

Pabulum of *Ancylis tineana* (Hübner) (Lep.: Tortricidae) confirmed as Birch in Britain.

Ancylis tineana (Hübner) feeds on a wide range of trees and bushes in Europe (Emmet, A.M. (1988) *A Field Guide to the Smaller British Lepidoptera*). However, due to the moth's scarcity in the British Isles it has never been reared here and hence its foodplant established. This has now been rectified. Larval spinnings found on small grazed *Betula pubescens* seedlings, less than one foot high, growing in an open grassy area on Schiehallion (OS grid ref NN7157), Perthshire (VC88) produced this species. The spinnings were collected on 10.ix.1989 and consisted of chambers made from several leaves. A single larva was seen wandering around the plantpot in early spring after overwintering successfully. It spun a white silken cocoon in a folded dead Birch leaf and emerged on 4.vi.1990. Unfortunately a number of spinnings were collected and the precise one which contained the successful larva is not known so it would be premature to assign it to one particular type of spinning, as empty spinnings of other species, such as *Hedya atropunctana* (Zett.), may have been included in the collection.— K.P. BLAND, 35 Charterhall Road, Edinburgh EH9 3HS.

***Utethesia pulchella* L., the Crimson-speckled Footman (Lep.: Arctiidae) near Exeter.**

My friend and colleague, V.W. Philpott, has asked me to report his capture of a single male of *Utethesia pulchella* L. at m.v. light on 30.ix.1990 at Woodbury, Devon (OS grid ref. SY018 876). The specimen was caught at 03.05 hours during a spell of very warm southerly winds (the temperature at 03.00 hours was 60°F.). B. Skinner (pers. comm.) tells me that this species has not been recorded in Britain since 1982. Several other migrant species were observed on the night, including *Agrotis ipsilon* Hufn. (20), *Spodoptera exigua* Hb. (3) and large numbers of *Autographa gamma* L. Mr Philpott notes that both richly tinted and unicolourous forms of the latter (presumably "home-bred" and immigrant individuals) were present.— ADRIAN M. RILEY, Longmynd, 35 Park Mount, Harpenden, Herts AL5 3AS.

***Alevonota aurantiaca* Fauv. (Col.: Staphylinidae) recaptured at Mickleham, Surrey; with short notes on two of its congeners.**

On 25th April 1990, whilst collecting with my friend Prof. J.A. Owen on the wooded slopes between Headley Lane and Mickleham Downs, I swept a pallid-looking little Staphylinid which I dismissed at the time as a probable teneral example of some common Aleocharine. That evening it proved that I had taken the above very rare insect — an interesting repetition of G.C. Champion's capture of the first known British specimen in the same locality 122 years earlier (8.v.1868, cf. Fowler, 1888, *Col. Brit. Isl.* 2: 92). The species was then called *Homalota rufotestacea* Kr., which trivial name

is now applied to another *Alevonota*; indeed all four of our species have undergone changes of name, a fact that must be borne in mind in considering the old records.

When recording *A. aurantiaca* from Box Hill (two under a stone, iv.37) as the first find since Champion's — the site was only some hundreds of yards from that of my recent capture (1937, *Ent. Rec.* **49**: 136-7), I was unaware that the latter collector had also taken it at Guildford in the same county — several on one occasion by evening sweeping (*Ent. mon. Mag.*, ref. not to hand). It was taken also by Harwood, in the 1930s, in moss and by evening sweeping at Hambledon Hill, Blandford (Dorset), once in numbers (unpublished). The only other captures known to me are of one by the late J.L. Henderson in his garden at Purley, Surrey (1945, *Ent. mon. Mag.* **81**: 63, 65), and another by Mr D. Appleton at Portsdown, S. Hants (27.iii.73). *A. aurantiaca* appears to be exclusively confined to the chalk in Britain.

Another species of this scarce subterranean genus, *A. gracilenta* Er. (= *splendens* Kr.), is less seldom encountered than the last, but, unlike it, seems to occur almost invariably by single specimens. Since finding one at Windsor in 1939 (1940, *Ent. mon. Mag.* **76**: 32), I met with it on four occasions between 1958 and 1965 in my former garden at Blackheath by sweeping a lawn in warm afternoon sunshine; and lastly, one at Swanscombe, N.W. Kent, swept in a chalkpit, 29.v.69 — apparently a fairly typical habitat. I have seen one taken by Mr N. Holford on his garden lawn at Portsmouth, 25.ix.62. It will be seen from the above that *A. gracilenta* appears to have temporarily become a little less rare round about the 1960s, but I have heard of no further capture since my 1969 one. It was unrepresented in the Harwood collection; Donisthorpe's specimen was swept on the downs at Findon near Worthing (? unpublished).

A. rufotestacea Kr. (= *elegantula* Bris., *atricapilla* auct.), the least rare of our species but still extremely uncommon, I have taken only twice, in West Kent: one in the Thames Estuary area (as already recorded), and two in Darenth Wood (swept 6.v.60). The later capture adds one more to the very long list of rarities from that classic locality. Judging by those given in Fowler (*l.c. supra*) this should be rather especially a Surrey insect, but in later times has occurred more often in the New Forest (e.g. to P. Harwood and D. Appleton).— A.A. ALLEN, 49 Montcalm Road, Charlton, London SE7 8QG.

Examples of late and partial second and third broods of moths in the autumn of 1990 in the Isle of Wight.

1990 was the warmest year since the middle of the seventeenth century and had a prolonged hot summer and warm autumn similar to that of 1989. February and March also experienced above average temperatures and there was a considerable migration of butterflies and moths along the south coast in March. June was the only month which fell out of line being cool



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