

## Longhorn Beetles (Cerambycidae, Coleoptera) of Wyre Forest - an update with additional species

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*Phytoecia cylindrica*

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In 2009 in the Study Group Review (Bingham 2009) I produced a summary of the twenty-two longhorn beetles to be found in the Wyre Forest. By 2011 further species for the forest had been added (Bingham 2010, 2011). Following that yet more 'new' species were noted. *Arhopalus rusticus*, Dusky Longhorn was recorded at Eymore Woods by Alan Brown in 2010 (Brown 2011); this is within our Wyre Forest study area even if 'over the river' from the main woodland block. *Agapanthia villosa viridescens*, Golden-bloomed Grey Longhorn has been known to occur near to the forest for some time; its larvae feed on Apiaceae (formerly Umbelliferae) wildflowers of the Carrot family and also thistle roots. It was first noted actually within the forest at Breakneck Bank by Rosemary Winnall in 2012. *Leiopus linnei*, 'New' Black-clouded Longhorn formally not separated from the similar species *Leiopus nebulosus* Black-clouded Longhorn, was found by fogging work done by Natural England in 2015. (Winnall ed. 2015). *Anoploclera sexguttata*, Six-spotted Longhorn is a particularly important species with its stronghold in the New Forest. It has only been seen once on the edge of Pound Green Common in May 2011. I have for the present time kept it on the Wyre list because the habitat is suitable, but we really need another sighting to confirm it is still present. It can be found during the day but has a short flight period so perhaps it has been missed. However it must be very localised within the forest.

To be included on the Wyre Forest list I consider a species must be breeding within the forest or immediate surrounding area. With these new records the total number of species to be found in the forest stands at twenty-nine. This year another species *Phytoecia cylindrica*, Umbellifer Longhorn can be added to our list of forest longhorns bringing the total to thirty.

*Phytoecia cylindrica* is a small black species some 8-10mm long. It has been slowly expanded its range spreading northwards over recent years. Recently, by moving up along the Severn Valley, it is now well into Shropshire. Records started to appear from around the forest area a few years ago, notably around the Blackstone area and the mouth of the Dowles Brook along the Severn. Finally, on the 6 June 2019 I found several specimens along the Dowles Brook at Wimpehill Wood, well into the main woodland area. *Phytoecia* is an atypical longhorn in some way as it feeds on the stems of Apiaceae. Typical plants include Bur Chervil (*Anthriscus caucalis*) (Twinn and Harding 1999) and Cow Parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris*), which is possibly the main species used, but also on similar plant species (Hickin 1975). Eggs are laid singly in the stem below the inflorescence. Larva then bore into the pith hollowing out the whole stem. Some three months are spent in the larval stage, pupation occurs in the autumn, and the winter is passed in the adult stage. (Watford Beetle Group webpage). Its former Notable B status is now downgraded to Least Concern due to its spread northward, but presently it still remains an uncommon species further north. Most of the forest presents unsuitable habitat for this species as Cow Parsley is somewhat restricted in the main wooded areas but common enough along parts of the Dowles Brook and the numerous surrounding hedgerows that border the forest.

Other species of longhorn may also be possible but I have not included them in the thirty species on the Wyre list in Table 1. Records for *Dinoptera collaris* are mentioned in the old Invertebrate Site Register for Wyre Forest produced back in the days of the Nature Conservancy Council. (NCC 1997). The reference is

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given as Hendersson collection, British Entomological Society dated 1933 and 1938 from Biological Records Centre data. This species is now extinct in Britain and I even wonder at times if the Wyre records were correct. There are verified records from Worcestershire so perhaps it once was a Wyre Forest speciality, but alas no more. More likely is *Stenostola dubia*, Lime Longhorn found locally in the Severn Valley. It should be present somewhere within the forest and there is a record from Eymore Wood in 1974, but I have never seen it in Wyre. Searching newly coppiced lime trees would be the places to look but the main host, Small-leaved Lime *Tilia cordata*, is quite scarce in the forest.

*Rhagium inquisitor* Ribbed Pine Borer was recorded by John Meiklejohn at Hawkbatch many years ago, but no further records exist. Perhaps this was an error for *R. mordax*, a slip of a pen, or could it be from some imported specimen during forestry operations? We may never know, but it certainly seems absent from the forest today. *Stenurella nigra*, Small Black Longhorn, formerly recorded by Norman Hickin and latterly also by Colin Plant in 1984, has apparently not been seen since then. It could still be present perhaps in the more open landscape adjacent to the woodland, but despite searching no sightings have been made. It may be very localised occurring towards the south-west of the main forested area, possibly in a hedgerow habitat.

