

**THE IDENTITY OF MYRMECOPORA BREVIPES BUTLER
(COL.: STAPHYLINIDAE)**

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MYRMECOPORA BREVIPES was brought forward as a species new to science by Butler (1909). In describing the beetle, Butler compared features of his species with those of *M. uvida* Erichson. He noted that his species was a little shorter than *uvida* (i.e. intermediate in length between *uvida* and *sulcata* Kiesenwetter) with the "thorax distinctly broader than long". Butler wrote that, besides the specimens he himself had collected, he had seen specimens of his species taken by Mr de la Garde at Dawlish, Devon.

Assing (1997), in his revision of Western Palaearctic species of *Myrmecopora* reported that he had been unable to locate a syntype of the species collected by Butler himself in spite of extensive enquiries. Reasoning that de la Garde's specimens from Dawlish were syntypes, Assing chose one of them from the collection held at Exeter City Museum and Art Gallery as a lectotype for Butler's species. A possible flaw in Assing's reasoning might have arisen if de la Garde had collected more than one *Myrmecopora* species of intermediate size at Dawlish. This, however, seems unlikely for Mr D. Bolton of Exeter City Museum has, at my request, kindly examined the relevant specimens in the Museum's collection and found that apart from an indeterminate damaged specimen, the other eleven match Assing's lectotype.

Looking at a number of *Myrmecopora* specimens of intermediate size collected by the author from Steephill, Isle of Wight and various other sites on the south coast, Assing realised that these were not the same species as de la Garde's specimens. Among other differences, the pronotum was not significantly broader than long. Assing named the second species *oweni*. A full description of both species and the means of distinguishing them is given in his paper. A simplified key covering only those species so far recorded from the British Isles is given below.

Preliminary studies indicate that *oweni* is widespread and locally common along the south-western and southern coasts of England whereas *brevipes* is much rarer and apparently confined to the south coast of Devon. The separation of *brevipes* from *oweni* by Assing means that most British specimens hitherto labelled *M. brevipes* will have to be relabelled but at least Assing's *brevipes* is consistent with the brief description which Butler provided for his species whereas *oweni* is not.

Acknowledgements

I must thank Herr V. Assing and Mr P.M. Hammond for their helpful comments. Mr D.E. Bolton, Exeter City Museum and Art Gallery kindly made available an opportunity of examining specimens in his care for which I am most grateful.

References

- Assing, V. 1997. A revision of the Western Palaearctic species of *Myrmecopora* Saulcy, 1864, *sensu lato* and *Eccoptoglossa* Luze, 1904 *Beitr. Ent.* **47**: 69-151.
 Butler, E.A. 1909. *Myrmecopora brevipes*, a new species allied to *M. uvida*, Er., an addition to the British fauna. *Entomologists mon. Mag.* **45**: 29-31.

Appendix 1

Simplified key to *Myrmecopora* species recorded from the British Isles.

1. joints 4 and 5 of antennae clearly elongate 2
 joints 4 and 5 of antennae more or less quadrate 3
2. length 2.4 – 3.4 mm*. pubescence on the inner two thirds of the elytra clearly transverse *oweni* Assing
 length 2.9 – 3.9 mm. pubescence on the inner two thirds of the elytra mostly oblique *uvida* Erichson
3. length 2.2 – 3.5 mm. pronotum clearly broader than long; head strongly transverse and strongly punctured *brevipes* Butler
 length 2.1 – 2.9 mm pronotum longer than broad; head weakly transverse and weakly punctured *simillima* (Wollaston) (= *sulcata* auct. Brit.)

* Measurements of length are those given by Assing (1997).



The Triangle *Heterogenea asella* (D.& S.) (Lep:Limacodidae) re-found in Devon

On 26 June 1999, in the woodlands near Great Torrington, during a joint field trip of the Devon Moth Group and the British Entomological and Natural History Society which hoped to discover the extent of the distribution of the Scarce Merveille-du-Jour *Moma alpium* (Osbeck), Dr B.P. Henwood took a small moth from the trap of B. Deakins, with his permission. The next day, Dr Henwood identified this specimen as The Triangle *Heterogenea asella*, but as he had never seen the species before he brought it round to me for confirmation. Dr. A. Henderson from Bideford, took a further specimen to light in his part of the woodland on 9 July 1999. The moth is recorded in the *Victoria County History of Devon* (1906) at Bickleigh Vale, near Plymouth by J. Baseden-Smith and at Plymbridge by F.J. Briggs, with no dates of capture. S.T. Stidston (1952) in his list of "The Lepidoptera of Devon" repeats these records adding that the species is "very rare, the only known records".— R.F. McCORMICK, 36 Paradise Road, Teignmouth, Devon TQ14 8NR.



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