



COLEOPTERA IN THE OXFORD DISTRICT.

BY

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Having now resided in Oxford for rather more than a year, I find that my first impressions, as to its being an excellent and very interesting collecting centre for all Orders of insects, are fully confirmed. The following list of *Coleoptera*, almost without exception taken by myself within a radius of six miles from the centre of the city, will show that this Order, at any rate, is well represented in the district. To my friend Mr. W. Holland I owe my first introduction to nearly all the places hereafter mentioned, and in many cases to the actual and often very limited localities of uncommon and interesting beetles which his persevering industry and acumen have brought to light.

Commencing with the localities in Berkshire, the most productive of these is at Tubney, about six miles south-west of Oxford, but more easily reached from Abingdon by a pleasant walk of half that length. Here a sandy soil, extensive woodlands and heathy commons, and a luxuriant and varied vegetation, combine to make a very attractive piece of collecting-ground; and a nice bit of marshy thicket at Cothill (the "Ruskin Plot," now the property of the Ashmolean Natural History Society of Oxford) may be taken on the way thither from Abingdon. A remarkable feature of this inland locality is the

number of insects, usually associated in our minds with seaside conditions, to be met with here. Thus, *Agrotis vestigialis* (*valligera*) has occurred not rarely, as well as at Boars' Hill on somewhat similar ground not far distant; and among the *Coleoptera*, *Harpalus anxius* (recorded by Mr. Holland, Ent. Mo. Mag., vol xxxviii, p. 18) *Amara fulva*, and *A. tibialis*, are among the commonest of their respective genera; *Bledius opacus* is found burrowing in the sand in numbers in spring and autumn, and *Heterocerus flexuosus* in the banks of ponds; *Notoxus monoceros* (in all its varieties) and *Microzoum tibiale* swarm at times, and *Oteniopus sulphureus* abounds on the flowers of the yellow bedstraw (*Galium verum*) in July; *Orthocerus muticus* is sometimes not uncommon, and *Crypticus quisquilius* has been found in plenty by Mr. Holland, but I have not yet met with it myself.

Among the species taken here by me are: *Cychnus rostratus*, occasionally in a sand-pit; *Harpalus discoideus*, at times very common under stones, and *Amara consularis*, abundant under rubbish in sandy fields. *Aleochara cuniculorum*, found in great numbers early in May by Mr. G. C. Champion and myself in two large and very strong-smelling rabbit-burrows on the common; *Lamprinus saginatus*, very sparingly by cutting tufts of grass infested with *Myrmica ruginodis*, in April; *Gyrophæna strictula*, very abundant in a hard *Boletus* on a stump, and *Encephalus complicans* in tufts. *Microglossa pulla*, *Engis humeralis* (common), *Cryptophagus populi*, *Triphyllus suturalis*, *Tiresias serra*, *Hypophlæus bicolor*, and *Tetratoma fungorum* in plenty, in fungus and under bark on an old elm; *Pocadius ferrugineus*, numerous in puff-balls, and *Trox sabulosus*, under dry rabbit-skins. *Ceuthorrhynchus geographicus*, on *Echium vulgare*, and *Ceuthorrhynchideus horridus*, on *Carduus nutans*, both common; *Cæliodes exiguus*, in plenty on *Geranium pyrenaicum*. *Apion schönherri* (another insect usually associated with sea-coast conditions), somewhat local, but almost, if not quite, the most abundant yellow-legged *Apion* in the district, occurring plentifully even by the roadside throughout the summer, as well as in tufts of grass in early spring. *A. sanguineum*, occasionally by sweeping, but more frequently in a sand-pit, where Mr. Holland has taken it quite freely in the late autumn; *A. pallipes* on *Mercurialis*, and *A. pubescens* and *spencei* by general sweeping. This latter method has produced, among many other species, *Callicerus obscurus*, *Homalota scapularis*, *Anisotoma rugosa* (a fine example on October 22nd last year), *Catops sericatus*, *Saprinus virescens* (by Mr. Champion in May last), *Heptaulacus villosus* (one each by Mr. Holland and myself on July 9th last year; I have also taken this species within the last few days at Wychwood Forest and at Streatley, Berks); *Trachys pumila*, rarely in the sand-pit, and more frequently by sweeping the shortest herbage on which the net can be got to bear, in open places among the bracken in the wood; all the specimens that I have taken in this way appear to come off *Nepeta glechoma*; *Limonium cylindricus* (also common under stones), *Cryptohypnus 4-pustulatus*, *Malachius viridis* (common),

Anthocomus fasciatus, *Phytœcia cylindrica*, *Longitarsus agilis*, *Brachytarsus varius*, *Orthochætes setiger*, *Sibinia primita*, *Miarus plantarum*, *Orobitis cyaneus*, *Phytobius 4-tuberculatus*, and *Hylesinus oleiperda*. Mr. Holland has found here also *Panagæus 4-pustulatus* (several), *Pœcilus lepidus*, *Amara patricia*, *Onthophilus sulcatus* (in the sand-pit in November last), &c.

Wytham Park and Woods being within an easy walk of my residence, have been visited by me pretty regularly, and have produced a good many interesting insects, chiefly by sweeping under the fine beech trees on Wytham Hill, which consists of oolitic limestone, and bears a flora almost as rich and varied as that of the chalk downs.

