

CUMBRIA WILDLIFE REPORT 2022

BETLES

J READ



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Male and Female Hylecoetus dermestoides a species of ship-timber beetles

March 2023

Despite the extremes of weather during the spring and summer months 2022 was quite a good year for beetles and beetle recording in Cumbria. A number of interesting and notable species were discovered and recorded during the season from both vice counties 69 and 70, which included a number of new hectad records and two species that were new to the county.

A number of noteworthy water beetles were also recorded in 2022 by Steve Routledge during the Talkin Tarn bioblitz which was organised by the North Pennines AONB Partnership and held over a two day period in June. Along with the water beetles a number of water bugs were also recorded from the site and were dealt with in a very interesting article recently published by David Bilton and Steve (Bilton & Routledge 2023). The paper deals with the effect of climate change and warming, mainly on the aquatic coleoptera and heteroptera in the tarn, and the decline of a number of species, due primarily to the water quality which has steadily deteriorated during the past 20 years.

2022 also saw the publication of three documents dealing with Cumbrian coleoptera which were published at intervals online by the Cumbria Biodiversity Data Centre in their series of occasional publications which can be accessed at <https://www.cbdc.org.uk/wildlife-in-cumbria/cbdc-publications> . The three titles are as follows 1. *A bibliography of Cumbrian coleoptera*; 2. *Cumulative index to species and families of coleoptera recorded in The Field Naturalist (New Series) Volumes 1 – 13, 1956 – 1969* and 3. *A short biographical account of the life of John Walton, naturalist and entomologist, together with an annotated list of his publications on coleoptera*.

As in previous reports the arrangement and nomenclature is according to the most recent checklist of British coleoptera (Duff 2018).

***Hygrobia hermanni* (HYGROBIDAE) Squeak Beetle**

Recorded from Talkin Tarn (NY545588) 18 – 19 th June (SR) during the bioblitz. This large reddish – brown coloured water beetle is commonly known as the squeak beetle on account of its ability to emit a loud screech sound when disturbed or handled. It was first discovered in Cumbria in 2006 and has since been recorded from a number of sites around the Carlisle area and in the west of the county.

***Noterus clavicornis* (NOTERIDAE) Predatory Diving Beetles**

Also recorded from Talkin Tarn (NY545588) 18–19th June (SR). *N. clavicornis* is associated mainly with base – rich lowland pools in Britain. It is widely distributed nationally and is quite widespread and common in Cumbria. New hectad record for NY55.

***Calasoma inquisitor* (CARABIDAE) Caterpillar – hunter Beetle - Nationally Scarce – County Rare**

One specimen of this large, bright coppery coloured and very striking ground beetle was observed at Yew Tree Tarn, Coniston (NY3200) 13th May (MR). It is mainly a speciality of ancient oak forest where the adults actively hunt and prey exclusively on moth caterpillars high up in the tree canopy. It is a rare and very locally distributed species in Cumbria and has previously been recorded from the Coniston area and Roudsea Wood, and from a few broad - leaved woods in the Borrowdale Valley and Glencoyne Wood, Ullswater.

***Carabus nemoralis* (CARABIDAE) Ground Beetles**

Two individuals of this, large 14mm, long violet and coppery coloured carabid were found under stones in the grounds of Lanercost C of E Primary School NY558638 14th February (DM). It is an

uncommon beetle in Cumbria and has been recorded from a small number of sites, mainly in the north and south of the county.

***Carabus nitens* (CARABIDAE) Heath – Goldsmith Beetle - Nationally Scarce – County Scarce**

This spectacular, bright green and red metallic coloured, predatory ground beetle is associated mainly with upland heaths and bogs and can be found on sphagnum and running on bare peat. It has previously been recorded from a number of wetland bogs and heathland areas in Cumbria which includes the fells and Solway Mosses. One adult was recorded from Shap Fell NY40, 5th May (CC).

***Amara montivaga* (CARABIDAE) Ground Beetles**

One specimen of this all black, shiny ground beetle was found in the back garden of a house in Broughton in Furness SD210870 5th April (NG). Until now this carabid was restricted to the south – east and south west of England, Wales and Killarney in Ireland. It has been recorded mainly from sandy sites, gravel and chalk pits where there is some weedy vegetation. A new county record and the first for vice county 69, Westmorland.

***Omalius excavatum* (STAPHYLINIDAE) Rove Beetles**

Several males and females of this 5mm long, dark brown and black rove beetle were extracted from coarse grass cuttings in the newly created Beck Bottom Community Garden, Hensingham NX986170 17th October (JR). A rare beetle nationally, it is uncommon in Cumbria and has previously been recorded from seven ten km squares. New for hectad NX91.

***Philonthus concinnus* (STAPHYLINIDAE) Rove Beetles**

Several specimens of this 7mm long all black rove beetle were extracted from a large heap of grass cuttings and general decaying plant material in the Beck Bottom Community Garden, Hensingham NX986170 20th October (JR). There are a few early 20th century records of the beetle from Cumbria mainly from sites around the Carlisle area, and in the west of the county. This is a new hectad record for NX91.

