Acknowledgements

Many thanks to the Zoology Department of Royal Holloway and Bedford New College for use of their facilities. Thanks also to R.M. Jordan and M.R. Perrow for assistance in collecting the samples.

References

Jordan, M.J.R., 1986: The genitalia of the species pair *Mesapamea secalis* L. and *Mesapamea secalella* Remm (Lep.: Noctuidae). *Entomologist's Rec. J. Var.* **98**: 41-44.

— , 1989: *Mesapamea remmi* Rezbanyai-Reser, 1985 (Lep.: Noctuidae). A species new to Britain. *Entomologist's Rec. J. Var.* **101**: 161-165.

Riley, A.M. & Southwood, J.E., 1988: *Mesapamea* species (Lep.: Noctuidae) in Shropshire in 1986. *Entomologist's Rec. J. Var.* **100**: 257-258.

Skinner, B., 1984: *Colour identification guide to moths of the British Isles.* Viking.

Postscript: A recent publication (Lempke, B.J., 1991, *Ent. Ber., Amstr.* **51**(2): 17-22) reports on a similar survey. Both species are common in the Netherlands. Overall, the impression is that *didyma* slightly outnumbers *secalis,* although local differences in the ratio occur. Remm originally separated the species on size, and this feature was checked here. In 767 random specimens (340 *secalis,* 417 *didyma*) the wingspan was measured. In the smaller specimens *didyma* predominated, with *secalis* being more common in the larger ones. The overlap was, however, so great that wingspan has no diagnostic value.

No other constant external feature could be found to separate the two.

P.A.S. & B.J.L.

Colydium elongatum (Fabricius) (Col.: Colydiidae) in Wiltshire, Berkshire and Surrey.

For over a century, *Colydium elongatum* was known in Britain only from the New Forest area. Recently, however, examples have turned up in other areas in Southern England and we thought it might be useful to summarise these records as interim documentation of the presumed spread of this beetle. The records are as follows:—

Wiltshire

Grovely Wood: 1 - 5 exx. on 10 occasions between 10.iv.70 and 8.iv.75; on beech and birch (once), sometimes associated with *Platypus* or *Xyloterus* sp. or both. D.R. Nash.

Langley Wood: 12.iv.74 1 ex. on fallen oak. D.R.Nash.

Burnt Ground Wood: 31.v.74 several exx. on beech log. D.R. Nash.

Great Ridge: 13.viii.80 2 exx. on sycamore log, associated with *Xyloterus signatum* and *X. domesticus.* D.R. Nash.

Savernake Forest: 29.v.76 1 ex. from a rotten beech. C. MacKechnie-Jarvis (1976 *Proc. Brit. ent. nat. Hist. Soc.* **9**: 122).

Berkshire

Windsor Great Park: 8.vi.86 1 ex. under sound bark of fallen oak bough D. Porter (1989 *Brit. J. ent. nat. Hist.* **2**: 53).

Windsor Great Park: 12.v.89 1 ex. on sawn surface of oak log. J.A. Owen.

Surrey

Ashstead Common: 25.v.87 2 exx. under bark of burnt oak. I.S. Menzies & J.A. Owen.

Ashstead Common. 1 - several exx. on 7 occasions between 27.vi.87 to 22.vi.88 mostly running over or lying under the bark on the burnt trunks of old oaks that were dead but standing. On 3 occasions, the beetles were seen entering borings of *Platypus* which was well established in the trunks. I.S. Menzies.

Even in the New Forest, *C. elongatum* has traditionally been regarded as a very rare insect (Fowler W.W. 1889 *The Coleoptera of the British Islands* **3**: 187; Joy, N.F. 1932 *A Practical Handbook of British Beetles* p.516). In our experience and that of colleagues, it appears, in recent years, to have become less rare in its New Forest stronghold, occasionally being locally common. Ashstead Common and Windsor Great Park, at least, are areas which have been well studied by coleopterists over the past hundred years and it seems almost certain that its appearance recently in these areas is due to a spread from the New Forest, perhaps due to a rising population there, rather than to it being previously overlooked. The reason why a beetle which has been very rare and confined to an area becomes commoner and spreads, as in this instance, remains to be determined. It is, of course, a matter for satisfaction that the process is not in the reverse direction.

The association of *Colydium* with *Platypus* on which it is considered to be predatory has long been recognised (Fowler *loc. cit.*). Our observations suggest that it may also be predatory on other scolytids such as *Xyloterus*. This is supported indirectly by the fact that *Colydium* occurs in coniferous trees as well as deciduous trees (Vogt, H. 1967 in *Die Käfer Mitteleuropas* band 7 ed H. Freude, K.W. Harde & G.A. Lohse) whereas *Platypus* appears to be confined to deciduous trees.

D.R.N. thanks the Earl of Pembroke for allowing him to study at Grovely Wood, Mr N. Anderson for permission to record at Langley and Burnt Ground Woods within the Hampworth Estate and the Lord Lieutenant of Wiltshire for allowing studies at Great Ridge. J.A.O. thanks the Nature Conservancy Council and the Crown Estates Office for permission to study beetles in Windsor Great Park.

I.S. MENZIES, 1 Cranes Park, Surbiton, Surrey KT5 8AB.

D.R. NASH, 266 Colchester Road, Lawford, Manningtree, Essex CO11 2BU.

J.A. OWEN, 8 Kingsdown Road, Epsom, Surrey KT17 3PU.