

## Lep tit-bits

[Compiled by Jane McPhail]

Great Easton, Rutland - oak beauty iii.93; tawny pinion iv.93 and x.93; nutmeg vi.93; purple bar viii.93; large ranunculus ix.93; and sprawler xi.93 (Jean & Ron Harvey).

Belmesthorpe, Rutland - *Argyresthia mendica* (= *spinosella*) (B&F 417) 3.vi.92 - ?new county record; *Donocaula forficella* 28.v.92; *Paraponyx stratiotata* 28.vii.93 and 14.vii.93; *Pempelia formosa* 28.vii.93 - scarce in Midlands (Chris Gardiner).

Ketton Quarry, Rutland - *Ebulea crocealis* 30.vi.93 (Chris Gardiner)

Old Lount colliery, Coleorton - *Epinotia stroemiana* 1994 - third county record (Jane McPhail).

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## Another new county hoverfly

At the June field meeting of the LES at Twenty Acre Piece, John Mousley gave me two *Parhelophilus* specimens collected the previous week from Furnace Plantation at Moira in the Ashby Wolds. On closer inspection these proved to be a male and female of *Parhelophilus frutetorum*. The only previous records of any of this genus from the county is of a *Parhelophilus versicolor* from Narborough Bog.

*Parhelophilus frutetorum* is usually found around ponds or ditches with *Typha*. It is a local species on a national scale with a distribution slightly more restricted than that of *P. versicolor*.

*Neil Frankum*

## Book review

*Leicestershire Dragonflies* by Steve Grover and Helen Ikin (1994) Leicestershire Museums Publication ISBN-0850223598.

The authors claim that this booklet "is not intended to be definitive but a guide only" - a very modest claim for such an excellent publication. The style of the text is innovative with emphasis being placed on the use of illustrations and a general lack of jargon.

A useful table summarises the flight periods of the Odonata most likely to be seen in the county whilst each species description is restricted to one page with most delightful illustrations of the adults on the facing page. Each of the commoner species has pictograms which give an indication of the type of habitat where they may be encountered. Up to date tetrad maps accompany each species together with a rarity index. I am not clear how this has been derived (it is not really explained anywhere) and its usefulness in an essentially provisional guide is questionable. However, this is my only criticism!

What is outstanding is the presentation of the booklet complete with very fine paintings by Steve Grover of the adult insects. It really is an eye-catching publication and should certainly be on every local naturalist's shelf!

Ray Morris

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## Dipterists at Shrewsbury

The annual summer field meeting of the Diptera Recording Schemes was held this year at the Preston Montford Field Centre near Shrewsbury. The meeting was much earlier than usual (10-17 May 1994) and was aimed to coincide with the flowering of the hawthorn and the spring peaks of a number of fly species. Unfortunately, however, the weather did not cooperate! In one of the worse Mays on record, it was cold and wet, we did not see the sun on six of the seven days of the field meeting!

That did not stop the 23 people on the trip (including two from the LES) from going into the field and making some very good finds. Indeed, a visit on the first day to a wooded stream valley near Ironbridge (in the rain) produced only the second British record of the crane fly *Lipsothrix nigristigma*. During further visits to the site later in the week by other members of the party, observations were made that indicated that the species was breeding in the numerous log jams in the stream.

Permission had been arranged for us to have access to Trust reserves, National Nature Reserves, SSSIs and other sites of interest in the area. During the week I visited 19 sites with a variety of habitats: ancient woodland, parkland, river shingle, wooded stream valleys, marshy grassland, heathland, wetlands and hay meadows. Unfortunately, the weather did impede my recording and I only saw 39 species of hoverfly although I did see *Portevinia maculata* for the first time. On some sites it was quite numerous being found in association with ramsons, its larval foodplant. Other groups seemed to be less affected by the weather - at least 103 species of crane fly were recorded for instance.

The crane flies of the genus *Ctenophora* were the highlights from a number of sites visited. The larvae of the flies all live in dead wood and are either uncommon or rare. The adults are fairly large black or yellow and black flies and the males have distinctive feathery lobes on the antennae. Three of the six species were seen - *C flaveolata*, *C pectinicornis* (at two sites - Powis Castle, Welshpool where several females were just emerging from a partially rotten horse chestnut tree and Devil's Spittleful, Kidderminster where a female was emerging from a rotten silver birch) and *C bimaculata* (a male and female sitting on the partially rotten trunk of a ?wild cherry at Devil's Spittleful).

As well as recording flies in under-recorded areas, these field meetings are useful for learning new techniques, having identifications confirmed, making contacts and socialising with other entomologists from around the country. The venue for next year's trip has yet to be decided but it will be well worth going wherever it is held!

Neil Frankum



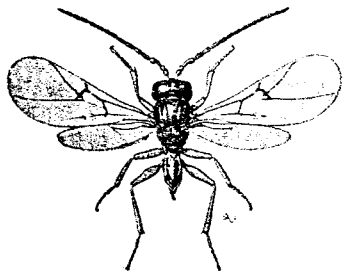
# Twenty Acre Piece 18.vi.94

A nice sunny day greeted us for the field meeting at Twenty Acre Piece Nature Reserve at Six Hills (grid reference SK 64-21-). The reserve consists of a central ride (created by the laying of a water main) which contains some quite nice areas of damp acid grassland. Much of the site used to be like this but now birch scrub and ash, hawthorn and oak woodland have colonised most of the area.

