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Newsletter 35 Autumn 2017

Well they do say things go in cycles and here I am, back again stepping in to edit this autumn edition of the BMIG newsletter. Richard Kelly has secured a post at the Chinese Academy of Sciences and I am sure all BMIG members would join me in wishing him well in his future career. I would like to thank Richard for his efforts in refreshing and updating this publication and overseeing its transition to an electronic format.

I am not intending to do more than step in as editor on an interim basis. I expect that a new Newsletter Editor will be elected at the AGM in March next year. Most of the other officers within the group will come to the end of their term at the same time. Most members appear reluctant to come forward and offer their time but we do need to involve more new people in running BMIG to ensure continuity. I outline the roles coming up for election in this newsletter and urge you to contact me or the Hon. Secretary Helen Read for more details or if you are interested in being nominated. The AGM will be held during the annual field meeting and this year we are gathering at the Crown Inn in Longtown, Herefordshire from 22nd to 25th March with a view to recording in Wales. This issue contains more details of the meeting and further information and a booking form can be found on the BMIG website.

Amazingly new species to Britain continue to be found, no less than four such species are reported below; three millipedes, *Cranogona dalensi*, *Cylindroiulus pyrenaicus*, and *Ommatoiulus moreletti*, all from South Wales and a woodlouse, *Philoscia affinis*, from Sussex. Guess why BMIG is visiting South Wales next year! Make sure you book early.

If you have any interesting reports, news items or photos for the next issue in spring 2018 then please send them to my email address found at the bottom of the newsletter.

Paul Lee

AGM notice

All BMIG members are invited to attend the AGM to be held at 8.00pm on Friday, 23rd March 2018. The venue will be The Crown Inn, Longtown, Herefordshire HR2 0LT

BMIG Field Weekend 22nd to 25th March 2018

Arrangements have been made for BMIG to stay at Longtown on the Welsh border for our annual get together in 2018. From our Herefordshire base it will be possible to go hunting for the 'Maerdy Monster' and the 'Beddau Beast' as described by Steve Gregory below. There are plenty of other myriapod and isopod 'goodies' in the area and there is always the possibility of discovering another species new to Britain or even a species as yet undescribed.

We have block-booked The Crown Inn, Longtown, a village pub with TripAdvisor 4 stars rating and a Certificate of Excellence. In addition to ensuite rooms the pub has 6 nice glamping pods/huts with a shower/toilet block nearby. A B&B plus Packed Lunch package has been negotiated and evening meals are available in the pub. Further details of the meeting and costs are available on the BMIG website and a booking form can be downloaded. Rooms are limited so early booking is advised and all bookings must be received by 31st January 2018 so don't put off looking at the website.

Officer Elections

By the AGM in March next year many of the officers will have served their first three year term. The existing officers are eligible for re-election but we encourage any member to express an interest in becoming more involved in running the organization and put themselves forward for election. Additionally, there are several roles that have never been filled. Ideally nominations would be communicated to the secretary Helen Read beforehand but they can also be made from the floor at the AGM. Officers to be elected during the AGM are:

1. Chairman
2. Vice-Chairman

3. Treasurer
4. Newsletter Editor – as Richard Kelly has resigned we need a new volunteer to take over
5. Bulletin Chief Editor
6. Centipede Recording Scheme Organiser
7. Millipede Recording Scheme Organiser
8. Woodlouse and Waterlouse Recording Scheme Organiser
9. Librarian and Collections Manager
10. Field Meeting Co-ordinator – I would like to see a new face getting involved in organising the meetings. Possible venues for future meetings in Derbyshire, Devon and Dorset have been found already.
11. Website Manager
12. Social Media Manager
13. Training Officer – This role has remained vacant since its creation.
14. Projects Officer – Another vacant role.
15. Conservation Office – Although strictly a vacant role, the chair and vice-chair have so far fulfilled the requirements between them. We would welcome someone giving the role their full attention.
16. BENHS representative

In addition to fulfilling the responsibilities of their role, the first eight officers listed above are automatically members of the BMIG committee that guides the direction the organization takes. Other officers may be co-opted onto the committee which meets at least once each year before the AGM and sometimes in the autumn as well.

