DYFED INVERTEBRATE GROUP

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MOLLUSCA

LAND MOLLUSCS AT GWBERT, CEREDIGION (22/1648) - A O CHATER

Three main habitats were searched for land molluscs during the DIG field meeting on 12 July 1987 - the Salix cinerea scrub and associated marsh east of the road, the dry sand dunes, and the flushed boulder clay cliff slope above the sea circa 500 m south of the Cliff Hotel. A total of thirty-five species is now known from these three areas, and as this includes only three species of slug with a total of thirty-two snails the site is unusually rich and interesting.

Cochlicella acuta occurs in abundance on the seaward edge of the sand dunes and on the young dunes towards the shingle spit. It has a very western, Atlantic distribution in Britain and Europe, and is otherwise known in Ceredigion only at Mwnt. Cernuella virgata, widespread on the dunes, is known from only four other sites in Ceredigion, all coastal and sandy. Candidula intersecta, also widespread on the dunes, is common in many places on the Ceredigion coast and along the railway tracks and in various other synanthropic sites inland. All three species are post-glacial arrivals in Britain, unlike other characteristic species of the dunes like Vallonia excentrica and Cochlicopa lubricella which have a much longer history as natives.

A comparison of the plants of Pen-yr-ergyd (the Gwbert dunes) and Ynyslas, the much larger dune sytem at the north end of Ceredigion, shows great differences which reflect the greater age of the Pen-yr-ergyd dunes and the fact that they are built up over somewhat calcareous boulder clay. The only striking difference in molluscs is the absence of Cochlicella acuta from Ynys-las, perhaps for climatic reasons (it is absent from most of the Merioneth dune systems, although it is widespread on the North Wales coast and extends right up to NW Scotland); and the absence of Pupilla muscorum from Pen-yr-ergyd whereas it is abundant at Ynys-las, again perhaps for some climatic reason as it has a distinctly anti-Atlantic and continental distribution in Britain as a whole.

The most interesting molluscan feature of the two marshy sites is the presence of three species of Vertigo, V. pygmaea being rare in Ceredigion where it occurs most often in marshes and less frequently on the dry sites which are characteristic for it over most of Britain.

Species lists

22/163487 Rank marsh of Oenanthe crocata, Athyrium filix-femina, Epilobium hirsutum and Eupatorium cannabinum co-dominant.

Aegopinella nitidula
A. pura
Arion ater agg.
A. intermedius
Ashfordia granulata
Carychium minimum
C. tridentatum
Cepaea hortensis
C nemoralis
Cochlicopa lubrica
Discus rotundatus
Euconulus fulvus s.s.
Lauria cylindracea
Leiostyla anglica
Oxychilus alliarius
O. cellarius
O.draparnaudi
Punctum pygmaeum
Trichia hispida
Vertigo antivertigo
V.substriata
Zonitoides nitidus

22/161487-162487 Dry dunes

Aegopinella nitidula
Arion ater agg.
Candidula intersecta
Cepaea hortensis
C. nemoralis
Cernuella virgata
Cochlicella acuta
Cochlicopa lubrica
C. lubricella
Discus rotundatus
Helix aspersa
Lauria cylindracea
Oxychilus alliarius
Puncturn pygmaeum
Trichia hispida
Vallonia excentrica
Vitrina pellucida

22/161496 Flushes on boulder clay sea cliffs with rank Filipendula ulmaria, Phragmites, Arrhenatherum, Iris pseudacorus, Equisetum palustre, Eupatorium cannabinum locally dominant or abundant.

