

# Spider Recording Scheme News

## Spring 2015, No. 81

**Editor:** Peter Harvey; srs@britishspiders.org.uk

**SRS website:** <http://srs.britishspiders.org.uk>

My thanks to those who have contributed to this issue. S.R.S. News No. 82 will be published in Summer 2015. Please send contributions by the mid June at the latest to Peter Harvey, 32 Lodge Lane, GRAYS, Essex, RM16 2YP; e-mail: srs@britishspiders.org.uk or grays@peterharvey.freeserve.co.uk. The newsletter depends on your contributions!

### Editorial

As always, thank you to the contributors who have provided articles for this issue and especially to Richard Wilson who has contacted Area Organisers for the Society on my behalf and drummed up an unusually large number of submissions. **Please help future issues by providing articles**, short or longer, on interesting discoveries and observations.

We live in interesting times, and remarkable spiders continue to be found, so it seems there has never been a better time to be an active arachnologist!

### Spider records

We now have 976,162 spider records in total in MapMate. About 415,345 have at least some site-based phase 2 habitat information. All these data are uploaded and summarised on the Spider and Harvestman Recording Scheme website. There is a backlog of data in non-standard format which awaits import into the recording scheme, but the hope is that this backlog can be cleared this spring.

An updated spider taxon database in line with the published 2014 checklist will soon be in use on the SRS website and in MapMate.

### Website visitors

Since the Spider Recording Scheme website went live in August 2010 until the website moved to a new server in early April 2014 we had 156,746 visits from 104,781 users, with 868,879 page views from 169 countries/territories. In the 11 months since the move to a new server, we have had to date 77,063 visits from 56,149 users, with 339,733 page views from 166 countries/territories.

### Area Organiser changes

Howard Williams has decided it is time to hang up his arachnological guns and he has relinquished his role as Area Organiser for Notts. (VC56). I would like to thank Howard for all the hard work he has done for the Society and SRS over the years. He says that at the moment the post is not onerous, so if there is any arachnologist out there who would like to take on the AO role, please make contact.

All Area Organiser details are available to logged-on members on the Spider and Harvestman Recording Scheme website.

### Spider identification course

**Venue** Green Centre, Wat Tyler Country Park, Pitsea Hall Lane, Pitsea, Basildon, Essex SS16 4UH, see <http://www.essexfieldclub.org.uk/portal/p/Courses>

Tutor: Tony Russell-Smith.

Places: 12

Book with Peter Harvey.

([grays@peterharvey.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:grays@peterharvey.freeserve.co.uk))

Fee: £10, but free to members of the **Essex Field Club** and **British Arachnological Society**.

Morning refreshments provided. Bring your own lunch or alternatively the Wat Tyler café will be open.

This one day course is aimed at naturalists starting the study of spiders and covers an introduction and fieldwork in the morning, followed by the identification of spiders to family level and an introduction to microscopic examination in the afternoon.

As members will know, Tony Russell-Smith has been studying spiders for over 40 years and is an ex-president of the British Arachnological Society. He has tutored several courses on spider identification and biology for the Field Studies Council.

### *Philodromus buxi* and *Anyphaena sabina*: two new species records for the UK

by Richard Wilson

#### Introduction

Since 2013, along with two colleagues (Andy Godfrey and Dr Mark Telfer), I have been identifying invertebrates collected on a split-level greenroof located on the Transport for London's (TfL) building, located on the Greenwich Peninsula (TQ 393 799; VC 16, West Kent, see Figs. 1 & 2). Material has been collected via pitfall traps set within the shallow substrate and Malaise traps as well as direct observation. In 2013, I visited the site myself but the majority of material has been collected by Liz Powell and Hannah Brett (Ecohab Consultancy) and passed on to us for identification.

#### TfL Greenroof

The TfL greenroof is split on two levels and occupies a combined area of c. 1,000 m<sup>2</sup>. The building upon which it sits is located on the Greenwich Peninsula, immediately

adjacent to the O2 Arena (Millennium Dome) and the River Thames. There is very limited greenspace within this location. The nearest semi-natural terrestrial vegetation to the south of the Thames is located c. 900 m south within the Greenwich Peninsula Ecology Park (TQ 400 792), and Bow Creek Peninsula Park (TQ 391 810; VC 18, South Essex), c. 1.2 km to the north. There are various brownfield sites apparent within a c. 1 km radius of the site (e.g. Leamouth Peninsula) as well as more formal greenspace (i.e. planted trees and borders).



**Figure 1.** Greenwich Greenroof.  
Photograph © Richard Wilson

### Methods and Results

Between May and September 2013, and the same period in 2014, pitfall and Malaise traps were set and regularly re-charged to collect the various invertebrate groups targeted for identification. Whilst the Malaise trap was primarily set to collect Diptera and Hymenoptera, spiders were collected by this method, suggesting colonisation arising via ballooning. Two of these species were *Philodromus buxi* and *Anyphaena sabina*.

### *Philodromus buxi*

On two separate dates (24<sup>th</sup> June and 18<sup>th</sup> July 2014), two single males of this species were identified from material collected in the Malaise trap located on TFL's greenroof.



