

A RESPONSE TO A. A. ALLEN'S LIST OF NOTABLE CORNISH COLEOPTERA

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A. A. ALLEN (2000) brought to our attention records of nineteen "Little-known notable" species of Cornish Coleoptera gleaned from a list compiled by Prof J. Clark (1906). Far from being "notable" in the current use of the word, eight are *Red Data Book* species, all but one of which are classified as RDB 1, Endangered. Allen's list also includes three extinct and as many of dubious status. He comments that these records appear to have been "overlooked in the later literature", and also that he is "aware of no later beetle list for the county".

Through a long-standing interest in the beetle fauna of Lundy, I have in my possession a reprint of a paper by K. G. Blair (1931) most of which comprises a table listing a total of more than 1350 species from the following localities – St. Mary's, Tresco, and other (Scilly) islands; Lundy; Braunton; and the Cornish coast. Of these, 223 species were from the Atlantic coast of Cornwall, 50 of which were recorded by more than one collector. The following six coleopterists contributed records: K. G. Blair recorded 94 species from St. Merryn, near Padstow, during 1925; E. A. Butler, 73 species, most from within three miles of Tintagel and a few hours at Boscastle and Camelford (1909); W. E. China, 40 species, 1930, Pendeen, near St. Ives; O. W. Richards, 20 species, August 1924, from various localities in the Land's End peninsula; P. de la Garde, 13 species from the marshes at Bude, North Cornwall, on 27.xii.1909 and 5.i.1910 (1910); seven species attributed to Canon W. W. Fowler are listed in the supplementary volume of the *Coleoptera of the British Isles* by himself and H. St. J. Donisthorpe (1913) and refer to records by Crawshay, E. Davies, C. J. Lamb, and J. R. le B. Tomlin. Fowler also includes some, but by no means all, of Butler's (1909) captures.

Only two of the Cornish species referred to by Allen appear in Blair's list. *Olibrus particeps* Muls. is recorded from Lundy by Dr N. H. Joy; from Braunton by Blair, de la Garde and E. M. Eustace; and from the Cornish coast by Blair and China; although Allen considers records of this species are likely to refer to *O. affinis* Sturm. *Pleurophorus caesus* (Pz.) is listed from Tresco based on C. W. Dale's record (1896), and a queried entry from "other islands" by F. Holme in 1836. Blair was apparently under the impression that Dale took a single individual which he considered "was most likely introduced with foreign plants". In fact Dale reported taking "two or three specimens". In a footnote to Dale's note G. C. Champion records that he had seen (but not retained) one of the specimens. The undated Tresco specimen in his collection must surely have been collected at a later date. Holme (1896) collected two specimens of a *Psammobius* ? on Samson which were devoured by *Cafii* in his

bottle. Blair comments that although these “may have been this species . . . it is more probable that these were *P. sulcicollis*” (Ill.) (= *asper* (F.)).

Of the 223 Cornish Coleoptera listed by Blair, five are now given *Red Data Book* status, and 24 are classified as Nationally Notable, by Hyman & Parsons (1992, 1994). A few of these are worthy of comment. Blair's record of the RDBK species *Leiodes picea* (Pz.) should be disregarded. Cooter (1996) considers this species to be “confined to Scotland and northern England as far south as Derbyshire”, and regards a Fowler record from Kent as “in error”. He appears to have been unaware of the Cornish record. Three Notable Staphylinidae, *Paederus fuscipes* (Curt.), *Calodera riparia* Er., and *Erichsonius* (as *Actobius*) *signaticornis* (Muls. & Rey), were recorded from Bude by de la Garde but were not included in Fowler and Donisthorpe's (1913) “Additional localities, notes, etc.”, although they do include a record of his for the last species from Christow (Devon). Similarly Blair's record of the chrysomelid *Ochrosis ventralis* (Ill.) from St. Merryn was overlooked by Hyman & Parsons (1992). Other Notable species recorded by Blair are the ptinid, *Ptinus seipunctatus* Pz. the curculionid, *Sitona waterhousi* Walzl, and the RDB2 cerambycid *Gracilia minuta* (F.). The location of this last species appears to have been incorporated in Twinn & Harding's Provisional Atlas (1999). Two other Notable species in Blair's list are O. W. Richards' record of the silphid, *Nicrophorus interruptus* Steph. and W. E. China's *Allophus triguttatus* (F.).

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