Aegopinella nitidula
A. pura
Carychium minimum
C. tridentatum
Cepaea nemoralis
Cochlicopa lubrica
Deroceras laeve
Discus rotundatus
Euconulus alderi
Leiostyla anglica
Nesovitrea hammonis
Oxychilus cellarius
Punctum pygmaeum
Trichia hispida
Vertigo pygmaea
V. substriata
Vitrea contracta
V. crystallina

COLEOPTERA

BEETLES OF.THE TAN-Y-BWLCH AREA, ABERYSTWYTH (22/580800), VC46 - D C BOYCE

During 1987 some beetles were collected from the shingle beach at Tan-y-bwlch, including marshy areas behind the beach associated with Afon Ystwyth, and also from the dry slopes of Allt-wen immediately to the south and Pendinas to the east. Tan-y-bwlch is a one and a half kilometre stretch of fringing shingle beach lying just to the south of Aberystwyth. At its north end it is composed of very coarse pebbles but southwards the particle size becomes progressively smaller, culminating in a zone of fine sandy material.

The coarse shingle, with an open plant community of red fescue Festuca rubra, orache Atriplex hastata, yellow horned poppy Glaucium flavum, buck's horn plantain Plantago coronopus, etc ..., was very poor for beetles as one might expect. The carabid Harpalus aeneus was present and on thrift Armeria maritima flowers the beautiful Psilothrix cyaneus (Melyridae) was abundant. The ladybird Coccinella 11-punctata was also found here. Sand couch Agropyron junceiforme, restharrow Ononis repens, sea holly Eryngium maritimum, sea rocket Cakile maritima, and sea sandwort Honckenya peploides were prominent components of the coarse sand flora. The carabid species found in this area were Harpalus aeneus, H. rufipes, Amara similata, Calathus mollis, Trechus quadristriatus, and the strandline specialist Broscus cephalotes. Around the roots of curled dock Rumex crispus the attractive weevil Apion miniatum was common and Melanophthalma fuscula (Lathridiidae) abundant. The common staphylinids Quedius tristis and Stenus brunnipes were found on the landward side of the beach where shelter enabled a more closed vegetation community to develop. Lastly, the unusual Notoxus monocerus (Anthicidae) was found under a stone on sterile sand near the strandline.

Formerly the low-lying pastures surrounding Afon Ystwyth were marshland but they have since been drained and only fragments of wetland vegetation survive. The few remaining ditches might still support some interesting relicts. The presence of two notable species, the ground beetle Bembidion maritimum (first record for Dyfed) and Helophorus alternans (Hydraenidae) on brackish river shingle behind the beach suggest that further investigation of the marshy remnants would be rewarding. In addition the common riverbank carabids Agonum albipes and Bembidion atrocoeruleum and the local staphylinid Lathrobium multipunctum were also present. A small fragment of saltmarsh on the east bank of the Ystwyth below Pendinas was disappointing. Sweeping of sea couch Agropyron pungens, sea rush Juncus maritimus and perennial sow-thistle Sonchus arvensis produced only common species such as Stenus flavipes, Coccidula rufa, Lonicera pilicornis and Amara aulica - the latter climbing Sonchus to feed on seeds.

I anticipate that the weevil fauna of these coastal habitats would prove most interesting if extensively investigated. The ancient, floristically rich, earthworks of Pendinas yielded Apion striatum, A.ulicus, the violet-feeding Onobitis cyaneus and the very local Apion sanguineum. On Tan-y-bwlch sweeping produced Ceuthorrhynchidius dawsoni, Ceuthorrhynctus litura and Otiorrhynchus sulcatus. Carabids found on the dry slopes were the notable Notiophilus germinyi, Harpalus rufitarsis and Carabus violaceus on Allt-wen and Amara aenea and Microlestes maurus on Pendinas.

This is in no way a comprehensive survey of the Coleopteran fauna of these habitats but I hope it gives some idea of the range of species present and that it will lead to a more thorough investigation of this underworked area.

DIPTERA

SOME RECENT RECORDS OF LARGER BRACHYCERA FROM PEMBROKE (VC45) -S J COKER

In line with the two adjacent vice-counties of Carmarthen and Cardigan, collection and identification of the Larger Brachycera was embarked upon in 1986. A total of twenty-nine species from five families has so far been recorded, including eleven species regarded as nationally notable, ie with less than 100 recorded 10 km squares. For these scarcer species additional data is given (locality, grid reference and date of capture).