**Figure 2.** Greenwich Greenroof.  
Photograph © Richard Wilson

As both specimens occurred on separate dates, it seems reasonable to consider that they originated locally from an established population as opposed to being introduced or being blown in from mainland Europe. On mainland Europe, as with most *Philodromus* spp., the species lives on bushes and lower branches of trees. Apart from planted specimen trees within the hardstanding landscape surrounding the TFL building or isolated individuals within brownfield sites/ greenspace, the nearest semi-natural vegetation with trees/ shrubs would appear to be the previously mentioned ecological parks. *P. buxi* is known from France (e.g. Brittany) and elsewhere on mainland Europe, in sunny places (Nentwig *et al.*, 2015).

### *Anyphaena sabina*

A single male specimen of *A. sabina* was collected from a Malaise trap on the 24<sup>th</sup> June 2014. This constitutes the first male specimen taken in the UK. A single female was collected in a pitfall trap between mid-June and mid-July 2011 at Mile End Park, London (TQ 36 82; VC 21, Middlesex) by Edward Milner (Milner, 2012). Mile End Park is approximately 3.5 km north-west of the TFL greenroof. No information can be located regarding this species' typical habitat; it is assumed that it is normally an arboreal species like others in the genus.

### Summary

The first records of *P. buxi* over two separate dates suggest that there is an established population within the

vicinity of TfL's greenroof. Likewise, the record of the first male *A. sabina* suggests that the species is spreading from Mile End Park. Both species could reasonably be expected in suitable habitat within the Thames Gateway. Both species are understood by the author to prefer warm climates and the heat island effect in addition to the Thames Gateway's known invertebrate importance (Harvey, 2000) caused by natural climate patterns (i.e. low rainfall, warm temperatures) may well be benefiting both species.

In addition to the two species mentioned, *Erigone aletris* has also been taken. This is a species which is believed to be North American in origin but subsequently naturalised in Scotland and England. Its disjunct distribution suggests that it has entered via Leith (SRS, 2015). Kadas (2002) and Jones (2002) have recorded this species on greenroofs in central London (e.g. Canary Wharf) and it is considered to be spreading and a successful coloniser (SRS, 2015).

The TfL greenroof has yielded a number of other invertebrate species including a second British record of the rove beetle *Oligota muensteri* (Telfer, in press) and an Australian ladybird, *Rhyzobius forestieri*, which was first recorded in Britain some six weeks earlier (Telfer, submitted).

#### Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank Liz Powell (Ecohab Consultancy, Oxford) for commissioning the work, TfL authorities (via Liz Powell) for giving permission to publish the article and Peter Harvey for confirming the specimens and commentary on a first draft. The specimens of *A. sabina* and *P. buxi* have been retained; and given their national significance, are being kept within Peter Harvey's personal collection, which will eventually be passed on to a national museum.

#### References

- Harvey, P.R. 2000. The East Thames Corridor: a nationally important invertebrate fauna under threat. *British Wildlife*, **12**: 91-98.
- Harvey, P.R., Nellist, D.R and Telfer, M.G. 2002. *Provisional Atlas of British Spiders (Arachnida, Araneae), Volumes 1 & 2*. Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, Biological Records Centre, Huntingdon.
- Jones, R.A. 2002. *Tecticolous Invertebrates. A preliminary investigation of the invertebrate fauna on green roofs in urban London*. Report to English Nature, Peterborough.
- Kadas, G. 2002. Rare invertebrates colonizing green roofs in London. *Urban Habitats*, **4**(1): 66-86.
- Milner, E. 2012. New *Anyphaena* species recorded in London, a second species new to Britain from Mile End Park, Tower Hamlets. Spider Recording Scheme Newsletter, No. 72 in *Newsletter of the British Arachnological Society*, **123**: 23-24.
- Nentwig, W., Blick, T., Gloor, D., Hänggi, A. and Kropf, C. 2015. *Spiders of Europe*. Available online at <http://www.araneae.unibe.ch>. Version 03.2015; accessed on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2015.

SRS. (2015) *Summary for Erigone aletris (Araneae)*.

Spider Recording Scheme website. <http://srs.britishspiders.org.uk/portal/p/Summary/s/Erigone+aletris>; last accessed on the 6<sup>th</sup> March 2015

Telfer, M.G. (in press) *Oligota muensteri* Bernhauer (Staphylinidae) in West Kent: the second British record. *The Coleopterist*.

Telfer, M.G. (submitted). *Rhyzobius forestieri* (Mulsant) (Coccinellidae) in West Kent. *The Coleopterist*.

161 Burley Wood Crescent, Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS4 2QJ.  
Email: | riwspider@yahoo.co.uk

## *Oecobius navus* (Oecobiidae) in North Yorkshire

Geoff Oxford

We usually go looking for spiders, but occasionally they find us. On 27<sup>th</sup> January 2015 I was sitting in my office at the University of York (SE619505) when I became aware of a small, pale spider running at speed up and down my arm. Luckily a tube was at hand. Examination of the live spider in a holding device convinced me it was nothing I had seen before. The overall length was 2.5 mm and several curious features were immediately obvious. The cephalothorax was almost circular, pale and with interrupted black lines above each coxa insertion. At first glance there seemed to be just six eyes but with flat silver patches, apparently without lenses, where the posterior median eyes might be expected. Between the spinnerets was a prominent anal tubercle with a fringe of long hairs. The specimen had a rather indistinct cribellum and a calamistrum with a double row of bristles. The epigyne suggested the individual was mature. I was about to send the spider to Peter Harvey for an opinion when I happened to look in Roberts (1995) and there it was, *Oecobius navus* Blackwall 1859.



**Figure 1.** *Oecobius navus* dorsal view. The total length of the spider is 2.5 mm. Photograph © Geoff Oxford