

## A Weevil Parasitoid

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The parasitoid larva emerging from the weevil, Dowles 2 May 2012

Rosemary Winnall

I collected a fairly large weevil resting exposed on a Meadow Sweet leaf by the side of the main ride near Lodge Hill Farm on 22nd April 2012. I took it home to identify it and was surprised to find a white larva emerging from under its elytra next morning. This almost immediately began to spin a cocoon in the container near to the weevil.

On 2nd May 2012 on our monthly Wednesday Study Group meeting we found many more similar weevils resting exposed on low vegetation alongside the Dowles Brook, some with parasitoid cocoons visible on nearby leaves. Then we saw some with an emerging larva as I had seen in the container at home (see photo above). The weevils remained alive after the emergence of the larva but were sluggish and when taken home all died after a few days.

A Hymenopterous parasitoid emerged from the first larval cocoon on 3rd May 2012 and all the others emerged within the next 2 weeks. I was able to identify

the weevil as a common species, *Barynotus moerans*, and Mark Shaw kindly identified the parasitoid as a *Pygostolus* (Braconidae) species. These are well known he says, as parasitoids of adult weevils. The parasitized weevils seemed to be behaving abnormally in resting exposed on the surface of the vegetation.



Weevil parasitoid, *Pygostolus* sp.

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Cocoon from weevil parasitoid

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Weevil parasitoid, *Pygostolus* sp.

Tony Simpson