JOHN BINGHAM

Some Species of Note from the Wyre Forest

Roeseliana roeselii. Tettigoniidae:Orthoptera. Roesel's Bush-cricket. John Bingham

The Orthoptera of the forest has always been somewhat limited as the local climate is not particularly suitable for warm-loving grasshopper and crickets. I had never seen *Roeseliana roeselii*, Roesel's Bush-Cricket in Wyre Forest but on 28th July 2023 at Longdon Wood on the Shropshire side of Wyre I found a colony. There were both male and females present in low numbers in an area of damp scrub with *Rubus* spp., Bramble. This was not unexpected as the species was already established well north of the forest in Shropshire and beyond and locally in the River Severn corridor. The sudden expansion seems to have been in 2023 as other recorders have reported them in the forest area. During August more locations along rides in the Longdon Wood area were found, often in much drier areas than is typical for this species. Clearly, they have now arrived in Wyre Forest and will no doubt become a common species, spreading away from the more favoured damper areas to drier woodland glades. *Pholidoptera griseoaptera*, Dark Bush-cricket, despite being here for some time, has yet to make progress into the main woodland but does occur along the River Severn corridor and in some areas of woodland next to the Dowles Brook. Perhaps this species will spread out further into the forest?

Sericomyia superbiens (Muller, 1776). Diptera:Syrphoidae Furry Peat Hoverfly. John Bingham

This is a species more common in the west of Britain but is occasionally found in the Wyre Forest. It is a large bumblebee mimic that flies in September. One was seen feeding on *Succisa pratensis*, Devil's-bit Scabious on 2nd September 2023 at Wimperhill Wood, near Dowles Brook. Unfortunately, I only managed



Sericomyia superbiens John Bingham



Metrioptera roeseli John Bingham

to get a quick photograph before it flew off but I did view it clearly in close focus binoculars.

Lysimachia minima (L.) U. Manns & Anderb. Magnoliopsida:Primulacea Chaffweed. John Bingham

The rather wet summer of 2023 was annoying but did provide habitat for *Lysimachia minima*, Chaffweed (Near Threatened list) (Stroh *et al*. 2023) a plant that needs wet or damp bare soil with more acid conditions. Normally it is restricted to ditches that dry out and become just damp bare ground over the summer, but in 2023 the wetter conditions provided lots of ideal habitats. Plants appeared at numerous locations that normally would have been too dry for this shallow rooted annual, especially amongst areas of bare soil on the sides of trackways. It is associated with *Juncus bulbosus*, Bulbous Rush and *Isolepsis setacea* Bristle Club-rush but sometimes occurs in short, often trampled grassland if wet enough. I recorded dozens of new sites in the forest but all were in Shropshire, perhaps a bias here!

References

P. A. Stroh, K. J. Walker, T. A. Humphrey, O. L. Pescott, R.



J. Burkmar. (2023) *Plant Atlas 2020: Mapping Changes in the Distribution of the British and Irish Flora*. BSBI

P*latystomos albinus* (Linnaeus, 1758) Anthribidae:Coleoptera and *Dicranocephalus medius* (Mulsant & Rey,1870) Stenocephalidae:Hemiptera. Numerous individuals along the Dowles Brook, Wyre Forest, Shropshire. John Bingham

Just metres over the county boundary along the Dowles Brook in the Shropshire portion of Wyre Forest on 22nd May 2023 I found unusual numbers of several scarce species. The site had been cut for coppice a few years before and was still open with stacked log piles and an abundance of flowering plants especially Wood Spurge (*Euphorbia amygdaloides*). The fungus weevil *Planystomos albinus* (Nationally Scarce Nb) is not uncommon in the forest but on the log piles I found over a dozen specimens with a bonus of two *Platyrhinus resinosus* (Nationally Scarce Nb) fungus weevils also amongst them. Both use fungus found on rotting logs but normally they are found just as single individuals.

The Wood Spurge provided another uncommon species, *Dicranocephalus medius* (Spurge Bug) (Nationally Scarce Nb) with numerous individuals on the flower heads including several in cop. This species becomes quite scarce in the Midlands with Wyre Forest one of the few places where it is locally common although restricted to suitable habitat. This number of individuals, over 10 in all was however exceptional, normally one or two would be good.

Resting on one of the logs a single specimen of the hoverfly *Chalcosyrphus nemorum* was spotted, another uncommon species that I rarely ever see in the forest. Perhaps this shows the maxim, 'right place, right time' and some luck is what naturalists need.





Wyre Forest Study Group



Dicranocephalus medius paired John Bingham



Chalcosyrphus nemorum John Bingham