Paul Lee

South Wales – yet another Chordeumatid millipede new to Britain

In the last newsletter (No. 34) I mentioned that Christian Owen had found a species of *Turdulisoma* millipede new to Britain at a former colliery spoil heap (now partially vegetated over) near Maerdy in the Welsh Valleys. A few weeks later in December 2016 Christian visited another colliery spoil heap, Cwm Coal Tips near Beddau in the Rhondda Valleys, and found another Chordeumatid millipede new to Britain. At 5mm long and lacking pigment this is the archetypal 'little white job'. In the field it is reminiscent of a small *Brachychaeteuma* species, but differs in the body being armoured with long curved

macrosetate. It was not until the end of March that Jörg Spelda managed to identify 'The Beddau Beast' as *Cranogona dalensi* Mauriès, 1965, a millipede originally described from the Pyrénées-Atlantiques in southern France.

I visited Cwm Coal Tips with Chris and Keith Lugg in February and we found *C. dalensi* to be widespread there and particularly easy to find in unvegetated wheel ruts on access tracks where its white body contrasted against the underlying dark colliery spoil. One of Keith's images of the 'Beddau Beast' has pride of place at the head of this issue and both can be found on the BMIG website:

<http://www.bmig.org.uk/species/Cranogona-dalensi>.

I asked Chris how many colliery sites he has surveyed for millipedes, expecting the answer to be 'many', but his reply was "just the two" (i.e. Maerdy and Beddau). This strongly suggests that there remains much more to be discovered in the post-industrial Welsh Valleys. A description of *C. dalensi*, based on specimens from Cwm Coal Tips, is being prepared for the BMIG Bulletin.

Steve Gregory

Two new Julids and a mystery solved

Over a decade ago, in 2004, Greg Jones collected some specimens of a 'two-tailed' *Cylindroiulus* from Kenfig Burrows and, nearby, at North Cornelly in Glamorganshire, south Wales. Although examined by Paul Lee, in the absence of a mature male it was not possible to identify the species at that time. Greg's discovery appears to have slipped from the collective consciousness of many myriapodologists in the UK. Then, in April this year Emma Williams visited Craig yr Aber, a woodland near Bridgend, Glamorganshire (SS85-85-, VC 41) and encountered a very distinctive millipede; very large (to 40mm in length), almost black and with contrasting pink legs and antennae. During a successful visit by Christian Owen to collect a male for identification he also picked up a handful of small brown '*Cylindroiulus*' specimens (about 15mm long) that were lurking under the same log. To Christian's surprise, these had a projecting telson and a projecting ventral scale. Of known British species, this combination is only seen in *Enataiulus armatus*, which is conspicuously hairy, and the recently discovered *Cylindroiulus apenninorum*, which is much larger

at 30mm or more. Chris's specimens were neither. Chris sent me male specimens of each millipede, which I provisionally identified as *Ommatoiulus moreleti* (Lucas, 1860) and *Cylindroiulus pyrenaicus* (Brölemann, 1897) respectively (both subsequently confirmed by Henrik Enghoff). Two Julid millipedes new for Britain under one log! Both species can be seen, side by side, in the image on the on the BMIG webs <http://www.bmig.org.uk/species/Ommatoiulus-moreleti>.

O. moreleti is native to Portugal and southern Spain but has been spread globally through human activity, becoming a pest in some areas, and is quite probably introduced into Britain. In contrast, *C. pyrenaicus* is only known from the Pyrenees and the Massif Central in southern France and it could feasibly be an over-looked native species. In light of this discovery, Greg sent me some faded specimens of his 'two-tailed' millipede collected in 2007. These also proved to be *C. pyrenaicus* and the mystery of the 'two-tailed' millipede from south Wales has finally been solved. A description of both species, based on Welsh specimens, is being prepared for the BMIG Bulletin.

