

FURTHER NOTABLE DIPTERA
FROM WINDSOR FOREST

By A. A. ALLEN, B.Sc., A.R.C.S.*

The present contribution is a longer sequel to my short paper (Allen, 1965, with an addendum in 1968) recording some Syrphidae and other flies from this classic locality — in which I expressed the intention of adding to it in future years. Little was known of its Diptera at that time beyond a few remarkable discoveries made by the late H. Donisthorpe while investigating its Coleoptera, together with sporadic records by others. Since then, however — though no doubt much still remains to be done, even in the better-worked groups — great advances have been made. Mr. P. J. Chandler in particular has worked the Forest in recent years and published his captures in two papers listing the flies of certain families found in the Middle Thames area, bringing together also most of the previous records or captures of note from Windsor Forest (Chandler, 1971-2). (The second of these is devoted entirely to the Empididae.)

At about the same time, my late friend G. Shephard and I were enabled to make a series of collecting-trips to the Forest, with the kind assistance and support of the Nature Conservancy who desired information on the state of its insect fauna. Coleoptera being our primary object much of the time, Diptera had often to take second place; and, while I regard the results in that Order as quite satisfactory, it is likely that many further interesting species might have been found had we been able to give more time to it. The Nematocera (other than Bibionidae) and the more obscure and difficult Acalypterate families were not, or hardly, collected; and Mr. Shephard concerned himself only with the more conspicuous forms. Our visits extended over the better parts of the summers of 1971-3, but had perforce to be rather erratic and at times few and far between. We were fortunate, however, in meeting with most of the dipterous specialities of the area known from an earlier period; in the Syrphidae (the most prominent family) the principal exceptions are *Psilota anthracina* Mg. and a few species recorded by me in 1965 but not found by us in the 1970s.

I have not thought it necessary to list here species already dealt with in 1965, unless there is something noteworthy to add. Naturally, many of our captures were of such species. Those included are marked by brackets round the entry heading, indicating that, unlike the remainder, they are not additional to those already published by me. This being only a selection, and for reasons of space, I in general omit all that appear not to be either uncommon or very local — whether or not there happens to be a previous record for the area. I have tried to avoid merely repeating or 're-hashing' many of Mr. Chandler's records, which the present notes are designed as far as possible to complement. All our captures at Virginia Water (in the southern end of the Great Park) were on

*49 Montcalm Road, Charlton, London SE7 8QG.

the Berkshire side. With one or two exceptions, nomenclature follows the 1976 Check List.

The following abbreviations are used: — H. Hill = the forest north of the Winkfield Road at or near Highstanding Hill; the Park = Windsor Great Park; G. S. = the late Mr. G. Shephard.

BIBIONIDAE

Several species of *Bibio* were met with, but there is a great dearth of up-to-date information on the British species and their distribution. *B. leucopterus* Mg., with its very dark-looking females, is not uncommon at H. Hill in late spring; the large and distinctive *B. pomonae* F., very local in the south-east, occurs sparingly about Badger's Bridge further north in the Forest in July; *B. varipes* Mg. and *B. lepidus* Lw. may also be worth a mention, the latter autumnal species from ivy in the Park (♂, 30.ix.64). The common and familiar *B. marci* L. (St. Mark's Fly) was bred freely from pupae found in a very rotten stump (Allen, 1974), apparently an unusual circumstance.

STRATIOMYIDAE

Oxycera pulchella Mg. — This very striking fly turned up twice, singly: by a small pool lacking vegetation, in the Park, 15.vii.72; and by the lake at Virginia Water, 16.viii.72. Like most of its congeners it is of very local occurrence.

RHAGIONIDAE

Chrysopilus laetus Zett. — Another handsome fly (little known abroad) of which the few British specimens had all been bred: the first from a puparium found in mud round a pond in the Park, 18.vi.36, by Donisthorpe (Oldroyd, 1939); in 1968 several were reared from larvae in rotten wood in the Forest by A. E. Stubbs and P. J. Chandler (Oldroyd, 1969:46 & Chandler, 1971:20). On 30th July, 1972, I caught one settled on a log in the Park, which seems to be the first British example taken at large. All so far have been females. The original specimen was recorded as the closely-allied *C. nubecula* Fall., an error corrected soon after (Collin, 1939). It should be noticed that the leading key-character used by Oldroyd (1969) is inconstant, it having since been found that the dark wing-clouds are not always developed; the orange body of *laetus*, however, is diagnostic among our few species.

TABANIDAE

Hybomitra bimaculata Mcq. (f. *bisignata* Jaen.). — A woodland horsefly; females not very scarce in the Forest about July. I first took one in 1940, and we found it (or rather, it found us!) sparingly in 1971-2. One was swept from rhododendron flowers, unusually for a Tabanid.

Tabanus bromius L. — Females occur both in the Forest (together with the last) and also quite widely in the Park, in July and August (first in 1940) in more open situations, probably feeding on the cattle which roam there freely; often sitting on palings, etc., at the edges of plantations, like the Asilid *Machimus atricapillus* Fall. The record of *T. miki* Brauer from the Park (Chandler, 1971) was incorrect, the specimen having since been found to be *bromius* (teste P.J.C.).

ASILIDAE

Dioctria linearis F. — A well-marked local species not uncommon over a wide extent of the northern part of the Forest in June and July, but we never found it elsewhere in the area.