Stratiomyidae

Beris vallata
Nemotelus pantherinus
Nemotelus uliginosus
Oplodontha viridula (Four sites in 11/89 and 12/72)
Sargus cuprarius (Pengelly Forest, 22/13-38-, 3 August 1986)
Sargus iridatus
Sargus splendens

Tabanidae

Chrysops caecutiens
Chrysops relictus
Chrysops viduatus (Dowrog, 12/77-26-, 20 July 1986)
Haematopota pluvialis
Haematopota crassicornis
Hybomitra distinguenda
Tabanus autumnalis (Mountain Meadows, 22/062222, 4 July 1986)
Tabanus bovinus (Priory Grounds, 12/956151, 22 August 1986)
Tabanus bromius
Tabanus sudeticus (Pengelly Forest, 22/13-38- , 9 August 1986)

Asilidae

Dioctria oelandica (Pengelly, 22/12-39-, 20 June 1986)
Dioctria rufipes
Dysmachus trigonus
Epitriptus cingulatus (Aber Eiddy, 12/795313, 31 August 1986)
Leptarthrus brevirostris (Mountain Meadows, 22/062222, 29 June 1986)
Leptogaster cylindrica
Machimus atricapillus
Neoitamus cyanurus
Philonicus albicepts (Mere Pool valley, 11/97X942, 16 August 1986)

Acroceridae

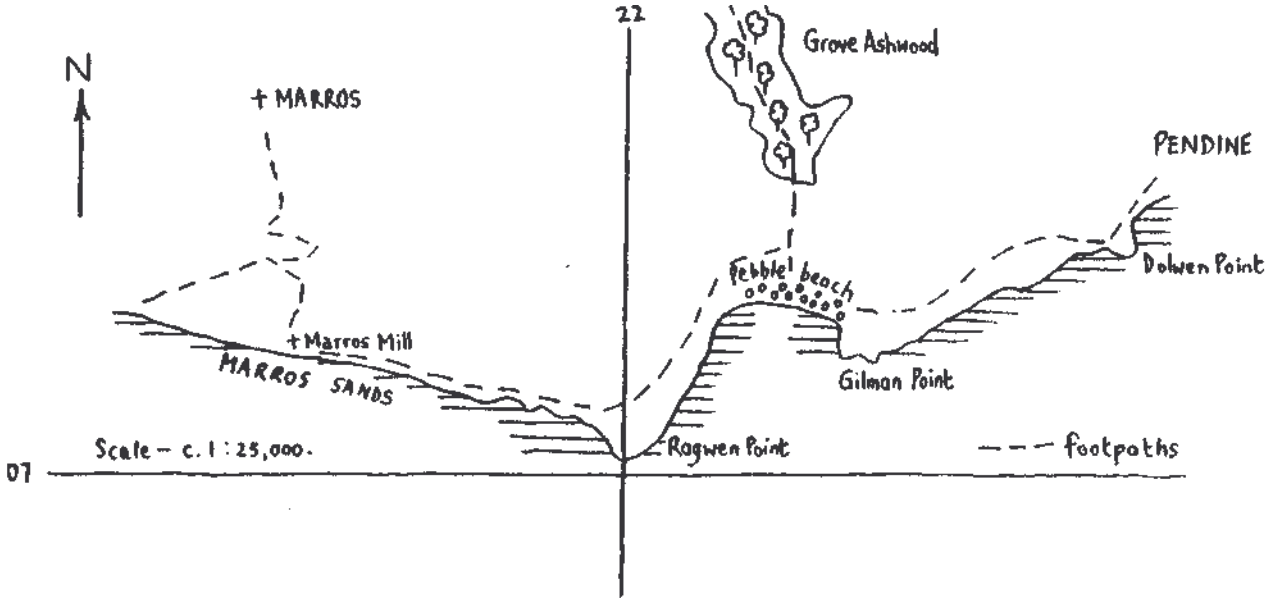
Acrocera globulus (St Issells Saltings, 12/964144, 9 July 1987)

Bombyliidae

Bornbylius major
Villa modesta

THE MARROS - PENDINE COAST, CARMS (22/22-07-) - I K MORGAN

On the winter-mild Marros-Pendine coast the combination of both gentle and steep south-facing cliffs cut into acidic and calcareous rocks has produced a range of habitats ideal for a broad diversity of invertebrates. The results of recent recording activity are summarized below, the area being described in an east-west direction.



