

A mature female was captured and identified as a Tropical Tent-web Spider *Cyrtophora citricola* (Forskål 1775) (Araneidae), a species well known for living in loose, social groups. The specimen was later returned.



Figure 3. Ventral view of female showing the epigyne. Photograph © Geoff Oxford



Figure 4. Mature female *Cyrtophora citricola* (not photographed in situ). Note the pair of 'paddles' at the rear of the abdomen. Photograph © Geoff Oxford

This species shows a marked sexual dimorphism for size, with males only about 3 mm in length, and great variability in coloration. Both sexes can change the background colour of the abdomen from very pale to very dark (Blanke 1972), and indeed can undergo instantaneous colour change under some circumstances (Blanke, 1975). The specimens seen at Vertigro all seemed to be black with white spotting. When disturbed in the web, the spider rapidly vibrates, like *Araneus*

diadematus. For more information on the biology of *C. citricola* see: http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/MISC/SPIDERS/Cyrtophora_citricola.htm

The species is widespread in parts of subtropical and tropical Asia, Africa and Australia, and in the warm coastal Mediterranean areas of Europe (Blanke 1972; Leborgne *et al.* 1998; https://araneae.unibe.ch/data/3879/Cyrtophora_citricola). It has more recently been recorded in Costa Rica, Hispaniola, Columbia, Cuba and North America (Florida).

The Japanese Sago Palms at Vertigro were imported in March 2017, directly from Italy; presumably the origin of the spiders. The presence of individual *C. citricola* of varying sizes seems to preclude the population originating from a single egg-sac. The poly-tunnels are closed and heated during the winter and so it remains to be seen whether the species will survive into next year. Blanke (1972) found that *Cyrtophora citricola* could not survive temperatures below -1 °C.

References

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A record of *Synema globosum* imported to the UK in fresh produce

by Duncan Allen & Paul Taylor

On Wednesday 5th of July Paul Taylor discovered a female specimen of the fantastic looking thomisid *Synema globosum*, also sometimes known as the "Napoleon spider" due to the markings looking like a silhouette of the infamous military and political leader on its abdomen. The spider had been found that morning in a punnet of *Vaccinium* from Italy that Paul had purchased.

After consulting the SRS website we saw there were only 4 records thus far, and that it was not yet known if: "the specimens captured in Britain represent casual introductions or whether the species is or will become established in this country" (<http://srs.britishspiders.org.uk/portal/p/Summary/s/Synema+globosum> 2017). While this record does not shed any light on whether the species may become established or not, it does highlight a possible introduction pathway for this species into the UK via commodities such as *Vaccinium* from the continent.



Figures 1-3. *Synema globosum* imported in a punnet of *Vaccinium*. Photograph © Duncan Allen & Paul Taylor

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Coelotes terrestris (Wider) in West Norfolk (VC38)

by Steve A. Lane

On 1st April 2016, I was looking for Coleoptera under bark and logs, on the west side of the A134 at Lynford Stag (TL812917) in the Norfolk Breckland (VC28), when I found a large dark amaurobiid spider in the base of a large disintegrating pine log on the woodland floor. I later identified this as *Coelotes terrestris* (Wider) based on the form of the epigyne. Realising that this was somewhat

outside of the known range for the species, I retained the specimen in 70% ethanol, with the intention of returning to it at a later date.

The habitat at the Lynford Stag site is of quite open woodland (Fig. 1), comprising pine with relatively young beech trees in a broad swathe that runs parallel to the road and borders on dense pine plantation further west. The ground layer at the time of the visit consisted mainly of leaf litter. Logs were present from fallen and felled timber.



Figure 1. Immediate habitat at Lynford Stag site. Photograph © Steve Lane

I sent the specimen to Pip Collyer in February 2017 and he agreed with my identification. However, as he had never seen the species before, he forwarded it to Peter Harvey who kindly confirmed the identification by comparison with his reference specimens. This would appear to be the first record for the East Anglian region.

On 3rd March 2017 I returned to the site at Lynford Stag and found a further two female *Coelotes terrestris*. They were both in crevices within web cells, inside a large pine log on the woodland floor, only some 20 metres distance from the 2016 specimen. The spiders were both found within minutes of arriving at the site. This second record, almost a year after the first, gives a strong indication that the species is established at the site.

Most occurrences of *Coelotes terrestris* in Britain are restricted to southern England south of an imaginary line connecting the Severn and Thames estuaries. There are a few isolated recent records from south Scotland and from Wales, but these may represent introduced outlier populations that may or may not be established. It will be interesting to research the true distribution of the species in the Norfolk Breck and to perhaps gain some insight as to whether this population is also an introduction or whether it is a relic population within a former, more extensive distribution range.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Pip Collyer and Peter Harvey for confirming the identification of the specimen and Pip for encouraging me to publish the record.

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