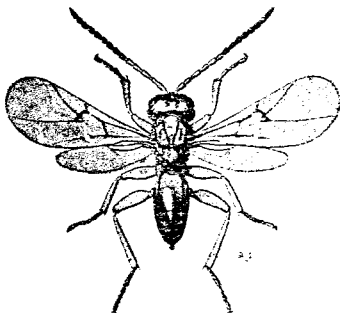
The site produced 29 species of hoverfly the best of which was a male *Orthonevra splendens*. This is a small black hoverfly with a broad white dust band across its face. On a county basis this is quite a rare species and only a couple of other records are known for Leicestershire.

Eight species of the larger Brachycera were found including the very small blue soldierfly *Microchrysa flavicornis*. This species, although the commonest of the genus and fairly widespread, was not recorded from Leicestershire in the *Provisional Atlas of the Larger Brachycera of Britain and Ireland*.

Two species of damselfly were seen along the main ride - *Coenagrion puella* and *Enallagma cyathigerum*. A cream-spot ladybird (*Calvia 14-guttata*) was also seen and a large skipper butterfly.



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♀

*Biorhiza pallida*

There were several galls present on the site. On oak were *Andricus lignicola*, *A anthracinis*, *Biorhiza pallida* and *Cynips divisa*. The sawfly

bean gall *Pontania proxima* was found on willow. The ever present rolled leaf edges on hawthorn is caused by *Eriophyes goniothorax typicus* while *Dasyneura rosarum* formed a pod-like leaf gall on dog rose. The fly *Chirosia betuleti* formed the mop-head gall on fern and *Dasyneura ulmariae* covered the leaves of meadow sweet with little swellings that had a cone-like projection below. Finally *Eriophyes similis* galled the leaf margins of sloe.

Neil and Maggie Frankum

Evening moth trapping was carried out in rather breezy and clear conditions with only fifteen species being recorded at the lone light. Experienced moth trappers clearly knew that this was a night to stay at home! The most noteworthy record was of the double dart (*Graphiphora augur*). It was also nice to see the Mother Shipton (*Callistege mi*) flying earlier in the day.

Adrian Russell

**LES**  
**ANNUAL**  
**GENERAL**  
**MEETING**

*to be held as part of the*

**DECEMBER**  
**MEETING**

# Picture-winged fly workshop

The National Diptera Recording Schemes began running a series of identification workshops at Preston Montford field centre last year (see p8). These have aimed to get enthusiasts to know popular groups of flies in more detail and to encourage them to study the lesser known groups.

At the end of March 1994 one such workshop was an in-depth look at the picture-winged flies with six families being covered.

Sciomyzidae (snail killing flies)

Phaeomyiidae (millipede killing flies)

[formerly these were one family of 68 species]

Tephritidae - 73 species

Pallopteridae (picture-winged flies) - 12 species

Platystomatidae - 2 species

Otitidae - 20 species

On Friday night, Alan Stubbs (Mr Diptera!) gave a general introduction into where to look for flies and the factors which can affect the presence of a species at a particular site: geology, habitats (both on their own and, more importantly, combinations of habitats and the boundaries between them), climate, previous (mis)management etc. He then ran through the range of equipment that he uses on his field trips, from the smallest tube to the net on a 12 foot extendable handle that catches the flies that other nets cannot reach!

The next two days were spent looking for picture-winged flies. The group was lead by Alan along with Stephen Falk, Ian MacLean (Sciomyzidae and Phaeomyiidae) and David Clements (Pallopteridae and Otitidae). The basic format was to have a half hour

introduction to each family and its characteristics and ecology. This was followed by a period of taking specimens through the keys with the experts on hand to give plenty of help and advice.



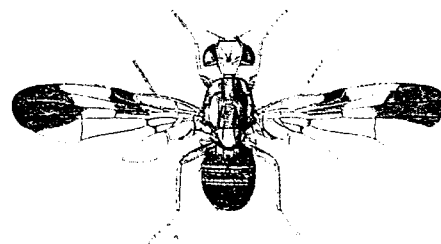
*Urophora cardui* ♀

The Sciomyzidae are a group of medium sized acalypterate flies with either clear or patterned wings. The adults can be swept from low vegetation in a variety of habitats, although wetlands are preferred by many species. There is a main peak in June and July but some species can be found all year round. The larvae are predators or parasitoids of molluscs (both terrestrial and aquatic).

The Tephritidae are a phytophagous family of flies with the larvae developing within flower heads, stems or leaves of various plants. The adults have a variety of wing markings, ranging from stripes to a reticulate pattern. The best known members are the genus *Urophora* whose larvae cause galls on knapweed and thistles.

The remaining families have fewer species but are fairly similar in looks to the Tephritidae having wings with patterns of bands and spots.