The relatively high winter temperatures at Dolwen Point (22/233077) and elsewhere along this stretch of coast contribute to the early-flowering of many plants which, in turn, provide sustenance for the flower bee Anthophora plumipes, the females of which are especially attractive, clad mostly in black hairs. The browner males, which emerge first, can be watched as they inspect potential nest sites or as they bask in the strengthening sunshine of April or even March. The presence of bare, unvegetated areas, the southerly aspect, and a wide range of nectar sources, make these cliffs ideal for many kinds of bees and wasps. An easily recognised species is Andrena cineraria, a solitary bee, with a dark blue abdomen and white thoracic hairs. Here, too, can be found Osmia aurulenta which nests in large, empty snail shells and which is quite localised in Carmarthenshire.

Surveying invertebrates at Dolwen Point need not be confined to the spring and summer months for the winter naturalist will be well-rewarded by scrutiny of the terrestrial mollusc fauna. The limestone cliff grassland holds the only extant Carms population of the handsome Helicella itala, a sizeable snail with a brown-and-white banded shell and a broad umbilicus. In the same area, but usually deeper in the tangled grassy leaf litter (or, in winter, hibernating in the friable calcareous soils), is the rather unusual snail Pomatias elegans, a southern species with a chalky operculum or lid with which it can close the whorl entrance when the animal is retracted. The tiny subterranean snail Cecilioides acicula and the more frequent Ashfordia granulata and Candidula intersecta also occur at Dolwen Point.

The same area of cliffs provides the only known VC44 locality for the lusitanian woodlouse Porcellionoides cingendus (though it is quite frequent in adjacent Pembrokeshire). Butterflies are represented by most of the common species

including holly blues Celastrina argiolus and wall browns Lasiommata megera, the latter often to be found sunning on the bare rock faces. At least eight species of millipede, including the 'dry ground species' Brachyiulus pusillus, Cylindroiulus latestriatus and Ommatoiulus sabulosus, and five species of centipede have been recorded.

Westwards, the sheltered ashwood south of Grove Park (22/225085) holds a woodland assemblage of invertebrates, including silver-washed fritillaries Argynnis paphia, commas Polygonia c-album and speckled woods Pararge aergeria. The swathes of ramsons Allium ursinum provide the larval foodplant for the hoverfly Portevinia maculata, the adults emerging in late spring when they can be observed flying above the rank-smelling ramson flowers. In the same wood, but usually on umbellifer blossoms, the less-than-attractive fly Tachina grossa can be seen; the early stages are internal parasites of large caterpillars.

Away from the shelter of the ashwood, the trackway leads to Gilman Point (22/227074) and en route the chirping of dark bush crickets Pholidoptera griseoaptera should be heard emanating from bramble thickets in the late summer months. Swift-flying dark green fritillaries Argynnis aglaja frequent this area and, like their silver-washed relatives in the ashwood, are favoured by the abundance of violets Viola spp. in this base-enriched valley. The shingle beach that links Gilman to Ragwen Point (22/221072) has not been adequately sampled for invertebrates but it should hold specialist species of note. The limited sandy area immediately east of the shingle, however, has yielded several 'good' species - the robberfly Lasiopogon cinctus (so far distinctly coastal in Carms), the local tiger beetle Cicindela maritima; the mostly south-western sulphur beetle Cteniopius sulphureus; and the maritime hoverfly Eristalinus aeneus. Above Gilman Point the localised beetle Dascillus cervinus can be found (the larvae are reputed to favour orchid tubers), whilst uncommon carabids include Harpalus rubripes and Bradycellus verbasci. Almost everywhere on the short turf in spring are the ponderous bloody-nosed beetles Timarcha tenebricosa.