The *Coleoptera* taken here include *Hypocyrtus seminulum*, *Homalium septentrionis* (also in fungi, with *Gyrophæna manca*, *fasciata*, &c.), *H. cæsum* var. *tricolor*, and *icpterum*; *Megarthus hemipterus*, *Agathidium nigripenne* (under oak bark), *Liodes orbicularis*, *Anisotoma cinnamomea* (also at Sommertown), *dubia*, *ovalis* and *punctulata*, *Cyrtusa paucilla*, *Hydnobius punctatissimus* (black form), and *strigosus* not rare; *Bythinus curtisi*, *Enconnus denticornis*, *Cryptophagus pubescens*, *Diphyllus lunatus*, in plenty in black fungus (*Sphæria*) on ash; *Abræus globosus* and *Enicmus testaceus* in rotten wood; *Trachys pumila*, by sweeping as at Tubney, and adhering to the viscid foliage of *Hyoscyamus niger*; *Longitarsus exoletus*, abundant on *Cynoglossum* as well as on *Echium*, *L. gracilis* in the utmost profusion on ragwort, and *Epitrix atropæ*, almost equally common on *Atropa belladonna*; *Mantura matthewsi* on *Helianthemum vulgare*, and *Psylliodes hyoscyami*. This species occurred sparingly in August last on a patch of seedling plants of henbane (*Hyoscyamus niger*) and more freely this year on the same plants, now grown to a height of nearly a yard and flowering profusely. Collecting *Psylliodes hyoscyami* is about the most disagreeable work of its kind that I know, as besides that half at least of the specimens seen are lost, through their activity in leaping, the food-plant is most unpleasantly sticky, and its heavy narcotic odour is very provocative of headache under a strong sun.* *Conopalpus testaceus*, *Mordella fasciata* (not rare on small Umbelliferous flowers), *Mordellistena lateralis*, *Apion filirostre*, *Trachyphlæus alternans*, and many other species of less interest.

Bagley Wood is another very tempting-looking locality, but at the present time is much too strictly preserved to be generally available for collecting. In my occasional visits there I have met with *Anisotoma badia*, *Colon brunneum*, *Neuraphes angulatus*, *Trachys minuta*, *Throscus carinifrons*, *Apion cruentatum*, &c., by general sweeping; *Haplocnemus nigricornis*, *Mordellistena abdominalis*, and *Brachytarsus varius*, by beating hawthorn blossom; *Chrysomela didymata*, in abundance on *Hypericum*, and *Sitones cambricus* sparingly, in company with *Apion ebeninum*, on *Lotus major* in October; *Leptinus testaceus*, *Agathidium seminulum*, *varians*, *convexum*, and *nigrinum*, *Amphicyllis globus*, *Choleva spadicea*, *Atomaria umbrina*, and *Liosomus ovatulus* var. *collaris*, in faggots; *Micrurula melanocephala*, plenti-

* I have unset specimens of *Psylliodes hyoscyami* at the service of any Coleopterist who may be in want of the species.—J. J. W.

ful on blackthorn blossom; and a small colony of *Melasis buprestoides* in decayed hornbeam in February last. *Crepidodera nitidula* has recently occurred here on aspen to Messrs. Collins and Holland.

At Boars' Hill, not far distant, with a more sandy soil, *Harpalus discoideus* is sometimes fairly common, and I have taken *Pterostichus oblongopunctatus*, rather plentifully among dead boughs, &c. (also at Bagley), *Hister purpurascens*, *Rhynchites interpunctatus*, *Apion confluens* and *affine*, &c.

Turning now to the Oxfordshire localities, at Ogley Bog, a very marshy valley not far from the suburb of Cowley, *Eubria palustris* was taken sparingly in July, 1904, and again within the last few days, by sweeping on hot calm evenings in the wettest places. *Longitarsus holsaticus* is common at times here (and at Cothill) on *Pedicularis palustris*, and *Anthobium minutum*, *Halitica lythri* (abundant). *Limnobaris T-album*, &c., have occurred by sweeping; *Lebia chlorocephala* being not rare in tufts of grass in the winter.

A marshy place near Yarnton has yielded, chiefly by cutting tufts and shaking moss in early spring, *Aleochara brevipennis*, *Myrmedonia collaris*, *Homalota languida* (small form) and *insecta*, *Conosoma pedicularium*; many species of *Stenus*, of which *longitarsis*, *atratus*, *bifoveolatus*, and *circularis*, are the best; *Lathrobium filiforme* (common), *quadratum*, and *longulum*, *Bryaxis impressa* (common), *Phalacrus caricis*, *Thryogenes festucae*, &c. *Ochthebius bicolor* and *Hydroporus granularis* abound here in shallow water, and in May last I took, in company with abundance of *H. variegatus*, a *Haliplus* which I refer to the var. *pallens*, Fowler, of *H. confinis*.

At Elsfield, *Ceuthorrhynchus resedæ* is not rare in June on the *Reseda luteola* growing in a small stone-pit, and I have taken here one *C. viduatus* (and another on the banks of the Thames near Godstow), *C. melanarius*, *Longitarsus flavicornis*, *Apion vicinum*, &c.

The *Donaciæ* find a congenial habitat on the banks of the Thames and Cherwell, the most abundant being *D. semicuprea*, which swarms on the tall river-side grass *Glyceria aquatica*, of which it nibbles the leaves in a very conspicuous and characteristic fashion. *D. affinis* is fairly common in early summer on the same grass, with, occasionally, *D. thalassina* and *impressa*. Later on *D. dentata* abounds locally on *Sagittaria*, and *crassipes* is often seen on the leaves of the water-lilies, being apparently most partial to those of *Nuphar luteum*. It is, however, so active and wary that it is difficult to secure a good series without the aid of a boat. Of the very rare *Hæmonia appendiculata*, there are two examples in the British Collection of *Coleoptera* in the University Museum, taken on water-weeds at Binsey, on the Thames; but it has so far baffled Mr. Holland's efforts as well as my own to find it "at home."

"Aorangi," Lonsdale Road,
Summertown, Oxford:

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