Neoitamus cyanurus Lw. — H. Hill, apparently not rare. This robber-fly is a typical sylvan insect. One female had caught a *Bibio pomonae*, about as big as itself.

THEREVIDAE

(*Psilocephala melaleuca* Lw.). — A speciality of the area, seldom seen as an adult and still more seldom caught; see Allen, 1965; Chandler, 1971; but finds of the larva (seemingly hard to rear) indicate a wide distribution over the Park and Forest. On 4.vii.71, at H. Hill, I watched a ♀ *Psilocephala* zigzagging rapidly from side to side in front of an old dry red-rotten trunk of oak where a portion of the interior was exposed, a few inches above ground; but something alarmed it before the net could be brought into play, and it was not seen again. A week later, in very hot dry weather, many flies and other insects were congregating about a stretch of the margin of Badger's Brook in the Forest, among which were a few of the present species — the one or two males seen being easily picked out by their silver colour flashing in the sun as they flew. Capture was quite another matter, for not only was any fly that settled to drink quickly disturbed, but the stream-banks were thick with ferociously thorny brambles, making the use of a net most exasperating. However, G. S. with great dexterity succeeded in catching a ♀ in perfect condition, which he generously insisted on my taking. In July 1972 he bred a ♀ *melaleuca* from a full-fed larva obtained earlier that year in the Park, from mould and frass under loose oak bark where there were many larvae of the chafer *Gnorimus variabilis* L. Much more recently (late May 1981) I bred another ♀ from a larva found in red-rotten oak the previous autumn.

EMPIDIDAE

(*Drapetis ephippiata* Fall.). — Only seen previously in a small area of the Park between the Long Walk and Union Gate (Allen, 1968); not listed as from Windsor by Chandler. In July 1972 it was found to occur more widely, but still very locally, among

grass under some large elms perhaps $\frac{1}{4}$ mile from the first place. A very distinctive little fly, which I met with in two places in the Foulden district, Norfolk, in June 1979.

Platypalpus ciliaris Fall. — A frequent woodland species occurring in both the Forest and Park, included here because I bred a few examples from damp mould and debris taken from inside a cut elm stump, emerging in June; I have seen no previous breeding record.

Bicellaria intermedia Lundb. — One swept under oaks in the Park, I.vi.63. It cannot be common, as Collin (1961:257) records it from only five English counties (one of them Berks.). The usual Forest species is *B. nigra* Mg.; the very common *B. vana* Coll. I have not seen there.

Rhamphomyia sulcatella Coll. — A little-known species recorded by Chandler (1966, 1972) as quite general in the H. Hill area of the Forest in early May. Our visits were mostly too late for it, but I have a female taken there on 26.v.73.

Hilara obscura Mg. — A ♀ swept by the lake at Virginia Water, 5.viii.72. Hants. and Surrey are the only southern counties from which Collin records it.

(To be continued)

THE APPEARANCE OF A THIRD BROOD IN THE GREEN-VEINED WHITE : *PIERIS NAPI* (L.), AT MORTON LOCHS, FIFE, SCOTLAND IN 1981. — Since 1979 weekly butterfly transects have been made at Morton Lochs, Fife between April and September each year. The transects are made as part of the national monitoring scheme run from Monks Wood. In each of the three years Green-veined White have been shown to have two broods with the second ending in early September. In 1981, however, I was surprised to find fresh individuals on the wing on 13th September. The last individuals of the second brood which were very tattered had been seen the previous week. Fresh butterflies were seen over three weeks until the end of September when the recording scheme ends. Although there was little suitable flying weather I saw Green-veined Whites into the second week of October. No third broods were reported to Monks Wood from other Scottish recorders. Thomson (1980, *The Butterflies of Scotland*) has suggested that late specimens of this species might be from third broods, but there appears to be no other documented case from Scotland. P. K. KINNEAR, 11 Hillview Road, Balmullo, Fife KY16 0DE.

WHAT DOES ODONTOSIA CARMELITA ESPER EAT? — Does anybody know an alternative foodplant for *O. carmelita*? On 10/11 April, at Kirklington in Cumbria, a specimen came to a moth-trap, and I know of no birch within $\frac{3}{4}$ miles. No book I have suggests an alternative foodplant. As a matter of interest it was a night with a sharp frost, and the trap attracted no less than 99 moths. An *Orthosia stabilis* D. & S. that must have been an early arrival and had settled on the grass was actually white with hoar frost. — R. LOVELL-PANK, 33 The Highlands, Hatfield Road, Potters Bar, Herts EN6 1HU, 7.vi.1982.



Allen, Anthony Adrian. 1982. "Further notable Diptera from Windsor Forest. (to be continued)." *The entomologist's record and journal of variation* 94, 191–194.

View This Item Online: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/94409>

Permalink: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/196075>

Holding Institution

Smithsonian Libraries and Archives

Sponsored by

Smithsonian

Copyright & Reuse

Copyright Status: In copyright. Digitized with the permission of the rights holder.

License: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/>

Rights: <https://biodiversitylibrary.org/permissions>

This document was created from content at the **Biodiversity Heritage Library**, the world's largest open access digital library for biodiversity literature and archives. Visit BHL at <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org>.