Not far to the west, the quartzite headland of Ragwen Point juts out to the sea, clad with a calcifuge vegetation dominated by western gorse Ulex gallii, bell heather Erica cinerea, bilberry Vaccinium myrtillus and bracken Pteridium aquilinum, interspersed with much blocky scree. The barer, lower slopes of this headland have at least three species of the brilliantly-coloured jewel wasps whilst other aculeates include the all-black Panurgus banksianus and the impressive sphecid wasp Ammophila sabulosa which can often be seen hunting for caterpillars. The common tiger beetle Cicindela campestris hunts over these dry slopes and green hairstreaks Callophrys rubi are frequent.

The coast extending westwards from Ragwen Point to just west of Marros is probably the least known part of the area under review, although brief inspection of the available habitats and the few records that exist are suggestive of the area's potential. For example, a visit by David Davies in June 1974 revealed the presence of the rare chafer Amphimallon ochraceus, observed flying over a small bog west of Ragwen Point. In addition to cliff areas and south-facing slopes, the long (part pebbly) Marros beach has freshwater seepages passing over the glacial clays that underlie parts of the beach - coastal seepages often support an assemblage of scarce dipterans with restricted habitat requirements. In some places impeded drainage has formed small marshy areas behind the beach with dense herbaceous vegetaion and mixed scrub. Perhaps future recording in this under-worked section of the Marros-Pendine coast will reveal some other invertebrate treasures?

A NEW RECORD OF THE BOG BUSH-CRICKET Metrioptera brachyptera IN DYFED - A P FOWLES

On 29 July 1987, whilst carrying out a routine survey of a complex of unimproved pastures at Hengwrt above Aberarth, Ceredigion, I was astonished to discover a colony of bog bush-crickets Metrioptera brachyptera on a small fragment of wet heath (22/500633). Late instar nymphs were abundant over the single acre of uniform heather Calluna vulgaris/cross-leaved heath Erica tetralix wet heath in which western gorse Ulex gallii and purple moor-grass Molinia caerulea were the only other plants occurring at all commonly. I was particularly surprised as the only other Welsh colonies with recent records are all based on large peatland expanses - Cors Fochno (Ceredigion) Cors Goch Llanllwch (Carmarthen) and Crymlyn Bog (Glamorgan). The bog bush-cricket does not inhabit the higher moorlands (which perhaps explains its apparent absence from the great bogs of Cors Caron, Ceredigion) and as such it is restricted to the surviving remnants of lowland wet heath in Wales. In Ceredigion these are few and far between and I had believed them to be too small to maintain viable colonies but in the light of this record perhaps greater attention should be paid to these tiny fragments.

Although Hengwrt is now isolated by farmland (the nearest heath is some three kilometres away) much of the Aberarth area supported quality heathland earlier this century. J H Salter, a pioneer of Ceredigion's natural history, recorded the pale violet Viola lactea from the vicinity in 1932 (this is a characteristic heathland plant not recorded since in the county) and pillwort Pilularia globulifera was also collected nearby at about the same time (this aquatic fern usually occurs in shallow heathland pools). We can, therefore, speculate that the bog bush-cricket was once widespread in this area and now clings on in tiny refuges as most of its habitat has gone under the plough. A similar situation occurs on the fringes of Cors Fochno where colonies persist on isolated fragments of raised mire at RSPB Ynyshir (and doubtless also further north along the Dyfi into Montgomeryshire) in addition to the central dome itself.

This is a widespread species in southern Britain but, in keeping with the distribution of its preferred habitat, it is somewhat localised in occurrence. Colonies are found in England as far north as Cumbria and North Yorkshire but its strongholds are on the extensive heaths of Surrey, Sussex, Hants and Dorset. It does not occur in Ireland and there is only a single, old, Scottish record - a museum specimen taken in Dumfriesshire (Kevan 1952). In Wales it is unaccountably rare and peculiarly absent from many seemingly suitable localities, including the splendid heathland tracts of Pembrokeshire. In addition to the Welsh sites mentioned above there are also old records for Castell Coch and Swanbridge in Glamorgan (Hallet 1929), Aberdaron on the Lleyn peninsula in Caernarvonshire (Kevan 1954), and Fenn's Moss, Flint (Kevan 1961).

