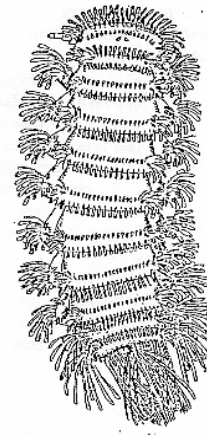




# British Myriapod and Isopod Group



Autumn 2006

Newsletter number 13

Editor: Paul Lee

## BMIG business

Thanks to Glyn Collis for his excellent organisation of the AGM weekend at Ayr. The myriapodological highlight was the discovery of a population of *Chordeuma sylvestre* at Culzean Castle, only the third British location and the only site for the species outside of Cornwall. Aside from that, clinging by fingertips whilst edging across a vertical river cliff brought colour to the cheeks of your editor, especially when he discovered the new footpath on the way back down the Ayr Gorge! We all left Ayr buoyed by a successful weekend but a little unsure of where we would be meeting in 2007. Thankfully Paul Harding stepped in and has ensured that arrangements are in place for us to visit Shropshire (see below for more details).

If you have visited the BMIG website ([www.bmig.org.uk](http://www.bmig.org.uk)) recently you will have noticed a large number of changes. If you have not visited then it is well worth a look. Again it is Glyn Collis we must thank for taking on the responsibility of setting up and regularly updating the new site.

## Steve Hopkin

For members who have not already heard I have to report the sad news of the death of our chairman, Steve Hopkin, in a car accident just a few weeks after the Ayr meeting. His death is a great loss to BMIG and everyone will be aware of the massive contribution he made to woodlice recording in this country. Fewer will be aware of his important work with a wide range of other soil invertebrates. Most recently he generously contributed a large number of his photographs to illustrate the new millipede atlas. A fuller obituary is being prepared for publication in the Bulletin but for now our thoughts and prayers are with his family.

## Millipede Atlas

With this issue you should have received details of a special offer for BMIG members allowing you to purchase one copy of the new millipede atlas at a discounted price. Please note that this is a time limited offer and all orders must be with the treasurer by the end of January 2007. The atlas will not be available directly from BRC and after the deadline you will have to pay the full price from the publishers or through a book seller.

## 2007 Field meeting and AGM.

With this issue you will have received a booking form inviting you to attend the 2007 AGM weekend from 29<sup>th</sup> March to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007 at the Bishop Mascall Centre, Ludlow, Shropshire. As was the case last year, this is the weekend before Easter, not our traditional weekend after Easter. You have until 15<sup>th</sup> February 2007 to book your place but as always prompt responses are much appreciated.

## AGM notice

All BMIG members are invited to attend the AGM to be held at 7pm on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2007. The venue will be the Bishop Mascall Centre, Ludlow. The minutes of the 2006 AGM held at the Scottish Agricultural College at Auchincruive are on the BMIG website so you can check what was said last time.

The present committee is keen to receive nominations for new committee members from any BMIG member. Ideally nominations would be communicated to the secretary beforehand but they can also be made from the floor at the AGM.

## Proposed amendments to By-laws

Notice is hereby given of a proposal to amend the By-laws of BMIG at the AGM to be held on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2007. It is proposed that the elected office of webmaster is created and the role of the librarian is expanded to include the curation of the BMIG collections at Dinton Pastures. The first By-law relating to the Committee would then read:

*The elected officers shall comprise the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, **Librarian & Curator**, Recording Scheme Organisers (if not otherwise elected), **Webmaster** and up to five other elected or co-opted members.*

## Maitland Emmet BENHS Research Fund

BENHS have asked the BMIG committee to remind members that they are entitled to apply for research grants from the Maitland Emmet BENHS Research Fund. Grants of up to £500 are available for work relevant to the British invertebrate fauna. Applications should be made by 30<sup>th</sup> September in the year prior to commencing the work. See the BENHS website ([www.benhs.org.uk](http://www.benhs.org.uk)) for more details.