Neil Frankum



*Euribia zoi* ♀

## Moths at Great Bowden Borrowpit

I have been carrying out moth trapping at this LRTNC reserve for the last few years, albeit on an occasional basis. In August 1990 I recorded the small rufous (*Coenobia rufa*), a rush feeder, from this site. This moth is currently being considered for assignment as a nationally notable species and it was encouraging to see it again in good numbers on 25th July this year. There are few other records of this moth in Leicestershire.

On the same night I also recorded several specimens of *Calamotropha paludella*. This pyralid feeds on reedmace and is associated with fens, marshes etc. Parsons (*A Review of the Scarce and Threatened Pyralid Moths of Great Britain 1993*) (see review elsewhere - Editor) describes the species as being local and provisionally assigns it Nationally Notable B status. I cannot find any previously published record of this species from Leicestershire although I understand that it may have been recorded from elsewhere in the county.

I would be very interested to receive details of any other county records of either of these species.

Adrian Russell

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## Six-belted clearwing at Clipsham Quarry

According to Adrian Russell's *The Rarer British Macro-moths - draft list of Leicestershire Records* (1992), the six-belted clearwing (*Bembecia scopigera*) is rare in the county. Indeed, even nationally it is not that common having been classed as a Notable B insect in the RDB.

During a visit to Clipsham Quarry on 10.vii.94 by members of the Rutland NHS, Patrick Mann found an insect which at first was not recognised as a clearwing. It was only on checking at home that we realised it was

probably a six-belted clearwing.

Since the specimen was released before positive identification could be established, we returned the following day in order to confirm the species presence at the Quarry. As it turned out we saw three insects one of which we caught for photography and identification. It was indeed the six-belted clearwing at a new site for the county.

Ron & Jean Harvey

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## Early spider

"A monster spider was discovered by a woman at her home on Sapcote Road, Burbage. The spider, measuring four inches in length, was a "wolf spider" and native to the British Isles but up until 1958 only one sighting had been made in Dublin, Ireland. Mrs Boraston brought the spider to The Hinckley Times but the reporters had to contact insect and spider expert, 15 year old Donald Hope of Hall Road, Burbage to identify it. He said its Latin name was *Tegenaria artica*, a large relation of the house spider and although it fed on insects, smaller spiders and bees, was capable of giving humans a nasty nip."

[From *The Hinckley Times* of Friday 28th August 1959]

I think that the spider referred to is *Tegenaria atrica* (now known as *Tegenaria gigantea*) which Dick Jones in *The Country Life Guide to Spiders of Britain and Northern Europe* considers to probably be common throughout southern England.

Amazing what local papers will print! Do you have any such items? Please send them in!

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## Old records

Tom Robertson in LESOPS 10 recalls the butterflies of mid-century Leicestershire. If you have such memories please let us know! This historical information is invaluable!

# WINTER PROGRAMME 1994-5

All indoor meetings will be held at the new venue of The Ecology Unit, Holly Hayes, Birstall unless otherwise indicated. Meetings are to commence at 7.30 p.m. and coffee will be available. Members and guests are encouraged to bring along exhibits for display and discussion.

- OCTOBER 27TH      **INTRODUCTION TO THE LEICESTERSHIRE ECOLOGY UNIT**  
John Mousley (Leicestershire Ecology Unit)  
The Leicestershire Ecology Unit plays an important part in collating environmental data particularly for use in planning application assessments but also for research.
- NOVEMBER 12TH    **MICROLEPIDOPTERA WORKSHOP**  
Ray Barnett (Bristol Museum)  
Ray returns to Leicestershire from the wilds of Bristol to share his impressive knowledge of the smaller moths and, perhaps, tell us about some of the delights of the West Country! Please bring specimens.  
Note: to be held at the New Walk Museum starting at 10.30 a.m.
- DECEMBER 8TH    **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND MEMBERS' EVENING**  
Your chance to have a say in the how th Society is run followed by contributions from the membership on their favourite pasttime, rounding off with seasonal mince pies!
- JANUARY 19TH    **LOCAL DRAGONFLIES**  
Steve Grover (Leicestershire Ecology Unit)  
Co-author and illustrator of the delightful *Leicestershire Dragonflies* published earlier this year. Learn about these haunting waterside insects.
- FEBRUARY 8TH    **HOVERFLIES**  
Francis Gilbert  
A joint meeting with the Natural History Section of the Lit & Phil on this fascinating group of the Diptera.  
Note: this meeting is to be held at the Rowans in Leicester. Details of location from Jan Dawson at the Nuseum.
- MARCH 9TH       **HABITAT MANAGEMENT FOR INVERTEBRATES**  
Peter Kirby (English Nature)  
Peter was responsible for the preparation of the Invertebrate Site Register for Leicestershire (and other counties) and is a past visitor to the LES. Habitat management is the way forward if we are to ensure the future for many of our insects.
- APRIL 1ST        **SO YOU HAVE A RECORD - SO WHAT!**  
Adrian Russell, Derek Lott etc  
Have you wondered how to best keep your records, where to put them or what to use them for? This is your chance to find out about the different ways in which records can be kept and then how to use them effectively. To include demonstrations of computer software.  
Note: this meeting is being held at the Museum starting at 10.30 a.m.