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LEPIDOPTERA

MOTH-TRAPPING AT SALEM, PENRHYNCOCH (VC46) 22/668843 - P HOLMES

With the start of the NCC Peatlands Invertebrate Survey I have moved from a suburban semi on a trunk road on the Wirral to a cottage in the countryside about five miles east of Aberystwyth. On the Wirral I had run a moth-trap daily from March to December for three years, and so on 15 June this year I was eager to plug in for the first time in new surroundings. My trapping station (garden!) is at 200 m a.s.l. half way up the south side of the Afon Stewi valley. The village of Salem has about 10 houses with cultivated gardens. There is a small oak wood bordering the village, which is joined by a strip to a medium sized wood on the north side of the valley. There are some large, isolated conifers, extensive grass fields with frequent hedgerows and small patches of valley fen along the Stewi. My trap is a standard Heath trap with a 6W fluorescent strip light. The following morning I found that I had caught forty-nine macro-moths (most micros are beyond me at present). This was quite a good total for mid-June but what surprised me was the species variety. On the Wirral this total at the same time of year would have comprised about 45 Heart-and-Darts Agrotis exclamationis plus a few others - here I had twenty-five species! Although nothing was very rare there was a very smart wood carpet Epirrhoe rivata, a species new to me.

The good numbers of individuals and species variety has continued since then. On 29 June I trapped 329 moths, including 130 large yellow underwings Noctua pronuba. On such mornings the trap can be seen to move with moths flying inside, and the total recorded is a bit of an estimate with moths flying off all around! To date (4 September) I have recorded 173 species, either in the trap or in the garden. This compares with a maximum of about 160 in one year on the Wirral. Trapping at Salem also started too late for the spring-emerging species and there are many autumn species still to come. Some of the more interesting records so far are listed below (information on species status is taken from Fowles (In Press) and Tillotson (1987):

Cloaked Carpet Euphyia biangulata - singles on 23 and 28 July, 14 and 15 August - a nationally notable species.

Goldenrod Pug Eupithecia virgaureata - one on 23 July - although this is regarded as a scarce species nationally it has recently been recognised as widespread and not uncommon in Ceredigion.

Welsh Wave Venusia cambrica - one on 18 July, only the seventh record for Ceredigion.

Broad-bordered Yellow Underwing Noctua fimbriata - one on 20 August, apparently there has only been one other county record in the last fifteen years.

Ashworth's Rustic Xestia ashworthii - one on 26 July - only the sixth county record for this nationally notable species.

Scarce Silver Y Syngrapha interrogationis - one on 8 July - there have only been three previous Ceredigion records of this nationally notable species.

Lempke's Gold Spot Plusia putnami one on 6 July - only the second time this species has been identified in Ceredigion but it has probably been overlooked due to confusion with the gold spot Plusia festucae.

Comparing Salem with my old garden site on the Wirral, I have gained many species whilst retaining virtually all of the others. The only species I have not trapped here that occurred in large numbers on the Wirral is the marbled beauty Cryphia domestica. I have only caught five mottled rustics Caradrina rnorpheus compared with 200-plus annually on the Wirral, and although there is still time I am surprised not to have yet caught a Mouse Moth Amphipyra tragopoginis; however, the lack of these two rather dull species doesn't disappoint me greatly!

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INVERTEBRATE RECORDING ON SKOMER ISLAND - CORRIGENDA

David Saunders, the Director of the West Wales Trust for Nature Conservation, has written with further information on the invertebrates of this enchanting island (See DIG 6: 2). He points out that Ringlets Aphantopus hyperantus were first recorded on Skomer in 1946 and then again in the early 1960's. There was a gap until the recolonisation of 1980 and since then they have been recorded annually on the Butterfly Monitoring Scheme transect (begun in 1977). They are apparently restricted to damp areas on the south of the island where they are seen regularly in small numbers.

