

end of the cottage industries. Any community would have had a full range of its own local tradesmen, but by the mid-eighteenth century the Enlightenment, the Scientific, Technological and Industrial Revolutions were about to develop causing huge and rapid changes to everyday life and work. From this survey it would seem reasonable to conclude that in the mid-eighteenth

century the sixteen modest orchards and the fruit produced played a small part in the economy of the Manor of Bewdley. In 1749 Thomas William Coke (1754 - 1842) pioneer of the Agricultural Revolution, living in Norfolk, would not be born for six years, so we might consider this survey as a glimpse into rural life 'at the end of an era' about to disappear for ever.

Unusual Numbers in Wyre Forest of the Horse Fly *Tabanus bromius* (Linnaeus, 1758) (Diptera: Tabanidae)

KEVIN MCGEE

On 4th July 2008 I visited Wyre to undertake some general recording and photography. I concentrated in the area alongside Dowles Brook in the centre of the forest. I was pleased to come across 3 specimens of the horse-fly *Tabanus bromius*, 2 of which were males. Although not a particularly rare insect I have never found it to be as common as general text books would have you believe. The best indication of current population levels are given in *British Soldierflies and their Allies* (Stubbs & Drakes, 2001) who write that is rare in the midlands but frequent in southern England. They go on to say 'it is a local species and would seem to have declined substantially'

The following day, 5th July 2008, I attended an organised recording day at Pound Green Common. During the afternoon some of us visited a part of Hurst Coppice, Wyre Forest. I was amazed to find 10 specimens of *T. bromius* with ease. They were all at rest on log-piles

along a length of the track covering about half a mile. Eight of them were females. Close approach for photography was simple, this is not usually the case! I have found *T. bromius* previously at rest on fence-posts and tree stumps, but only as singletons, except for one occasion when I counted about 6 at Grafton Wood, Worcestershire, on 2nd August 2004.

I've always found very hot and humid conditions to be best for horse-fly species but neither day fell into that category. The weather though had been relatively settled for a short while prior to this period so I believe they were taking advantage as part of a synchronised emergence; there was precious little opportunity during the cool and wet conditions in the summer of 2008!

REFERENCE

Stubbs, A.E. and Drake, M. (2001). *British Soldierflies and their Allies*. British Entomological and Natural History Society.



Tabanus bromius (female)

Kevin McGee