PRELIMINARY REPORT ON THE BEETLES (COLEOPTERA) OF HADDON HALL PARK

The Entomologists

Thomas Eccles has studied the beetle fauna of this country and France for over fifty years. He has discovered several species new to the U.K and published accounts of their discovery in the entomological journals. He is an accomplished illustrator of entomological and other natural history subjects. He has an eclectic career background, working as a geologist on North Sea Oil exploration rigs, as a Senior Countryside Ranger on Merseyside and as a local government officer in Leisure and Planning Departments. He is retired and lives in Tideswell.

Graham Maynard is the Recorder for Coleoptera for the county of Derbyshire. He is a qualified Master Brewer and has spent most of his working life in the brewing industry. He is retired and lives in Chesterfield.

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In 2014, local entomologists Tom Eccles and Graham Maynard commenced a survey of the beetles (Coleoptera) of Haddon Hall Park. Our interest in the site started after Eccles visited it on a Grayling fishing expedition at the invitation of a friend. Eccles noted the presence of many old trees , the unimproved grassland, extensive wetland and interesting riverine habitats and through contacts at the Peak Park Authority sought permission for a beetle survey to be undertaken. This was all the more attractive to the two entomologists as, so far as we can determine, the locality (in spite of its obvious conservation value) has not until now received the attention of entomologists and we were embarking on a survey of an unexplored locality.
Our early finds have fully vindicated our surmise that Haddon Hall Park would contain interesting species which are rare or absent elsewhere in the Peak District.

The Park has a variety of habitats each with its own characteristic beetle fauna; they may be categorised as follows:

WOODLAND
Stands of secondary deciduous woodland with close canopy.

Individual veteran and younger trees in parkland setting. These have probably been planted (or retained from more extensive woodland) for their landscape contribution. Some may be relics of an earlier pasture woodland regime where livestock was grazed among widely spaced trees which were pollarded for timber.

Willows and Alders along the bank of the River Wye. These individual trees may be of no great age, but there has probably been a continuity of this habitat for a very long time and the beetle fauna is expected to reflect this.

Species associated with dead and moribund trees (bark, dead wood, logs, wood chippings)
Species associated with saproxylic fungi
Species associated with wasps' nests
Species associated with birds' nests
Leaf Litter
Tree Cavities

GRASSLAND
Extensive areas of unimproved grassland marshy in places. The presence of many Lasius flavus ant-hills indicates lack of disturbance for a long period.

Dung Beetle Community – Longhorn cattle and rabbits
Community associated with moles (and other mammals' nests)

RIVERSIDE EMERGENT VEGETATION
The rich wetland flora is expected to yield many associated species of Coleoptera.

THE RIVER WYE
We do not propose to investigate the stream itself except where shingle or mud banks are exposed.

SPECIES OF CONSERVATION INTEREST (See accompanying illustrations)

Those marked with an asterisk are considered to be indicators of "Ancient" woodland.

1* Plegaderus dissectus A small but distinctive species which lives in rotten wood of various deciduous trees. Confined to ancient wood pastures.

2 Dorytomus longimanus A weevil, characterised by the very long fore-legs of the male (here depicted). It was found in numbers in the chinks of bark of a large Black Poplar.

3 Endomychus coccineus Lives on or around fungoid growth under bark of dead timber. In spite of its appearance, it is not related to Ladybirds (Coccinelidae)

4 Platyrhinus resinosus This species is particularly associated with the fungus Daldinia concentrica which grows on ash and beech. It has a mainly midland distribution. It may be more common than records suggest as it is very cryptically coloured and easily overlooked in spite of its fairly large size.. We have found it at Deepdale near Taddington.

5* Thanasimus formicarius A strikingly coloured species which is a predator of bark beetles. Several were found on a large ash log which was infested with Hylesinus bark beetles.

6*Ischnomera sanguinicollis One specimen was beaten from foliage of a large oak. Neither of us had encountered this species before.
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7* Dorcus parallelipipedus (The Lesser Stag Beetle). Adults and larvae have been found in fallen decaying ash trees. This is a rare species in Derbyshire with a very limited distribution. We have found it at Market Eaton, Lathkilldale and it is recorded from Chatsworth.