## Pensoft publications

I hope that many BMIG members will have seen advance publicity for the Millipede Atlas which has been published by Pensoft Publishers in Bulgaria. Pensoft's own flier promoting the book also shows a number of other myriapod works they have published and which may be of interest to BMIG members in the UK. Eric Philp has suggested reducing the cost of postage and the charges associated with converting sterling to Euros by submitting a bulk order. If anyone is interested in obtaining copies of any of the books (*The millipedes (Diplopoda) of the Asian part of Russia, A Catalogue and Key to the centipedes (Chilopoda) of Bulgaria, Nomenclator generum et familiarum Diplopodorum II*) please let me know by the end of the year. The books could then be available for collection at the AGM in Ludlow.

## Bulletin of the British Myriapod & Isopod Group Vol. 21

Volume 21 (2006) of our *Bulletin* has now been published and over the next few weeks copies will be sent out to regular subscribers. This 92 page issue contains articles on further studies on *Geophilus carpophagus* (s.l.), *Asellus communis* in Northumberland, habitat preferences in *Polyxenus*, *Adenomeres gibbosa* new to the UK, myriapods from the Channel Islands, a report on the 1994 Hungary field trip and reports on field meetings in Cheshire, Buckinghamshire and Durham as well as an index to volumes 1 to 20.

As you know, we do not currently charge a membership fee or for the cost of the biannual *Newsletter*. However we do need to cover costs of printing and circulation of the *Bulletin* and for the current issue this is, for individual subscribers, £12.75 including postage (UK) or £15 including postage (elsewhere). Copies are available from Tony Barber (tbarber@pcfe.ac.uk) and payment may be made in sterling by cheque, money order or bank transfer or in cash (£ or €).

## *Armadillidium vulgare* in West Central Scotland

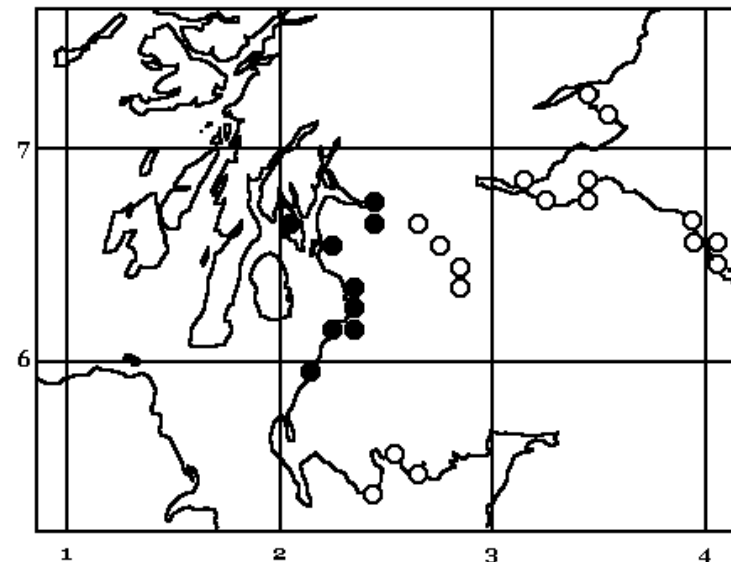
The 2006 spring meeting in Ayrshire produced a good number of records of *Armadillidium vulgare*; not something to get excited about by those from the deep south, but in Scotland this species is clearly approaching the edge of its distribution.

In the 1985 Atlas, its distribution in Scotland appears as scattered records in three bands: the East coast as far north as Fife; the Solway coast; and the onetime market gardening belt of the Clyde valley in Lanarkshire from Lesmahagow to Rutherglen, where many but all not records were from glasshouses. The Atlas also shows an isolated record from Troon on the west coast. This pattern adds substantially to the impression that, over the whole of the British Isles, *Armadillidium vulgare* has an anti-north-western distribution, sometimes described as an anti-atlantic tendency. However, we now know that the Troon record is not an outlier. Instead it may represent a fourth band in *A. vulgare*'s Scottish distribution, or more likely it tells us that this species is distributed, perhaps thinly, all round the coast of Scotland as far north as the Clyde in the West and the Tay in the East.

