

Hymenoptera 2009

GEOFF TREVIS

Rather cool and damp weather over much of the main flight period for aculeate hymenoptera resulted in a poor season generally with fewer records than normal. However, the year was not without interest as a number of scarce species were noted and one or two new ones added to the Wyre Forest list. In this review the term scarce, as used by the Bees, Wasps and Ants Recording Society, is for bees defined as recorded in 16 – 100 10km squares nationally and is generally equivalent to the older notable designation. The term local is more loosely defined as “associated with a particular habitat or geographical area; more than scarce and less than common”. For wasps the definitions are slightly different as scarce refers to records from 31 to 70 10km squares from 1970 onwards. I have recorded 36 species of bees and wasps this year amongst which the species of particular interest were:

Andrena falsifica Perkins, 1915 Mining bee

A scarce species of heath and heathy woodland flying between April and July. 1st record for the county.

Andrena fulvago (Christ, 1791) Mining bee

A scarce species inhabiting grassland which will, therefore, be found in the more open areas of the forest and the surrounding meadows flying between May and July. Two specimens were taken. 1st records for Wyre Forest.

Andrena praecox (Scopoli, 1763) Mining bee

This is a local species well worth looking out for from March to May. It inhabits scrub and woodland and is largely restricted to sallows when foraging. There have been very few records in the county with only three in Wyre in 2004, 2007 and 2009.

Andrena lapponica

This mining bee, which inhabits moorland and heathy woodland, is not considered rare or threatened but its close association with bilberry makes it rare in Worcestershire. Its only known site is in the Wyre Forest where it was first recorded by Dave Barnett in 2008. I include it here as there were no records for 2009 but it is almost certainly present and should be looked for on bilberry between April and June.

Anthophora furcata (Panzer, 1798)

This is the delightfully named Fork-tailed Flower Bee. It is not considered rare but 2009 saw the first record for the county and, of course, for Wyre Forest. It is active from June to August.

Chelostoma campanularum (Kirby, 1802)

As the name suggests, this bee is restricted to flowers of the *Campanula* genus and its English name is the

Harebell Carpenter Bee. Though designated local it may be abundant where found and it is well worth looking for as this is the first Wyre Forest record. It is a very small, black bee.

Lasioglossum xathopus (Kirby, 1802)

This is a scarce grassland bee flying throughout the summer from April to September. It was first recorded in Wyre Forest in 2006 with the second record coming in 2009.

Leptothorax acervorum (Fabricius, 1793)

Ants are probably under recorded in Wyre and it is surprising that this relatively common species has not previously been noted. Its nests, in dead wood or under bark or stones or in peat, should be sought through July and August.

Priocnemis susterai Haupt, 1927

This is the only notable wasp recorded in 2009. It is a scarce member of the Pompilidae or spider hunting wasps. It is a subterranean nester in soil cavities in open woodland and should be looked for from April to August. There have been previous records from Joan's Hole in 2003 and Bowcastle Farm in 2008. The current record is from Town Coppice.

Another significant division of the hymenoptera is the sawflies. These have remained almost completely unrecorded but this year has seen the start of recording effort and I would be glad to receive any specimens that might be taken in the coming year. As might be expected, the first year of recording has yielded common species, virtually all of which will be new for Wyre. The 2009 list is *Macrophya annulata*, *Monosoma pulverata*, *Tethredo arcuata*, *T. maculata*, *T. scrophulariae*, *Tethredopsis litterata* and *Tenthredopsis nassata*.



Andrena praecox female, 25th March 2004 Rosemary Winnall