*Paracorymbia fulva*, Tawny Longhorn has been recorded at Bliss Gate by Rosemary Winnall but it appears to be a casual migrant species, not yet breeding? It is Nationally Scarce, but trending upwards, so may establish within the forest area in the future, but until such times I have not included it, or *S. nigra* on the list.

Alan Brown also recorded *Prionus coriarius*, Tanner Beetle nearby at the Devil's Spittleful, so this may possibly occur within the forest. There are even more possibilities; *Stictoleptura rubra*, Red Longhorn a conifer species is heading west from its stronghold in East Anglia, and perhaps within 10 years we may start to see them in Wyre? So, the list is not complete - can it ever? Some species may be lost but often the rare and uncommon species, especially if nocturnal, may escape detection for many years.

A full list of our forest longhorns is set out in Table 1. The total of thirty species is notable for a forest in the English Midlands and represents an exceptional fauna, more so as Wyre lacks the old veteran trees that longhorn beetles are often associated with. Can we add more species? hhThe Wyre Frequency is my own 'best guess' based on recording over the years, and any species listed as 'common' or better you have a good chance of finding every year.



*Phymatodes testaceus*

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Table 1. Wyre Forest Longhorn Beetles 2019 Jenny Robbins

No.	Species	Common Name	Wyre Frequency	National Status 2019*
1	<i>Agapanthia villosa</i>	Golden-bloomed Grey Longhorn	Rare	
2	<i>Alosterna tabacicolor</i>	Tobacco-coloured Longhorn	Common	
3	<i>Arhopalus rusticus</i>	Dusky Longhorn	Very rare	
4	<i>Aromia moschata</i>	Musk Beetle	Rare	
5	<i>Anaglyptus mysticus</i>	Rufus-shouldered Longhorn	Occasional	
6	<i>Anoplodera sexguttata</i>	Six-spotted Longhorn	Very rare	Nationally Rare
7	<i>Asemum striatum</i>	Pine Stump Borer	Rare	
8	<i>Clytus arietis</i>	Wasp Beetle	Frequent	
9	<i>Grammoptera ruficornis</i>	Common Grammoptera	Abundant	
10	<i>Leiopus linnei</i>	'New' Black-clouded Longhorn	Very rare	Data Deficient
11	<i>Leiopus nebulosus</i>	Black-clouded Longhorn	Rare	
12	<i>Leptura quadrfasciata</i>	Four-banded Longhorn	Common	
13	<i>Mesosa nebulosa</i>	White-clouded Longhorn	Rare	Nationally Scarce
14	<i>Molorchus minor</i>	Spruce Shortwing Beetle	Rare	Not Assessed
15	<i>Pachytodes cerambyciformis</i>	Speckled Longhorn	Frequent	
16	<i>Phymatodes alni</i>	White banded Longhorn	Rare	Nationally Scarce
17	<i>Phymatodes testaceus</i>	Tanbark Borer	Occasional	
18	<i>Phytoecia cylindrica</i>	Umbellifer Longhorn	Rare	
19	<i>Pogoncherus hispidulus</i>	Greater Thorn-tipped Longhorn	Occasional	
20	<i>Pogonocherus hispidus</i>	Lesser Thorn-tipped Longhorn	Occasional	
21	<i>Pyrrhidium sanguineum</i>	Welsh Oak Longhorn	Common	
22	<i>Rhagium bifasciatum</i>	Two-banded Longhorn	Abundant	
23	<i>Rhagium mordax</i>	Black-spotted Longhorn	Abundant	
24	<i>Rutpela maculata</i>	Black and Yellow Longhorn	Abundant	
25	<i>Saperda populnea</i>	Small Poplar Borer	Rare	Nationally Scarce
26	<i>Stenocorus meridianus</i>	Variable Longhorn	Common	
27	<i>Stenurella melanura</i>	Black-striped Longhorn	Frequent	
28	<i>Tetropium castaneum</i>	European Spruce Longhorn	Occasional	Not Assessed
29	<i>Tetropium gabrieli</i>	Larch Longhorn	Rare	Not Assessed
30	<i>Tetrops praeustus</i>	Plum Longhorn	Occasional	

Wyre Frequency; Very rare - one record. Rare – 2 to 5 records. Occasional – 5 to 10 records.

Common – 10 to 50 records. Frequent over 50 records. Abundant – over 100 records. (Open to review).

\*The status in the UK for all Cerambycidae has been published (Alexander 2019).

Don't forget there is a National Longhorn Beetle Recording Scheme to send your records:

[www.coleoptera.org.uk/cerambycidae/home](http://www.coleoptera.org.uk/cerambycidae/home)

## References

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Watford Beetle Group; <http://www.thewcg.org.uk/Cerambycidae/0493G.htm>