

More from the Museum on Historic Worcestershire Beetles

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Following an earlier talk on Entomology Day by Peter Shirley and Mike Bloxham on the subject of the insect collections at Birmingham Museums, readers will be aware that a project to discover the extent of Worcestershire beetle holdings there has been in progress. Other snippets in the 'Review', plus the recent Entomology Day display devoted to the James Dyson Perrins beetle collection, will have indicated that we have made substantial progress in discovering target beetles and cataloguing them. Currently we have listed 573 different species derived from 1159 separate records, which involved examining 3509 specimens. This came as a bit of a surprise to us – as did some of the fascinating information revealed during what at first seemed rather a sterile exercise.

Anyone reading the latest Edition of the Worcestershire Record (Number 47, November 2019) will find that we have dipped into this cornucopia of data in writing an item on Worcestershire Cerambycidae (longhorn beetles). Whilst there is much that is mundane, the publication of Natural England Commissioned Report NECR272 in August 2019 on the status of British Longhorn Beetles highlights *Dinoptera collaris* (quite frequent before world war two) as Regionally Extinct. *Stenurella nigra* (found until the 1990's) is now Nationally Rare. The account that follows also indicates that the former is/was indeed a Wyre species.

The newly assembled data mentioned at the outset may well be useful to enhance some existing information on beetles mentioned in a range of publications. One article that ignited this project was in the WFSG Review of 2013 where Paul Reade and Mick Blythe unearth an account of a ramble by William Gabriel Blatch in 'Bewdley Forest'. They list the names of 134 beetle species he mentioned, with notes on synonymy and presence/absence from the Wyre Forest database. On checking through the list and comparing it with our new records, we found 38 matches. The attached labels on beetles are not dated, although clearly marked 'Bewdley', which may be interpreted as meaning Wyre Forest (the town is specified in other records). Species with an asterisk were not in the WF database when the original article was written by Paul and Mick.

SPECIES FAMILY

<i>Aplotarsus incanus</i>	ELATERIDAE
<i>Bembidion atrocaeruleum</i>	CARABIDAE
<i>Bembidion decorum</i>	CARABIDAE
<i>Bembidion dentellum</i>	CARABIDAE
<i>Bembidion monticola</i> *	CARABIDAE
<i>Bembidion punctulatum</i>	CARABIDAE
<i>Chlaenius vestitus</i> *	CARABIDAE

<i>Chrysolina hyperici</i>	CHRYSOMELIDAE
<i>Cidnopus aeruginosus</i> *	ELATERIDAE
<i>Cionus alauda</i>	CURCULIONIDAE
<i>Cionus hortulanus</i> *	CURCULIONIDAE
<i>Clivina collaris</i> *	CARABIDAE
<i>Cryptocephalus aureolus</i> *	CHRYSOMELIDAE
<i>Cryptocephalus moraei</i> *	CHRYSOMELIDAE
<i>Cryptorhynchus lapathi</i> *	CURCULIONIDAE
<i>Dinarda maerkelii</i> *	STAPHYLINIDAE
<i>Dinoptera collaris</i> *	CERAMBYCIDAE
<i>Drusilla canaliculata</i>	STAPHYLINIDAE
<i>Exapion fuscirostre</i>	BRENTIDAE
<i>Gonioctena viminalis</i>	CHRYSOMELIDAE
<i>Hypnoidus riparius</i>	ELATERIDAE
<i>Leptura quadrifasciata</i>	CERAMBYCIDAE
<i>Lomechusa emarginata</i>	STAPHYLINIDAE
<i>Mniophila muscorum</i>	CHRYSOMELIDAE
<i>Necrodes littoralis</i>	SILPHIDAE
<i>Nicrophorus vespilloides</i>	SILPHIDAE
<i>Oedemera lurida</i>	OEDEMERIDAE
<i>Oiceoptoma thoracicum</i>	SILPHIDAE
<i>Orectochilus villosus</i>	GYRINIDAE
<i>Oxypoda formiceticola</i> *	STAPHYLINIDAE
<i>Prosternon tessellatum</i>	ELATERIDAE
<i>Rhagium bifasciatum</i>	CERAMBYCIDAE
<i>Stenurella melanura</i>	CERAMBYCIDAE
<i>Stenurella nigra</i>	CERAMBYCIDAE
<i>Stenus biguttatus</i>	STAPHYLINIDAE
<i>Tachyusa constricta</i> *	STAPHYLINIDAE
<i>Trox sabulosus</i> *	TROGIDAE
<i>Zacladus geranii</i>	CURCULIONIDAE

Much is open to conjecture. Blatch was a highly respected Victorian coleopterist, assiduous in keeping vouchers. Unfortunately his large collection was redistributed, with several museums receiving unspecified components. It is possible that missing 'Bewdley' specimens may reside in Manchester (where some substantial associated literature may exist), Bolton, Coventry, Doncaster or York. All we can say is that the evidence suggests our specimens to be from Wyre and that Blatch collected them, probably during the years closely preceding the writing of his fascinating account. Research will continue.

References

- Archives of Birmingham Museum Trust (25 Dollman St, Birmingham B7 4RQ)
- Blatch, W.G. (ed. P. Reade and M. Blythe) 1879. *Bewdley Forest*. Wyre Forest Study Group Annual Review 2013.
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- Duff, A.G. (ed) 2018. *Checklist of Beetles of the British Isles*. Pembrokeshire Books, Lver.

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Wyre Forest Study Group



Trox sabulosus collected by W. G. Blatch

Photo from Birmingham Museums Trust



Lodgehill Meadow, 2 May 2019

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