

Recording Riverflies in Wyre

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The Riverfly Recording group brings together experts and enthusiasts of riverflies – caddis, mayflies and stoneflies. They have an annual meeting that involves a discussion of developments in recording their groups, and some recording.

The 'formal' meeting was held at the Wyre Forest Discovery Centre on May 16th 2018. Recording took place mainly around the mouth of the Kingswood Stream on May 16th and by the River Severn at Bewdley on May 17th, followed by a walk up the Snuffmill Dingle.

In total we recorded 45 species of caddis, 15 of mayflies, 5 of stoneflies and as many participants had wider interests, 21 species of other freshwater taxa.

The records will be incorporated into the Wyre Forest Study Group data set that will be sent to the local record centres and also incorporated into the national riverfly data sets for display on the NBN in due course.

There were some notable records as follows.

Caddis

The caddis *Beraeodes minutus* is new to Wyre. Its larvae live amongst the roots of marginal vegetation and another species that uses that habitat, *Polycentropus irrortus*, was recorded for only the second time.



Reared male *Tinodes pallidulus*

Stuart Crofts

Tinodes pallidulus, one of Wyre's special caddis, was found for the first time away from the Dowles catchment, at the bottom of the Park Dingle.

Hydropsyche saxonica is another scarce species. Previously known only for the west of the forest we added locations in the middle and the east.



Female *Hydropsyche saxonica*

Stuart Crofts

Land Caddis *Enoicyla pusilla*. As event organiser I emphasised that I could not guarantee anyone finding this localised insect. I was therefore delighted that Rosemary Winnall and Brett Westwood were able to show the participants a colony close to the centre; it had been on the "must see sometime" list for most.

Setodes punctatus is a nationally rare Severn specialist that no-one had ever seen alive. The very unusual cased caddis larva burrows vertically into coarse sand, reverses in its case, and then sits at the entrance as a sit-and-wait predator of any small insect or worm that comes into range of its long legs.

Mayflies

Potamanthus luteus The Yellow Mayfly. This species has only recently been recorded from the Severn. It is now known from above Shrewsbury to below Tewkesbury but it is only in the Bewdley area that the Environment Agency can be pretty sure of seeing nymphs every time they survey; the conspicuous adult seems to fly at night and is seen even more rarely than the nymphs.



Baetis atlanticus. The mayfly *Baetis rhodani* is one of the commonest of all mayflies as it can tolerate some organic pollution. It has a nymph that is easy to identify. There has been a suspicion that there is more than one species being identified as *B. rhodani* and one of the segregates has been given the name *Baetis atlanticus* it is not easy to identify but Richard Chadd, who attended the meeting, can do so and recorded it from the Dowles Brook and the adjoining Kingswood Stream.

Other species

Physella gyrina This is an alien water snail and the largest member of the family Physidae in this country. Most of us had not seen it before. It was common in the Snuffmill Dams which we think is probably the first record for the area.

Stenelmis canaliculata An adult was found in the Severn. There are very few records in the UK for this large riffle beetle and most people had not seen it alive before.