Steve Gregory

A few records from Brownsea Island

Brownsea Island in Poole Harbour is known for, amongst other things, being one of the few sites left in Southern Britain for red squirrels (the Isle of Wight is another) and has been an area of wildlife conservation for many years. Now owned by the National Trust it was opened to the public in 1963. Much of the island is woodland with open areas and the remains of buildings whilst a large wetland area is a nature reserve. We visited the island this September (06.09.2017) and noted a few myriapods and woodlice (did not see any squirrels). The primary purpose of the visit was not to look for invertebrates.

Centipedes: *Lithobius forficatus* (3 sites), *Haplophilus subterraneus* (1 site), *Geophilus flavus* (1 site)

Millipedes: *Glomeris marginata* (1 site), *Proteroiulus fuscus* (2 sites), *Cylindroiulus caeruleocinctus* (2 sites), *C. punctatus* (1 site)

Woodlice: *Porcellio scaber*, *Oniscus asellus*, *Trichoniscus pusillus* agg, *Philoscia muscorum*

Clearly this list is limited and undoubtedly with

more searching and/or a different time of year further species would be found. What was notable was, however, the fact that although a total of five specimens, some large, of *L.forficatus* were collected and others seen, we saw no evidence of *Lithobius variegatus* in what would seem to be an obvious location for it both in terms of geography and ecology. More records of myriapods and woodlice from the Island would be of interest.

Tony Barber

Mouldy millipedes – Laboulbeniales fungi

In the last Newsletter, Henrik Enghoff drew our attention to the tiny fungus *Troglomyces triandrus* (order Laboulbeniales) which grows on *Archiboreoiulus pallidus* [Call for Information: Find a new fungus for Britain. Newsletter 34, Spring 2017]. Christian Owen took up the challenge but instead of finding a new fungus for Britain, found a new millipede - *Cylindroiulus pyrenaicus* – but that's another story (see 'Two new Julids and a mystery solved' above). Chris found several specimens of *C. pyrenaicus* collected from Craig yr Aber, Glamorganshire (SS85-85-, VC 41) in May 2017 to be infected with a Laboulbeniales fungus growing around their anterior legs. This was identified by Henrik Enghoff as *Rickia laboulbenioides*, the second British record for this fungus (which is probably seriously under-recorded) and a new host millipede species. *Rickia laboulbenioides* was described as recently as 2013 growing on *C. latestriatus* (from The Netherlands and Belgium) and has been found on *C. punctatus*, *C. perforatus* and *C. dahlia*. It could be expected to turn up on other species of *Cylindroiulus* known in Britain (if only someone was to look!).

Laboulbeniales fungi preserve well in alcohol and recently many new species have been described from millipede specimens held in museum collections (Santamaria, *et al.* 2016). In light of this I checked through my personal collection of Julida and out of about 100 tubes I found one containing some *Cylindroiulus latestriatus* (from an inland heathland in Oxfordshire) that bore the characteristic fungal growths around the anterior legs. The actual species of Laboulbeniales has yet to be identified, but given the host millipede *Rickia laboulbenioides* is most likely. Do look out for millipedes (of all orders, not just Julida) that are infected with Laboulbeniales and to check through

any preserved specimens you may have. Henrik Enghoff at the Natural History Museum of Denmark (henghoff@snm.ku.dk) will be very interested in your observations.

Ref: Santamaria, S., Enghoff, H. & Reboleira, A.S.P.S. (2016) Hidden biodiversity revealed by collections-based research - Laboulbeniales in millipedes: genus *Rickia*. *Phytotaxa* **243** (2): 101–127.

Steve Gregory

***Oritoniscus flavus* in Scotland**

Warren Maguire has been very active in the Edinburgh area mainly recording woodlice. Perhaps the highlight of his work was the discovery in July 2017 of a new population of *Oritoniscus flavus* at Inveresk, Musselburgh, East Lothian about 100m from the River Esk. *Oritoniscus flavus* was first recorded from Scotland by Duncan Sivell in 2010 from beside the River North Esk at Melville Castle, near Edinburgh, and in 2011 at two additional sites along an 8km stretch of the North Esk. Warren's record extends this known range by a few more kilometres north, more or less to the Scottish coastline. *O. flavus* is clearly well-established along the River Esk. Prior to 2010 the only known British sites for this species were in south Wales some 500 km to the south! Images of Warren's *O. flavus* can be seen on the BMIG website: <http://www.bmig.org.uk/species/Oritoniscus-flavus>.