Here is the evidence in the form of a list of Scottish west coast sites from south to north. Dagger marks indicate records from the BMIG spring meeting 2006, including re-visits made during the meeting to the site of the Atlas record from Troon, and to other sites discovered since the Atlas was compiled. Asterisks indicate records NOT obtained during the BMIG Spring 2006 meeting.

- † NX19 Pinbain Bridge (site discovered by Jim McLeary who showed us exactly where to look), also new shoreline sites near Craiggelly south of Girvan.
- † NS21 Culzean Country Park, new site
- † NS31 Dalrymple Church, new site
- † NS32 Scottish Agricultural College Auchincruive and Prestwick Dunes, new sites
- † NS33 Troon Station, the site of the Atlas record (J.Naden, 1979)
- † NS25 Fairlie shoreline NS2054 (site discovered by J.Gill 1985/6)
- \* NS06 two sites in Ardbeg, Isle of Bute (via G.Collis, 2005 and 2006)
- \* NS46 two sites in Paisley (D.Mellor, Paisley Museum, 1991)
- \* NS47 two sites in Clydebank (S.Futter, publ. in *Glasgow Naturalist*)

These records suggest that the imbalance in Atlas records from eastern and western Central Scotland is probably due to collecting effort. It remains uncertain how much this changes the broader picture of an anti-north-western distribution for *A. vulgare* as there is also an absence of records from north-west Ireland. So, who do we know in Galway?



Map. 1 *Armadillidium vulgare* in central Scotland  
The filled circles denote the records listed here, the open circles are Scottish records appearing in the 1985 Atlas. The few post-Atlas Scottish records other than from the west coast are not plotted. Atlas records from the north-east coast of Ireland are omitted too.

Records from the BMIG meeting are from Steve Gregory, Steve Hopkin, Jim McLeary, Eric Philp, Mike Davidson, Glyn & Dawn Collis. The Fairlie site was reported to me by

Jennifer Gill who discovered it while doing a 6<sup>th</sup> form project in 1985/6. Unfortunately, I had just moved south to Warwickshire, and was unable to check it until 2004 when Jennifer was proved correct. I could not resist revisiting the site during the Ayr meeting. Richard Weddle kindly alerted me to the Paisley records. The Bute records were made with the help of Becky and Sue Hothersall, and David Peveril. Many thanks to Steve Gregory for producing the map at short notice. Thanks also to Scottish Natural Heritage for financial support to the BMIG for the Ayr meeting.  
Glyn Collis, Seasgair, Ascog, Isle of Bute, PA20 9ET.

### Outdoor *Oxidus*

*Oxidus gracilis* out of doors, against a north facing wall at latitude 55° north in Northern Ireland - it is true! On the 27<sup>th</sup> August 2006, under a piece of wet plywood lying on the ground, I found two millipedes of a very distinctive conker brown colour with bright yellow paranota. They keyed easily to *Oxidus gracilis* but I checked with Roy Anderson who kindly confirmed the identification. Both were female but on 16<sup>th</sup> September, in the same place, a male turned up. Although quite close to my conservatory, which is full of tropical plants, I have never come across any of these millipedes there and escape would be difficult. The area is prepared for conversion to a patio and the sand has already been laid down, but the patio will have to wait now until next spring, in order to determine whether this small colony survives the winter. Other millipedes found under the same piece of plywood were *Tachypodoiulus niger* and *Cylindroiulus punctatus*. The garden also supports populations of *Cylindroiulus londinensis* and *britannicus*, *Polydesmus angustus*, *denticulatus* and *inconstans*, *Brachyiulus pusillus*, *Glomeris marginata*, *Leptoiulus belgicus* and *Ophiulus pusillus*.

Peter H. Langton, 5, Kylebeg Avenue, Coleraine, Londonderry BT52 1JN

### Recent changes to the names of British woodlice

Recently, I have been sent a copy of the World Catalog of terrestrial Isopods (Schmalfuss 2003). This lists all the valid genera, species (over 3500) and synonyms known up to the year 2000.

Whilst looking through it became apparent that a few name changes to the British and Irish check list are required. In brief there are two name changes, a species split and eight minor spelling mistakes. These are detailed below.

