

Mike Bloxham

Rather unpromising weather greeted the cecidologists attending this event. Fortunately, after an indifferent beginning, conditions improved to give a sunny end to the day. Our first visit saw us work our way from the Experimental Pool area back along the main track by Dowles Brook. The start was immediately encouraging, with *Zestophanes potentillae* on *Potentilla reptans* in the pool outflow culvert and *Lasioptera rubi* on bramble a short distance down the track. After a rather damp ramble, we lost Peter Shirley for a while as he searched for the spectacular fungus gall *Taphrina alni* on catkins of the abundant track-side alders. He rejoined us to report success and we were also shown distorted alder leaves (*Taphrina tosquinetii*), but by that time John Meiklejohn and half the party had also vanished to work the banks of Dowles. When eventually we were reunited, John was pleased to show everyone *Trigonaspis megaptera* on an oak leaf. This was an excellent record for one of Britain's most elusive galls. A further 22 gall species were added before the lunch break.

The afternoon session took us along the disused railway to Lodge Hill Farm (SO 759 765) where we investigated the surrounding meadows. There was much of interest, including a superfluity of hornets. It seems that these beautiful insects have enjoyed a national revival recently. Rosemary Winnall managed to take some fine photographs of them. She also showed the party several wax caps in the pastures before we returned to gall gathering.

There was a good showing of *Jaapiella veronicae* on *Veronica chamaedris* and the blackthorn provided plenty of *Eriophyes prunispinosae* along leaf margins. Whilst we did not manage more than a small species list at the farm, the final moments before departure were significant when John Meiklejohn and I examined an oak tree in the hedgerow. What appeared to be small grey aborted leaf buds turned out to be several galls of *Andricus glandulae*.

These were of the asexual generation (producing females able to produce fertile eggs without mating) described as rare in 'British Plant Galls' (p407). This may well not be the case because the galls are very easily overlooked appearing like small grey moribund leaf buds on terminal twigs. I am fortunate in possessing photographs of galls of both generations, the sexual generation (consisting of males and females) being found on oak catkins in early summer. Both stages are reasonably characteristic, but very easily missed in the complexities of the surrounding shoot vegetation. Now that we have a precise location for them, study group members might try to discover both generations by an inspection of oaks in May and October this year. To assist in this, both photographs are published here (the sexual generation gall was found at Hednesford on 20 May 1998).

We are indebted to John Meiklejohn for acting as recorder on the day and his list concludes the report.



Andricus glandulae - Sexual generation Mike Bloxham



Andricus glandulae - Asexual generation Mike Bloxham



Wyre Forest Study Group

Lodge Hill Farm Meadow 1 (SO 758766).

| Host | Causer | Causer Category |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| <i>Centaurea nigra</i> | <i>Urophora jaceana</i> | D |
| <i>Malva moschata</i> | <i>Puccinia malvacearum</i> | F |
| <i>Prunus spinosa</i> | <i>Eriophyes prunispinosae</i> | A |
| <i>Quercus robur</i> | <i>Andricus glandulae</i> | Hy |
| | <i>Cynips quercusfolii</i> | Hy |
| | <i>Macrodiplosis dryobia</i> | D |
| | <i>Neuroterus albipes</i> | Hy |
| | <i>Neuroterus numismalis</i> | Hy |
| | <i>Neuroterus quercusbaccarum</i> | Hy |
| | <i>Trioza remota</i> | He |

Lodge Hill Farm Meadow 2 (SO 759766)

| | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|----|
| <i>Centaurea nigra</i> | <i>Urophora jaceana</i> | D |
| <i>Cirsium arvense</i> | <i>Urophora cardui</i> | D |
| <i>Corylus avellana</i> | <i>Phytoptus avellanae</i> | A |
| <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> | <i>Phyllocoptes goniothorax</i> | A |
| <i>Veronica chamaedrys</i> | <i>Jaapiella veronicae</i> | D |
| <i>Malus sylvestris</i> | <i>Phyllocoptes mali</i> | A |
| <i>Quercus robur</i> | <i>Andricus curvator</i> | Hy |
| | <i>Andricus fecundator</i> | Hy |
| | <i>Andricus quercuscorticis</i> | Hy |
| | <i>Cynips quercusfolii</i> | Hy |
| | <i>Macrodiplosis dryobia</i> | D |
| | <i>Neuroterus albipes</i> | Hy |
| | <i>Neuroterus numismalis</i> | Hy |
| | <i>Neuroterus quercusbaccarum</i> | Hy |

Dowles Brook (SO 746764)

| | | |
|------------------------------|---|----|
| <i>Acer campestre</i> | <i>Aceria macrochelus</i> | A |
| <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> | <i>Eriophyes laevis</i> | A |
| | <i>Taphrina alni</i> | F |
| | <i>Taphrina tosquinetti</i> | F |
| <i>Betula pendula</i> | <i>Cecidophyopsis betulae</i> | A |
| <i>Cirsium arvense</i> | <i>Urophora cardui</i> | D |
| <i>Corylus avellana</i> | <i>Contarinia coryli</i> | D |
| | <i>Phytoptus avellanae</i> | A |
| <i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i> | <i>Chirosia betuletae</i> | D |
| <i>Filipendula ulmaria</i> | <i>Dasineura ulmariae</i> | D |
| <i>Potentilla reptans</i> | <i>Xestophanes potentillae</i> | Hy |
| <i>Prunus spinosa</i> | <i>Eriophyes prunispinosae</i> | A |
| <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> | <i>Chirosia grossicauda</i> | D |
| <i>Quercus robur</i> | <i>Cynips divisa</i> | Hy |
| | <i>Cynips longiventris</i> | Hy |
| | <i>Cynips quercusfolii</i> | Hy |
| | <i>Neuroterus albipes</i> | Hy |
| | <i>Neuroterus anthracinus</i> | Hy |
| | <i>Neuroterus numismalis</i> | Hy |
| | <i>Neuroterus quercusbaccarum</i> | Hy |
| | <i>Trigonaspis megaptera</i> | Hy |
| | <i>Trioza remota</i> | He |
| <i>Rosa canina</i> agg. | <i>Diplolepis</i> sp. (smooth pea gall) | Hy |
| <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg. | <i>Lasioptera rubi</i> | D |
| <i>Taxus baccata</i> | <i>Taxomyia taxi</i> | D |
| <i>Tilia cordata</i> | <i>Aceria lateannulatus</i> | A |

Causer Category Key

A: Acari (mites), **D:** Diptera (true flies), **F:** Fungi, **He:** Hemiptera (bugs and hoppers), **Hy:** hymenoptera (wasps).