Let's hope that Warren turns to millipedes and centipedes with the same enthusiasm, and success.

Steve Gregory

Two *Philoscia* in Britain!

The Striped Woodlouse *Philoscia muscorum* (Scopoli, 1763) is ubiquitous in southern England, where it rarely gets a second glance from most woodlouse recorders. However, a second species *Philoscia affinis* Verhoeff, 1908 occurs across the Channel. Although most common in south-western Europe, it occurs widely across Europe, including northern France, and has been recently discovered in Belgium (Boeraeve, *et al.*, in press). This is a species I thought likely to occur in Britain, but I have failed to find it, probably because I rarely bother to check specimens of *Philoscia*. In

July, I received an email from Pepijn Boeraeve, a member of Spinicornis, the organisation studying and promoting the terrestrial isopods of Belgium (<https://www.spinicornis.be/>), informing me that they had found *Philoscia affinis* in the UK. The discovery of a male specimen of *Philoscia affinis*, apparently collected in the UK in 1985, held in the collection of the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences (RBINS) prompted members of Spinicornis to visit south-east England this summer specifically to look for *P. affinis*. To cut a long story short, one male and several females of *P. affinis* were collected from leaf litter in woodland near Houghton (Arundel) in West Sussex. This discovery is being written up in the BMIG Bulletin.

Philoscia affinis closely resembles the ubiquitous *P. muscorum*. In *P. affinis* the head is typically the same colour as the body, whereas in *P. muscorum* the head is typically black (but not always!), contrasting against the less darkly pigmented body. For reliable identification the male 7th pereopod needs to be examined to check for the distinctive hook found at the base of the merus in *P. affinis*. There also seem to be some differences in habitat preferences. Both Faune de France (Vandel, 1962) and Die Tierre Deutschlands (Gruner, 1966) describe *P. affinis* as a woodlouse of wet woodlands, whereas in Britain *P. muscorum* prefers dry sunny grasslands. An interesting paper about *P. affinis* in northern France (in French – but with pictures!) can be downloaded from: http://www.gretia.org/phocadownload/cahiers_gretia/IA06/Invertebres_Armoricains_N6_2010_06-07-Robert-isopoda-philosciidae.pdf.

Please do look out for pale-headed *Philoscia* specimens, especially in wet woodland and in south-east England. If evidence in Belgium is anything to go by this is likely to be an overlooked species in Britain.

Ref: Boeraeve, P., De Smedt, P., Arijs, G. & Segers, S. (in press) *Philoscia affinis* Verhoeff, 1908 new to Belgium (Isopoda: Philosciidae). *Bulletin S.R.B.E./K.B.V.E.*

Steve Gregory

Vernacular names of centipedes

Wireworms

At the Tremough Campus Bioblitz (Penryn) this

year I was displaying, amongst other live animals, a specimen of *Haplophilus souletinus* as an example of a geophilomorph centipede. One visitor looking at it said that it was a “wireworm” and that he had always called them by that name. He had been brought up in Surrey but had lived in Cornwall for many years and did not know them by any other name. In the older literature, there are references to this order of centipedes being known as wireworms (sometimes also as “glow-worms” because of their bioluminescence) but it is interesting to hear someone actually use the name.

Jack-o'-the knives

In Peter Marren and Richard Mabey's *Bugs Britannica* (2010), a copy of which I have recently acquired, an illustrated *Lithobius variegatus* is named as “Jack-o'-the knives, the large foxy-red centipede”.

They also list vernacular names: forty-feeter (Orkney), forty-legs (E England), Jecky forty-feet (Scotland), Jennie-hunder-feet (or legs) (**Scotland**), Jock wi' the money feet (Scotland), Maggie hunder-legs (Orkney), Maggie monny-feet, Martin o' the knives, Meg-money-legs (N England), red fox. I would be interested to know if people still know of these names or of other similar ones.