#### Name changes:

1. *Stenophiloscia zosteræ* Verhoeff, 1928 and the five other species of *Stenophiloscia* described by Verhoeff, including *Stenophiloscia glarearum* Verhoeff, 1908 are synonymous. *S. glarearum* Verhoeff, 1908 takes precedence. This synonymy is made on the grounds that none of these species can be distinguished from existing illustrations. Thus a single species, *S. glarearum*, occurs along the Atlantic and western Mediterranean coasts. Two other species occur in the eastern Mediterranean.

2. *Eluma purpurascens* Budde-Lund, 1885 and *Eluma caelatum* (Miers, 1877) are synonymous. *E. caelatum* (Miers, 1877) takes precedence. This long suspected synonymy has been confirmed by examination of the type

material of *Armadillidium caelatum* held at the BMNH. The world distribution stretches from England, down through western Europe and into North West Africa and many adjacent Islands. It has been introduced into French Guiana (the type locality) and Tasmania.

#### Species split:

1. It has long been recognised that *Trichoniscus pusillus* occurs as two forms in Britain. Traditionally, these have been treated as sub-species and consequently the two have rarely been differentiated during field work. These have been elevated to full species status. *Trichoniscus pusillus* ssp. *pusillus* Brandt, 1833 becomes *Trichoniscus pusillus* Brandt, 1833. *Trichoniscus pusillus* ssp. *provisorius* Racovitza, 1908 becomes *Trichoniscus provisorius* Racovitza, 1908. This essentially adds a species to the British check-list. The two species can be separated by microscopic examination of mature males, but this is a tricky procedure. Fortunately, *T. pusillus* Brandt, 1833 is parthenogenetic and populations are almost entirely composed of females. The low proportion of males, comprising about 1% of the population, is in itself a convenient means of separating the two species (see Harding & Sutton 1985).

#### Spelling amendments:

1. *Haplophthalmus mengii* (ending in double 'ii') is the correct spelling of *Haplophthalmus mendei* (Zaddach, 1844).
2. *Metatrichoniscoides leydigii* (ending in double 'ii') is the correct spelling of *Metatrichoniscoides leydigi* Weber, 1880.
3. *Trichoniscoides helveticus* (Carl, 1908) (with the authority in parentheses) is the correct spelling. Carl's original description of *Trichoniscoides helveticus* was in the genus *Trichoniscus* (as *T. albidus* var *helveticus*).
4. *Halophiloscia couchii* (ending in double 'ii') is the correct spelling for *Halophiloscia couchi* (Kinahan, 1858).
5. *Platyarthus hoffmannseggii* (ending in double 'ii') is the correct spelling for *Platyarthus hoffmannseggi* Brandt, 1833.
6. *Porcellio laevis* (Latreille, 1804) (with the authority in parentheses) is the correct spelling. Latreille's original description of this species was in the genus *Oniscus* (as *O. laevis*).
7. *Trachelipus rathkii* (ending in double 'ii') is the correct spelling of *Trachelipus rathkei* Brandt, 1883.
8. Trachelipodidae (often mis-spelt as Trachelipidae) is the correct spelling for the family name as erected by Strouhal, 1953. This corrected by Souza-Kury (1993).

An updated (2004) version of Schmalfuss's World Catalog of terrestrial Isopods can be downloaded in PDF format from the following web link:  
<http://www.naturkundemuseum-bw.de/stuttgart/projekte/oniscidea-catalog/>

Summary Table:

Old Name (as used in Harding & Sutton 1985, Hopkin 1991, Oliver & Meechan 1993)	New Name (after Schmalfuss, 2003)
Name Changes	
<i>Stenophiloscia zosteræ</i> Verhoeff, 1928	<i>Stenophiloscia glarearum</i> Verhoeff, 1908
<i>Eluma purpurascens</i> Budde-Lund, 1885	<i>Eluma caelatum</i> (Miers, 1877)
Species Split	
<i>Trichoniscus pusillus provisorius</i> Racovitza, 1908	<i>Trichoniscus provisorius</i> Racovitza, 1908
<i>Trichoniscus pusillus pusillus</i> Brandt, 1883	<i>Trichoniscus pusillus</i> Brandt, 1883
Spelling Corrections	
<i>Metatrichoniscoides leydigi</i> Weber, 1880	<i>Metatrichoniscoides leydigii</i> Weber, 1880
<i>Haplophthalmus mengei</i> (Zaddach, 1844)	<i>Haplophthalmus mengii</i> (Zaddach, 1844)
<i>Halophiloscia couchi</i> (Kinahan, 1858)	<i>Halophiloscia couchii</i> (Kinahan, 1858)
<i>Platyarthrus hoffmannseggii</i> Brandt, 1833	<i>Platyarthrus hoffmannseggii</i> Brandt, 1833
<i>Trachelipus rathkei</i> Brandt, 1883	<i>Trachelipus rathkii</i> Brandt, 1883
<i>Trichoniscoides helveticus</i> Carl, 1908	<i>Trichoniscoides helveticus</i> (Carl, 1908)
<i>Porcellio laevis</i> Latreille, 1804	<i>Porcellio laevis</i> (Latreille, 1804)
Family Trachelipidae	Family Trachelipodidae

Schmalfuss (2003). World catalog of terrestrial isopods (Isopoda: Oniscidea). *Stuttgarter Beitrage zur Naturkunde*, Serie A, nr. 654

Souza-Kury, L.A. (1993). Trachelipodidae Strouhal, 1953 - correct spelling of Trachelipidae (Isopoda, Oniscidea). *Crustaceana* **65** : 111-112

Steve Gregory  
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### In the journals

The following recent paper may be of interest to newsletter readers:

Hodge, S. & Standen, V. 2006. The use of 'cryptozoa boards' to examine distribution of woodlice (Isopoda) and millipedes (Diplopoda) in a disused limestone quarry. *Entomologist's Monthly Magazine*, **142** (2), 55-61. This paper discusses the use of ceramic tiles as artificial refuges for the investigation of the millipede and woodlouse fauna of Durham Wildlife Trust's Bishop Middleham Quarry Reserve. The paper concludes that the use of cryptozoa boards is a valuable, non-destructive sampling technique that detected the majority of the target species present at this site. Unfortunately this latter claim was proved incorrect by the BMIG visit to the site during the 2005 AGM weekend. Hodge & Standen found five species of millipede present in the quarry. Two of these were not seen by BMIG members but a further five species were

found so at best the cryptozoa boards attracted just 50% of the species present.

### Autumn meeting 2007, Oban area, Argyll.

I am exploring the possibility of organising a meeting in the autumn of next year. If you are interested, please contact me as soon as possible as arrangements will have to be made before the next Newsletter. The Oban area has a benign climate, though absence of rain cannot be guaranteed. Possible places to visit include the limestone island of Lismore and/or Torosay Castle Gardens on the Isle of Mull. Glyn Collis, Seasgair, Ascog, Isle of Bute, PA20 9ET. E-mail: g.m.collis@warwick.ac.uk

### Myriapod and Isopod courses

Following the success of previous courses in 2004, 2005 and 2006, the FSC course "Identifying Centipedes, Millipedes and Woodlice" is being offered again from 2-5 March 2007 at Flatford Mill. Early booking is recommended as places are limited. To book or for further details contact: Flatford Mill, East Bergholt CO7 6UL. Tel: 01206 298283.

A one day workshop on "Woodlice, Centipedes and Millipedes" aimed at enthusiastic adult beginners is being held at Hill End Field Study Centre in Oxfordshire on 17<sup>th</sup> April 2007. To book or for further details contact: Hill End, Eynsham Rd, Farmoor, OX2 9NJ. Tel: 01865 863510

### NEXT NEWSLETTER: Spring 2007

Please send your contributions to reach the editor by  
**28 February 2007**

Supplies of record cards and additional copies of the British Myriapod and Isopod Group Newsletter can be obtained from the Biological Records Centre.

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The British Myriapod and Isopod Group Newsletter is printed and distributed for the British Myriapod and Isopod Group by the Biological Records Centre, supported by funding from the NERC Centre for Ecology and Hydrology and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee.

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