8*Melasoma aenea One specimen was found hibernating under loose bark of Willow, its probable food plant.

These are just a few typical examples of the many species so far recorded.

Evidence for Haddon Hall Park as ANCIENT WOODLAND

The species of Coleoptera (beetles) discovered so far, suggest that Haddon Hall Park , unsurprisingly, is an ancient site with a history of habitat continuity. The definition of an ancient woodland is a wood which is documented as being in existence since 1600. There has probably been some form of woodland here since that period and before, most likely as parkland with few scattered old trees managed as wood pasture with livestock grazing beneath very open canopy. The beetle fauna reflects this "ancientness", with what is known as ancient woodland indicators. Theses species are seldom if ever, found away from ancient sites. They mostly have limited powers of dispersal and once a site has been dis-forested, they do not return. Typical of these are three species of the family Histeridae viz Abraeus, Plegaderus, Paromalus etc. all of which have been found here. We have encountered several others

We are keen to continue our survey at Haddon as we are certain that many more species remain to be discovered and this will make a significant contribution to our knowledge of the Coleoptera of the Peak District. The number of species yielded by this locality will depend on the intensity of the survey (mainly the number of visits). We are keeping detailed records of our finds and some form of final report or even publication is envisaged.

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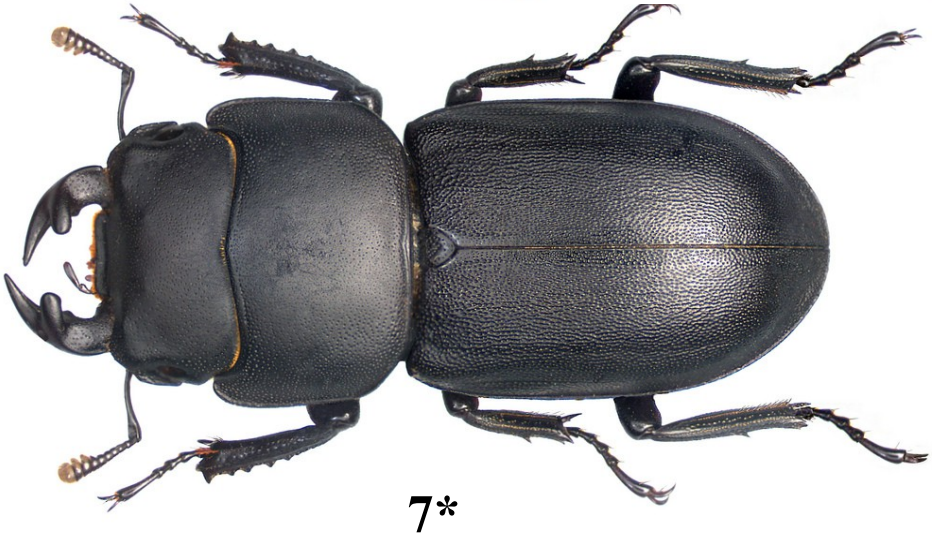

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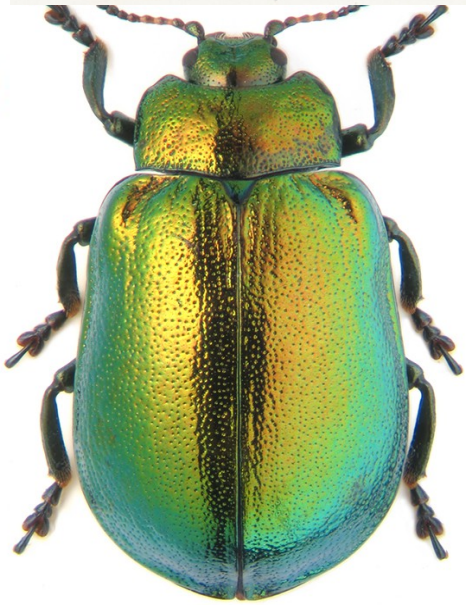

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Tetratoma fungorum *

Orchesia undulata *

Mycetophagus quadripustulatus *

Triplax aenea *

Sinodendron cylindricum *

Anisotoma humeralis