Tony Barber

A centipede folk song

Also from Peter Marren and Richard Mabey's book.

The Wee Kircudbright Centipede

The centipede, justifiably proud of her dexterity, entertains her neighbours with a beautiful little dance which she performs without fault until a jealous spider innocently asks her how she does it. Humiliation follows:

*As legs number 1 and 2 were tied with 3 and 4
Legs number 5 and 6 were canceled on the floor
Leg number 17 was attacked by number 10
98 and 99 will never dance again.*

For the full lyrics, search on line. According to PM & RM, the moral is ‘never try to explain what comes naturally’.

Tony Barber

Stella Turk (1925-2017)

Stella Turk, a link through her late husband Frank

Turk (F.A.T.; 1911-1986) to an earlier generation of myriapod researchers, died at her home in Cornwall on 3rd April 2017. Born in Scilly, she spent part of her childhood in New Zealand but grew up in Cornwall where she spent most of her life working together with F.A.T. involved in natural history, conservation and adult education. She was national recorder for marine molluscs and strandings recorder for Cornwall and, amongst many other publications, contributed significantly to the first edition of the Red Data Book for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. With Frank, she helped found the Cornish Biological Records Unit (CBRU, now ERCCIS), initially within Exeter University's Cornish Studies Unit and later with Cornwall Wildlife Trust and although she officially "retired" in 1994 she continued to play a significant part in recording in Cornwall & Scilly for most of the rest of her life. She was awarded the Stamford Raffles Medal by the Zoological Society of London (1979), an Honorary MSc from Exeter University (1980) and an MBE (2003).

Although Stella herself did not work directly on myriapods, she had a wide range of interests and was known to phone every so often to tell you about something she had discovered and that she thought you might be interested in. It seems from the records that in 1948 she collected the first recorded specimen of a centipede not known at the time from Holy Vale, St. Marys and included in a collection made by her husband. The species was subsequently found again on Scilly by Dick Jones and on The Isle of Wight by Andy Keay and described as *Nothogeophilus turki* Lewis, Jones & Keay, 1988, named in honour of F.A.T.

It seems that Stella was also something of a poet and a number of verses written by her can be found on the web at [www.jane-herbert.co.uk/stella / index.php](http://www.jane-herbert.co.uk/stella/index.php) from which the following are taken.

Scientific names for animals (March 2005)

All such names are 'latinised in every language used

Canis familiaris is our familiar canine,

Felis catus is our less familiar feline

Equus, the horse, is an equine

Whilst *Leo*, the lion is leonine.

Always unexpectedly, up it pops –

The colourful Hoopoe, *Upops epops*.

Garrulus garrulus the Jay

Has more than enough to say.

*Porcellio scaber**, our 'grammar sow

(Has common names meaning pig or cow).

Not all names are descriptive or who would wish

To have his name given to a fish**?

Perhaps the less said the better

About *Homo sapiens*, unwise 'go-getter'.

Author's notes:

* Literally 'the scabby little pig!' All countries have common names but none reach the 200 or so in English. Look at the underside of a specimen to see why they are called sows and cows.

** It is an honour to have one's name given to an animal by the person describing it. For example, *Gobius couchi* 'Couch's Goby' was named after the famous Polperro naturalist and fish expert Dr Jonathan Couch.

The untouchable (or pooper-scooper) woodlouse
(September 1998)

Its day is as night

As it has no sight

And away from the light

It becomes quite white.

Ants treat it as a guest

And never a pest

As well they might

For this little louse

Cleans up their house.

But horror!

It is said that if they're in the mood

It becomes a morsel of ant food!

Author's notes: *Platyarthrus hoffmansegii* is a small white, blind woodlouse, mainly found in the nests of ants. It feeds on the faeces of its hosts which, in general, ignore it.