***Stenus fossulatus* (STAPHYLINIDAE) Rove Beetles - Nationally Scarce – County Scarce**

This medium sized, dark reddish- brown coloured camphor beetle is a specialist of sandy-clay riparian landslips, mainly in open areas with sparse vegetation. It is a rare beetle nationally and known only from a few sites in northern England, and one locality in the Scottish borders. Specimens were discovered at two sites; Gowk Bank, River Irthing NY6773 14th April and Shiel Knowe on the White Lyne NY5679 17th April (SH). It has previously been recorded from the Irthing, Kingwater and White Lyne.

***Rhinoceros cylindricum* (LUCANIDAE) Rhinoceros Beetle**

Several larvae and adults of this large, 20mm long all black, impressive woodboring rhinoceros beetle were found while splitting large tree rounds for wood collected from mixed deciduous and coniferous woodland in Ainhouse Plantation, Eskdale NY128016 5th August (DM). The beetle has previously been recorded from Cumbria from a number of widely scattered localities, mainly in the east.

***Epiphaniis cornutus* (EUCNEMIDAE) Nationally Scarce**

This 3 – 7mm long blackish - brown false click beetle was found during the course of survey work carried out at Robinson Place Farm, Great Langdale NY308065 28th July (PB) which is owned and

managed by the National Trust. *E. cornutus* is an established introduction and was first discovered in Britain in 1964. It is rare and locally distributed in England, Wales and Scotland and associated mainly with dry fungoid rotten logs of broad – leaved and coniferous trees; larvae develop in decaying heartwood. Occasionally found on mixed vegetation in wooded areas. New record for VC 69 Westmorland.

***Lampyris noctiluca* (LAMPYRIDAE) Glow Worm**

Due mainly to habitat loss, glow worms, unfortunately are now quite scarce and declining in many areas of Britain, so it is good to report that several larvae of the beetle were observed in the disused Close Hodge limestone quarry near Coniston NY3130, 19th June (RT).

***Podabrus alpinus* (CANTHARIDAE) Soldier Beetles - County Scarce**

A single individual of this large, black and red - legged soldier beetle was discovered on soil beneath some Scots pine trees at the north end of Talkin Tarn, Brampton NY54851890 18th June (DC). The beetle is very locally distributed in Cumbria with few records from the north and south–west.

***Hylecoetus dermestoides* (LYMEXILLIDAE) Ship – timber Beetles - County Scarce**

One female and three males of this woodboring beetle were observed mating on a fence post in Roudsea Wood National Nature Reserve SD328819 14th April (NG). Males and females of this orange and dark brown beetle are long and slender and measure approximately 6-18mm. Males are characterised by being on average smaller and darker and possess large prominent maxillary palps. The larvae develop in freshly dead sappy timber and root stumps where they feed on ambrosia fungus introduced by the adult females. Quite widespread nationally, but scarce in Cumbria it has previously been recorded from Whinlatter Forest NY21, Satterthwaite SD39 and the Rusland Valley SD38.

***Nalassus laevioctostriatus* (TENEBRIONIDAE) Darkling Beetles - County Scarce**

One pair of this 9mm long shiny dark reddish – brown darkling beetle were found in a crevice of a dying silver birch tree on the Duddon Mosses National Nature Reserve SD220854 8th April (NG). Although this beetle is frequent and widespread in Britain it is scarce in Cumbria, and has been recorded from only a few, coastal sites, in the west of the county. It is mainly nocturnal in habit and found under bark, in rotten wood, moss and damp humus; also climbs trees to graze on algae. New record for hectad SD28.

***Lagria hirta* (TENEBRIONIDAE) Darkling Beetles**

This large, light yellowish – brown and black darkling beetle is restricted mainly to coastal sandy areas in Britain and very rarely found in inland situations. Surprisingly a single individual was attracted to a moth trap at Cumrew NY5450 13th June (GB).

***Enicmus testaceus* (LATERIIDAE) Mould Beetles - Nationally Scarce – County Rare**

This very small 1 – 2 mm long dark reddish – brown mould beetle was found during survey work carried out at Robinson Place Farm, Great Langdale, NY308065 28th July (PB). *E. testaceus* is a rare and very locally distributed species nationally and found mainly in ripe slime fungus (particularly *Reticularia lycoperdon*) on beech and other broad - leaved trees, and can also be found beneath fungoid bark. The beetle is very rare in Cumbria and was last recorded from VC70 in 1917 from Kingmoor, NY35 by F. H. Day. New record for VC69, Westmorland.

***Phaedon armoricae* CHRYSOMELIDAE Leaf Beetle**

A large number of adults of this medium – sized, deep blue leaf beetle were observed on plants of Willowherb and crucifers in the draw – down zone of a large pond at Edderside, near Aspatria NY099455 19th September (DM). The beetle is associated mainly with Brooklime *Veronica beccabunga*, and other waterside plants. Although it is common and widespread nationally *P. armoricae* tends to be uncommon in Cumbria and has been recorded from only a few sites in the north and west. New record for hectad NY04

List of recorders

GB: Guy Broome, PB: Peter Brash, CC: Chris Cant, DC: David Clarke, NG: Nigel Gilligan, SH: Steve Hewitt, DM: Deborah Muscat, JR: John Read, MR: Mo Richards, SR: Steve Routledge, RT: Rachel Thompson.

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References

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