

## Rare Deadwood-feeding Oecophorid Micromoths in Wyre Forest

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Suitable deadwood habitat, Longdon Wood

Dave Grundy



*Schiffermuelleria grandis*

Dave Grundy

We are lucky in Wyre Forest to have three beautiful, rare, and local species of the Oecophoridae which appear to be indicators of ancient semi-natural woodland in the U.K.

*Schiffermuelleria grandis* (Desvignes) was described as new to science from a specimen labelled "Bewdley Forest" 26/5/1842. It was discovered again in Ribbesford Woods in 2002 by Jenny Joy, and many have been seen there since then, and it has been recorded twice in 2005 and 2006 in two different sites in the New Parks area of the main Wyre Forest block. One was also found in Shrawley Wood in 2009 by Dave Grundy.

*Esperia oliviella* (Fabricius) was first recorded in 1929 by Stuart Carlier and has been seen quite widely in and around the forest since 1984.

*Oecophora bractella* (Linnaeus) does not seem to have been found here until 1990 but it is in fact widespread

and fairly common across the main forest block.

The larvae of all three species feed in deadwood; *bractella* has been bred from cut or fallen deadwood and rotten stumps of many different tree species, but especially under the bark in the drier parts of old log piles; *oliviella* has been bred from rotten oak, apple, and pear stumps, boughs, and fallen timber; *grandis* has not been bred locally as yet but it is known to feed under bark in dead branches and twigs of deciduous trees and even in dead ivy stems.

It is clearly very important for the conservation of these species that dead wood is not removed from the forest and log piles and fallen and standing dead timber and rotten stumps kept available for the benefit of these species and of very many other invertebrates.

(Ed. See map showing records of these moths on page 80).



*Esperia oliviella*

John Bingham



*Oecophora bractella*

John Bingham