Tony Barber

Kenneth Hill (1924-2016)

Ken Hill was a regular attendee at BMIG field meetings for many years and a very familiar figure to many of us, dressed in fatigues with his yellow hessian bag over his shoulder and stick in hand. In his later years he continued to join in the fieldwork, come rain or shine, and didn't hesitate to get down on his knees to grub about looking for beasties.

Ken had a lifelong interest in Natural History but it was only after his retirement that he enrolled in

the Open University and in 1991 obtained a BA in Ecology and Conservation. After graduating he continued structured study attending many Field Studies Council courses. He was a broad naturalist, interested in molluscs, spiders and other groups of invertebrates found in the same habitats as myriapods and Isopods. He was also interested in plant galls and lichens and was an active member of the South London Botanical Institute as well as regularly attending meetings of the London Natural History Society.



Ken Hill at the BMIG meeting Kent in 2011

Ken lived in Essex and worked for British Rail, mostly as a booking clerk at Grays. He always travelled to our meetings by train and when necessary didn't hesitate to embark on lengthy and complicated journeys to reach us. He was proud of and committed to his family (he had five children) and stopped coming along to field meetings when he became a full-time carer for his wife who predeceased him. Subsequently his own health prevented him from re-joining the meetings.

Ken was quietly spoken but didn't hesitate to speak up if he had something important to say. He was very grateful for the help that people gave him when he was less mobile but had a dogged determination to join in if he possibly could and this included the occasional long walk to or from field sites. He was happy to 'muck in' with whatever accommodation was available and was a staunch vegetarian. As he got older and slower he was frequently the last one out in the morning and often last to get to meeting points but joked that at least if he had made it then everyone must be there! We miss his quiet humour and being able to gently pull his leg!

Next issue – Spring 2018

The next instalment of the newsletter will be available in the spring. If you have any news, interesting findings or photos that you would like featured please send them to the interim newsletter editor at the email address below by the 10th February 2018.

And finally

In an issue packed with new finds I refer you to a recent paper authored by Karin Voigtländer, Etienne Iorio, Peter Decker & Jörg Spelda which describes a new species, *Lithobius crassipesoides*. The species is only distinguished from *L. crassipes* by subtle differences in leg spinulation and the structure of the male leg 15. The paper shows the known distribution of *L. crassipesoides* to be northern Spain. It would be easy to be parochial and ignore this paper but never forget the number of species from northern Spain and the Pyrenees that have turned up in Wales recently. Who knows what you could discover by looking at those LBJs more closely.

Reference

Voigtländer K, Iorio E, Decker P, Spelda J (2017) The subgenus *Monotarsobius* in the Iberian Peninsula with a description of a new pseudo-cryptic species from Northern Spain revealed by an integrative revision of *Lithobius crassipes* L. Koch, 1862 (Chilopoda, Lithobiomorpha, Lithobiidae). *ZooKeys* **681**: 1–38.

<https://doi.org/10.3897/zookeys.681.12942>

Round BMIG Quiz Answers

Round BMIG Quiz 2 was obviously no problem for self-styled 'old lag' Steve Gregory and Dave Bilton and Tony Barber who all solved it quickly.

What place in England links a littoral diplopod and a littoral isopod with a disastrous Tiger, naturists and a memorial tank? The place is Slapton Sands in South Devon. The species are *Thalassiosobates littoralis* and *Stenophiloscia glarearum*. 'Exercise Tiger', the 1944 rehearsals for D-Day landings, were off-shore here – over 700 troops were killed by friendly fire and an attack by a Nazi E-boat. A Sherman tank is part of a memorial to that exercise. The nudist beach is at the Strete end of the Sands. Steve also pointed out that Slapton is the type locality for *Anthogona britannica*.

Round BMIG Quiz 3

Find the link between a notable locality for individual BMIG species with other information about the locality. Please remember to solve all elements of the puzzle.

What place in Ireland links two isopods (one was formerly elusive, the other might have been a railway passenger) with Kate Bush's Sensual World, Mrs Bloom's first date, The Ginger Man's house, and gun-running by a future president?

Think you know the answers? No prizes, but email pha@ceh.ac.uk.

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