David has also drawn our attention to an article by B L Sage entitled "The Coleoptera of Skomer Island, Pembrokeshire and their ecology" (Nature in Wales (1977) 15: 184-208) in which a total of 247 species are listed. This excellent review includes records of many local species including the uncommon carabids Masoreus wetterhali and Acupalpus dorsalis. Of greatest interest is the discovery of the water beetle (Dytiscidae) Graptodytes bilineatus in the West Pond on 30 August 1966 and in the South Pond on 3 September 1966. This is a nationally rare (RDB3) species previously known only from Somerset and the east coast of England. Skomer is the only Welsh locality but is has recently been widely found in Ireland as an inhabitant of shallow heathland pools.

DIPTERA

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON HOVERFL1ES OF THE GENUS Xylota FEEDING AT FLOWERS - A P FOWLES AND I K MORGAN

Xylota species (Diptera: Syrphidae) are distinctive solitary wasp mimics that have characteristically jerky movements which further enhance the deception. They (and other members of their tribe) are unique amongst British hoverflies in that the adults apparently obtain their food from the surface of leaves and do not need to visit flowers. Gilbert (1968) expands slightly upon this and explains that they "collect pollen and other food items from leaf surfaces". An exception to this is X. coeruleiventris which is occasionally reported at buttercup Ranunculus flowers and there is a record of X. segnis the commonest member of the genus, feeding at flowers of Ranunculus repens (McLean 1982). In view of the scarcity of these occurrences the following observations may be of interest.

20 June 1987 - A male X. segnis was watched at close range for several minutes feeding at flowers of Ranunculus acris at a woodland edge near Llanfarian, Ceredigion (22/584767). Rather than sipping nectar, as most hoverflies do, this male was clearly sponging up pollen with its proboscis from the anthers.

24 June 1987 - During an extremely brief visit to Cae Pwll-y-bo, Brecknock (22/854512) five globes of the beautiful globeflower Trollius europaeus were inspected in the hope of finding Cheilosia nasutula. There were no Cheilosias present but, instead, two of the globes contained X. coeruleiventris. As this was a gloriously sunny day they were presumably feeding here rather than sheltering from the elements.

26 June 1987 - Two X. segnis were observed feeding on the pollen of a cultivated yellow Helianthemum species in a garden next to the dingle woodland at Blaengwrfach, Carms (22/407380).

30 June 1987 - A male X. coeruleiventris was taken whilst feeding at a Ranunculus acris flower at the edge of an unimproved pasture near Rhydcymerau, Carms (22/579379). This constitutes the first record of this species for the vice-county.

6 August 1987 - At the junction of the Doethie and Pysgotwr rivers on sheep-grazed pastures within Allt Rhyd-y-groes NNR, Carms (22/764482), several X.coeruleiventris of both sexes were observed feeding at tormentil Potentilla erecta flowers.

31 August 1987 - A female X. coeruleiventris was taken while feeding at bramble Rubus fruticosus flowers in the streamside oakwoods along the Glasffrwd at Strata Florida, Ceredigion (22/749652). As with all of the above observations, the weather was warm and sunny at the time.

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McLEAN, I F G (1982) - Xylota segnis observed feeding at flowers. Ent. Mon. Mag 118:193

FIELD MEETING - GWBERT CLIFFS AND DUNES (22/162489) VC46 12 JULY 1987 - A P FOWLES

The fine weather gracing this extremely scenic location induced some members to "down-tools" and sunbathe for a short while in the afternoon but, despite this minor mutiny, many good records of the coastal invertebrate fauna were enjoyed. Gwbert lies three kilometres north of Cardigan on the east bank of the Teifi estuary and the westerly aspect encourages a rich entomological diversity. The small dune system now hosts a permanent caravan park but in between the roadways a typical dune flora persists, whilst the dynamic forces of erosion and accretion ensure that a complete zonation of habitats from shingle spit to mature dunes is present. Immediately behind the dunes wind-blown sand overlies a steep bank of boulder clay on which an extensive, and almost impenetrable, scrub of gorse Ulex europaeus has established. Small clearings do exist to allow exploration and near the road is a lush marsh, adding further to the variation of habitats present in such a small area. Extending westwards from the dunes the coastline is composed of low cliffs, boulder-clay initially and then hard rock out towards Cardigan Island. Numerous flushes and seepages run down the cliffs, supporting pockets of common reed Phragmites australis and more open communities rich in species.

Although we were blessed with warm sunshine throughout the day a fresh sea-breeze perhaps kept some of the flying insects at bay. None-the-less, ten species of butterflies were seen, including a couple of dark green fritillaries Argynnis aglaja, and quite a strong colony of graylings Hipparchia semele was based upon the dunes. Both of Ceredigion's burnet moths, Zygaena trifolii and Z. filipendula, were on the wing and it was interesting to see several scarlet tigers Callimorpha dominula associated with cliff seepages in which hemp agrimony Eupatorium cannabinum was abundant. Hoverflies were surprisingly rather poor though Stephen and Anne Coker found Eumerus strigatus, not reported from the vice-county for more than thirty years. Soldier-flies were more productive and a trio of scarce species were recorded - Oxycera rara, O. pygmaea, and Nemotelus notatus - each of which requires base-enriched flushes for the development of their semi-aquatic larvae. Typical dune flies included the therevid Thereva annulata and the robber-flies Dysmachus trigonus and Philonicus albiceps.

Several common species of ground beetles were recorded during the day but it was disappointing not to find any coastal specialities. The cliff flushes looked particularly promising but they seemed to support little more than scores of Bembidion genei and an occasional B. nitidulum. However, one good dune species amongst the Coleoptera was the chafer Euchlora dubia which was seen in good numbers and was very active in the hot sunshine. Aculeate Hymenoptera are bound to prove interesting at this site and Ian Morgan collected several specimens which are still awaiting determination. A jewel-wasp which has been identified proved to be Hedychridium ardens, one of the smaller chrysids which parasitises solitary wasps in sandy areas.

On the southern shore of the dunes half-a-dozen Armadillidium album were located in a narrow strandline composed largely of twigs, leaves and seaweed. The following week a strong colony of this scarce woodlouse was recorded across the river at Poppit Sands (22/159483) in Pembrokeshire so the species is clearly well-established in the Teifi Estuary. A number of millipedes and centipedes were collected at Gwbert during the meeting, including Cylindroiulus latestriatus and Lithobius melanops, both typical inhabitants of dry coastal situations. Arthur Chater concentrated chiefly on the land molluscs and his site report is presented separately elsewhere.

The spiders were comprehensively explored by Kefyn Catley who recorded a total of twenty-two species during the day. The most interesting elements of

the fauna were found on the boulder-clay flushes of the cliffs; two nationally scarce species, Pardosa purbeckensis and Pirata latitans, were recorded along with Arctosa leopardus (more typically found on areas of Sphagnum moss), and the linyphiid Entelecara erythropus provided a new county record.

FIELD MEETING - WESTERN CLEDDAU (12/894317) VC45 2 AUGUST 1987 - S J COKER

The final meeting of the 1987 season took place at the two nature reserves in the Western Cleddau valley. These two reserves encompass most of what now remains of the valley mire which once covered the wide valley floor for several miles along the headwaters of the river. Heavy rain overnight continued into the morning. The lower section of the mire (forming the National Nature Reserve) is almost entirely covered by head-high fen vegetation which is difficult enough to penetrate in ideal conditions but was thought to be too unrewarding during and after rain. Consequently the programme for the day was altered and a walk around the upper reserve (belonging to the West Wales Trust for Nature Conservation) was "enjoyed" by five members, under the leadership of Bob Haycock (the NCC Warden). After lunch the sun broke through so we 'attacked' the lower reserve.

Six species of dragonfly were glimpsed during the day and also twenty-two species of hoverflies, of which Platycheirus fulviventris, P. immarginatus and P. scambus were the most interesting. The horsefly Tabanus sudeticus was also found.